## OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER

Policy and Procedure Updates Travel, Assets, and Payroll August 2025





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# Policy and Procedure Purpose



## Purpose

Last fiscal year, the Controller's Office undertook a comprehensive policy and procedure update project.

This webinar series will provide a high-level overview of Controller's Office policies and procedures, including updates.





## **University Policies and Procedures**

The <u>University-Wide Policies and Procedures Manual</u> is maintained by the Office of the Provost.

Controller's Office policies are captured in the Administrative and Finance section (FINA) and are also included in our Resources and Training Toolbox (Policies & Procedures section) along with accompanying procedures and appendices.



## **Policy and Procedure Basics**



#### **Policy**

Details <u>what</u> is required by federal, state, local, and/or University requirements and best practices



#### **Procedure**

Accompanies policies and details <a href="https://example.com/how/how/">how/</a> compliance with those requirements is achieved

Additional supplemental policies and procedures can be developed internally at the unit or departmental level, but they cannot contradict the overarching policies and procedures of the University.

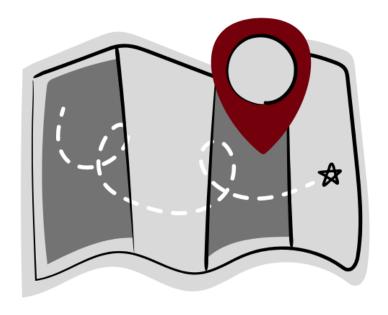


## **Policies and Procedures**

Policy	Procedure
FINA 2.50 – Travel	Travel
FINA 2.50 – Relocation Allowance	Relocation Allowance
FINA 7.00 – Capital Planning	Capital Planning (Coming Soon!)
FINA 2.82 – Asset Management	Asset Management
FINA 6.00 – Employee Payroll	Employee Payroll
FINA 6.01 – Payroll Overpayments	N/A
FINA 6.11 – Employee Housing	N/A



- Only reasonable travel expenses that comply with this policy and are supported by appropriate documentation will be reimbursed.
- University travel only encompasses travel more than 10 miles from the traveler's official headquarters (e.g., attending trainings, conference, or professional meetings).
- Individuals traveling on University business are expected to exercise discretion when making travel arrangements and expenditures.





Travelers must adhere to the following requirements:

- Excessive costs and luxury accommodations must be avoided.
- Expenses must be supported by appropriate documentation.
- Transportation to and from business destinations should be by the most economical method available.
- Personal use of frequent flyer miles or credit card points earned from University business travel should be used to defray the costs associated with subsequent University travel.
- Sharing the same bedroom or sleep space is <u>strictly prohibited</u> when a power differential exists between travelers (see University Policy <u>UNIV 2.10</u>).



 Travel Authorizations (TA) must be completed and fully approved before travel occurs in the following circumstances:







South Carolina

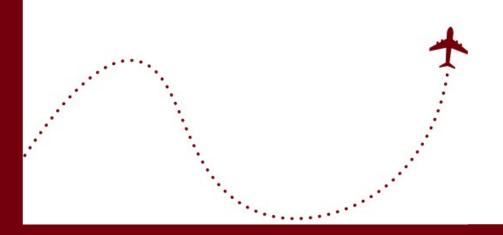
- Departments will determine the appropriateness of travel and the extent to which travel expenses will be defrayed by the University.
- Reimbursement to employees for incurred expenses cannot occur until after the travel is complete.

Common travel expense types include:

Airfare	Must be in economy seating, except where emergencies or availability restrictions occur which require exception from the University Controller.
Ground Transportation	Rental cars, personal vehicle mileage, ridesharing, car allowance or courtesy car.
Meals	Standard per diem reimbursement based on the days of travel and the times of departure and return.
Lodging	Actual lodging expenses up to a maximum base per day.  Home sharing accommodation is reimbursable only if supported by appropriate receipts.



- Request and approval for travel reimbursements occur electronically through the PeopleSoft Finance system.
- This policy is not intended to apply to travel reimbursements for non-University employees.
  - Use the policy as a guideline for non-employee travel unless a contractual agreement specifies otherwise.





- Refer to the procedure for travel expenditure account codes.
- If applicable travel occurs without a Travel Authorization (TA), a justifying memo
  of explanation <u>must</u> be prepared, approved by the employee and Department
  Head, and attached to the reimbursement request.
- TAs should be completed and approved through the PeopleSoft Finance Travel and Expense Modules.
  - Employees: Main Menu > Employee Self Service > Travel and Expense > Travel
     Authorizations
  - Students and Non-Employees: Main Menu > USC Finance eForms > Student/Non-Employee Travel eForm



- Refer to the <u>Travel Checklist</u> to ensure travel expenditures are supported by proper itemized receipts.
- Awarding agencies may have more stringent receipt requirements for sponsored awards.

#### **Airfare**

- Preferred method of payment is a University Travel Card.
- Air carriers must be selected based on cost and time criteria rather than opportunities to earn frequent flyer points/other rewards.

#### Mileage

- Current IRS standard mileage rate is 70 cents per mile
- Current courtesy car rate is 37 cents per mile

#### Meals

- Receipts are not required for meals.
- One-day meal reimbursements are prohibited.
- Reimbursement based on the days of travel and the times of departure and return.

Per Diem Meal Allowance			
Meal	In-State	Out-of-State	
Breakfast	\$8.00	\$10.00	
Lunch	\$10.00	\$15.00	
Dinner	\$17.00	\$25.00	
All Meals	\$35.00	\$50.00	

Day of Departure		Day of Return	
Time of Departure	Meals Reimbursed	Time of Return	Meals Reimbursed
Before 6:30am	All Meals	Before 11:00am	None
6:31am - 11:00am	Lunch & Dinner	11:00am – 1:30pm	Breakfast Only
11:01am - 5:15pm	Dinner Only	1:31pm – 8:30pm	Breakfast & Lunch
After 5:15pm	None	After 8:30pm	All Meals



#### Lodging

- Reimbursed up to a maximum of \$441.14 per day, per person.
- Lodging is not prepaid. If the hotel requires prepayment, the University can pay the hotel directly through Payment Requests or the Travel Card for employees and students only.

#### Miscellaneous Expenses

- Receipts only required for expenses of \$25 or greater.
- Examples include:

Allowable	Non-Allowable
Baggage charges, parking fees, official telephone calls, airport shuttles, tolls, reasonable tips	Movies, bar bills, laundry, room service, health/spa fees, other entertainment and personal charges



#### **Reimbursement Requests**

- Submit after the trip is complete, within 7 days of return.
- If the trip includes both personal and business travel, only business travel dates and expenses should be included.
- Employees: Submit Expense Report through the PeopleSoft Finance Travel and Expense Module.
- Students/Non-Employees: Submit Travel Reimbursement Voucher (TRV) through the Student/Non-Employee Travel eForm.





#### **Travel Advances**

- Payments issued to advance funds to an individual for official University business travel, typically for student travel.
- Can only be issued 10 days prior to the travel and must be settled within 7 business days of return.
- No advances are authorized for travel within South Carolina, unless related to student athletic activities.
- Advances may be issued for up to 70% of the total estimated lodging and meal expenses.



#### **Travel Advances**

The <u>Travel Advance Form</u> must be completed and attached.

Employees: Requested through the PeopleSoft Finance Travel and Expense Module.

Students: Must be set up as a supplier in the Supplier Self-Service Portal, with the departmental proxy submitting a Payment Request.

• In the event an advance is not settled, the Controller's Office may deduct outstanding balances from the employee's next payroll or place a charge on the student's account with the Bursar's Office.





- The University may elect to reimburse, or pay on behalf of, an employee for relocation expenses within the stated maximum limitations and restrictions.
- All such expenses must be reasonable, necessary, and as economical as possible.
- Employer-paid relocation expenses are taxable to the employee and will be reported as taxable income, with appropriate taxes withheld accordingly.
- Refer to the policy for detailed examples of reimbursable vs. non-reimbursable relocation expenses.



#### **Eligibility**

The following conditions must be met:

- 1. One Year of Employment
- 2. Full-Time Salaried Position
- 3. At the University's Request: The relocation must be for the good of the University, rather than the convenience of the employee.
- 4. Established in the Payroll System: Only authorized for active employees, not those in an "applicant" status.
- 5. Relocation Agreement: Must be completed <u>prior</u> to receiving any payment.





#### **Relocation Agreement**

- The employee must complete and execute a Relocation Agreement with the University prior to receiving any reimbursement or direct payment.
- The Relocation Agreement requires signature from the employee, departmental authorized approvers, and the University Controller.
- The agreement must be signed by all parties during the onboarding process the details must be included in the employee's offer letter.
- The Relocation Agreement, along with a copy of the offer letter, must be sent to the Controller's Office at <u>relocation@sc.edu</u>.
- Failure to remain employed for one year will trigger the employee's duty to repay the amount reimbursed or paid (on a prorated basis).



#### **Reimbursement Rules and Guidelines**

- The new employee's place of residence must be outside of South Carolina and the University must demonstrate that paying such costs is necessary to fill the position.
- Reimbursements are limited to actual costs incurred, up to the amount agreed upon by the department and employee.
- If departments choose to compensate employees for moving expenses, they must do so within their own budgets.
  - Sponsored awards (e.g., federal grant/award) can be used <u>only</u> if such expenses are authorized by the underlying award.



## FINA 2.51 Procedure – Relocation Allowance

#### **Relocation Expenses**

- The actual costs paid for transportation of the employee, and their immediate family are eligible for reimbursement.
- If the trip includes both personal and business travel, only business travel dates and expenses should be included in the reimbursement request.
- All expenses must be supported by original, itemized receipts.
- The hiring department and the Controller's Office reserve the right to assess the validity and reasonableness of expenses prior to reimbursement.





## FINA 2.51 Procedure – Relocation Allowance

#### **Employee Responsibilities**

- Submitting original, itemized receipts.
- Assisting the hiring department in completing the <u>Relocation Request</u> Form.
- Submitting claims for reimbursement to the Controller's Office within 30 days of moving.
- Making all moving arrangements.
- Remaining an employee of the University on a full-time basis for at least one year.

#### **Hiring Department Responsibilities**

- Establishing monetary limits.
- Initiating the Relocation Agreement approval process during onboarding.
- Ensuring the Relocation Agreement is fully executed <u>prior</u> to the employee's move.
- Completing/submitting the <u>Relocation</u> <u>Request Form</u>, along with receipts and supporting documentation to the Controller's Office.



## FINA 7.00 – Capital Planning



## FINA 7.00 – Capital Planning

The University, through its Board of Trustees, makes ongoing strategic capital investments in academic, student life, athletic, housing, parking, and other facilities. Capital projects use various funding sources to include bonds, appropriations, reserves, and donations.

All capital planning activities must coincide with the other strategic priorities of the University and follow established prioritization and approval processes.



## FINA 2.80 Procedure – Capital Planning

- While the Controller's Office owns FINA 2.80 and manages certain parts of the capital planning process, such as bond issuance, the Controller's Office does not establish the strategic priorities of the University or evaluate capital planning requests.
- The procedure will include detail regarding involved external parties, prioritization guidelines, and the basic steps of the bond issuance process.
- Units/departments with space needs submit those requests to the Space Needs and Planning (SNAP) Committee for evaluation through the <u>USC Space Request</u> Form.
- The University completes a review with both Moody's Investors Services and Fitch Ratings see the latest <u>Annual Bond Indebtedness Report</u> for credit ratings.



## FINA 2.82 – Asset Management



## FINA 2.82 – Asset Management

## Legal Authority

 SC Code of Law requires personal property to be inventoried annually.

## Ownership and Title

 Ownership of all equipment acquired by the University, through acquisition or transfer, rests with the University.

## Custody and Control

- Equipment accountability will be vested with the department in possession of the equipment.
- All departments should appoint an individual responsible for equipment, including disposals, transfers, and physical security.



## FINA 2.82 – Asset Management

#### Responsibilities

- The Controller's Office maintains detailed asset records and coordinates property tagging and the annual asset inventory.
- Assets should only be used for University business and must remain on official premises.
- Disposals must be initiated at the department level and coordinated with Consolidated Services and the Controller's Office.
- All state property purchased with state funds must flow through the State's surplus process.
- Responsible parties who do not comply with the assets management policies and procedures are subject to personal liability.



# FINA 2.82 Procedure – Asset Management

#### **Acquisition**

 Asset purchased for > \$5,000 with a useful life exceeding one year must be considered a capital asset (56XXX Account). Exceptions include:



All firearms and works of art, regardless of cost

- Asset number is automatically assigned to an item based on the voucher information in PeopleSoft Finance.
- Once a tag is received from the Asset Management Team, departments must promptly affix it and submit pictures to the Asset Management Team at <a href="mailto:PHYSINV@mailbox.sc.edu">PHYSINV@mailbox.sc.edu</a>.



# FINA 2.82 Procedure – Asset Management

#### **Inventory**

- Annual inventories should not represent the only time departmental asset management and monitoring occurs.
- All departments must designate a Point of Contact for asset management and inventory.
- The annual inventory process typically runs from March to May.
  - Asset Management Team will communicate specific deadlines to departments based on inventory size.
- Assets must be verified, reviewed, and approved in PeopleSoft Finance during the annual inventory process.





# FINA 2.82 Procedure – Asset Management

#### **Disposal**

- Assets may not be traded-in, donated, sold, salvaged, scrapped, or otherwise disposed
  of without proper prior approval.
- Refer to the procedure for the steps for each disposal method:

Method	Description
Transferred	Moved to another department within the University
Consolidated	Sent to Consolidated Services to scrap, sell, or donate
Lost or Stolen	No longer in possession due to loss or theft
Destroyed	No longer in possession because it is beyond repair
Cannibalized	No longer in possession because it was dismantled and used for parts



# FINA 2.82 Procedure – Asset Management

#### **Other Transfers**

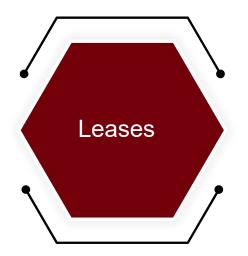
- Transfers to <u>another state agency or other external entity</u> should be coordinated through the Purchasing's Consolidated Services division.
- When equipment is purchased with sponsored award funding, transfers to a new Principal Investigator institution require proactive coordination with Grants & Funds Management (GFM) and the Office of Sponsored Awards Management (SAM).
  - The transfer must comply with the terms and conditions of the award and sponsor approval, as applicable.

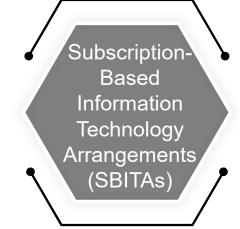


# FINA 2.82 Procedure – Asset Management

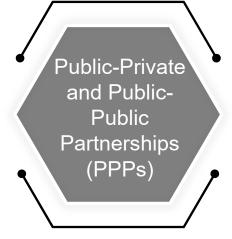
#### **Other Asset Management Considerations**

- The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) has established standards for accounting for certain agreements recognized as "right-to-use" assets.
- These assets are not inventoriable but must be appropriately accounted for and recorded.
- Refer to the procedure for definitions and required processes for the following arrangements:













- Significant restructuring occurred for the Payroll section during the policy/procedure update effort.
- Payroll for all University employees is processed centrally by the Payroll Team at the Columbia campus.

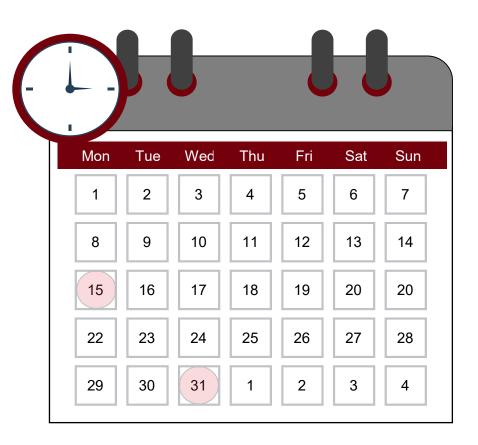


- The Payroll Team processes and distributes payments to employees based on documentation that is provided and authorized by the Division of Human Resources and/or departmental HR personnel.
- The policy update consolidates topics previously covered in former policies:
  - FINA 6.03 (Payroll Frequency)
  - FINA 6.06 (Payroll Checks Items Withheld)
  - FINA 6.09 (Distribution of Payroll Statements of Electronic Deposit and Payroll Checks)
  - FINA 8.01 (Payroll Authorizations to Internationals)



#### Pay Schedule & Frequency

- Paychecks are issued on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the last day of the month.
  - Faculty with 9-month appointments will be paid accordingly, receiving 18 equal semi-monthly paychecks.
- Advance payments are prohibited. The only exception is an early paycheck distributed in December due to the holiday schedule.





#### **Mandatory Items Withheld**



Federal and State Income Taxes



FICA Taxes (e.g., Social Security and Medicare)



Retirement Contributions (e.g., SC Retirement System, Police Officers Retirement System, or State Optional Retirement Program)



Federal and State Tax Liens



**Family Court Orders** 

#### **Optional Items Withheld**

vision, dental, life insurance, long-term disability, medical spending account, etc.)
Supplemental Insurance Benefits (e.g., short-term disability, critical illness, etc.)
Supplemental Retirement Plan Contributions (e.g., 403(b), 457(b), etc.)
Various University-related voluntary deductions

(e.g., parking, fitness center membership, etc.)

Elective Benefit Deductions (e.g., health,



#### **International Employees**

- After hiring and verification through the Division of Human Resources and International Student Support Services, payroll payments are issued following the same standard processes used for domestic employees.
- The Payroll Team coordinates with international employees regarding required tax withholdings.

#### **Tax Forms**

- The Payroll Team issues Form W-2s to employees annually for tax reporting purposes (by January 31<sup>st</sup>).
- The appropriate consent form must be completed by the employee to receive their Form W-2
  electronically, which is strongly encouraged and preferred.
- For international individuals, a Form 1042-S is issued by the Tax Team (by March 15<sup>th</sup>).



#### **Social Security Numbers**

- Federal law requires eligible employees to furnish their Social Security Number (SSN) during the hiring process and prior to employment.
- The University uses SSNs for tax reporting purposes only – an internal employee ID is assigned and used for identification purposes.

#### **Time and Absence Reporting**

- Timesheets <u>must</u> be completed by non-exempt employees daily and submitted weekly.
- All employees, including both exempt and nonexempt leave-earning employees, are required to record their absences (e.g., annual leave, sick leave, etc.) in the University's timekeeping system in a prompt manner.

#### **Direct Deposit**

- All University employees must enroll in direct deposit.
- Paper paychecks will be issued until the automated verification of bank account information occurs.

#### **Work Outside South Carolina**

Any employee working outside of SC <u>must</u>
 ensure their state of employment is accurate and
 up to date in the payroll system.

### FINA 6.00 Procedure – Employee Payroll

#### **Employment Abroad**

Any international appointment (employee working abroad) requires special approval from the University Controller and must be time-limited.

#### **Approval Process**

- 1. Complete: Request for Employment Outside the U.S. form
- 2. Submit: Email signed form to payroll@mailbox.sc.edu
  - Must be signed by Dean or Dean-level authority
  - Form is available on the last page of the procedure

#### **Review and Decision**

- Payroll Team reviews for completeness
- Forwards to University Controller for final review
- Approval is not guaranteed

#### **Next Steps**

- If approved: Form is returned for upload with hire form
- If **denied**: Payroll Team will notify department
- Approved cases are recorded and taxed accordingly



### FINA 6.01 – Payroll Overpayments



### FINA 6.01 – Payroll Overpayments

- The purpose of this policy is to define the process for identifying and resolving payroll overpayments to University employees.
- Overpayments represent payment that exceeds the amount due, which is strictly prohibited by SC Code of Law Section 8-11-30.
- While uncommon, overpayments occasionally occur due to errors in processing or untimely or inaccurate submissions.



## FINA 6.01 – Payroll Overpayments Responsibilities

#### **Employee**

- Review

   paychecks
   promptly to
   ensure no
   discrepancies
   in pay occur.
- Immediately notify departmental HR contact of any issues.

#### **Department**

- Ensure timely and accurate completion and submission of information related to the authorization of salary payments, including hiring, absence management, and separation.
- Monitor and promptly identify and report any overpayments to the Controller's Office Payroll Team and the Division of Human Resources (DHR).
- Review the circumstances leading to overpayments to identify corrective action.
- Departments <u>are not</u> authorized to forgive or overlook payroll overpayments.

#### **Central Administration**

Division of Human Resources

 Identify the rationale and cause of the overpayment and notify the Payroll Team.

#### Payroll Team

 Confirm the overpayment and repayment amount and facilitate notification and collection efforts with the employee.



### FINA 6.01 – Payroll Overpayments

#### **Notification of Payroll Overpayment**

- An official notification letter is prepared by the Payroll Team and sent to the current/former employee, Department Chair/Director, and the Division of Human Resources (DHR).
- A concurrent letter is also issued to the Vice President or Dean of the affected department.
- If overpayments occur repeatedly without correction within a particular unit/department, DHR and the Payroll Team will arrange subsequent measures to work toward an acceptable resolution and mitigation plan.

#### **Repayment of Payroll Overpayment**

- The employee is obligated to repay the payroll overpayment <u>immediately upon receipt</u>. It is imperative for overpayments to be settled within the calendar year of occurrence.
- If repayment is not received after 60 days, it is subject to referral to a collection's agency.
- For separated employees, the Payroll Team will reduce the annual leave payout balance to account for overpayments in their final paycheck.

South Carolina

### FINA 6.11 – Employee Housing



### FINA 6.11 – Employee Housing

The purpose of this policy is to define the requirements and restrictions with furnishing housing to employees.

The University **does not** routinely provide housing to employees.

In these rare cases, the employee will be required to accept such housing as a condition of employment.

When the on-site presence of an employee is deemed necessary to meet programmatic requirements, the University <u>may</u> provide adequate housing for the required employee on its premises.



### FINA 6.11 – Employee Housing

#### **Taxability**

Housing furnished to employees is considered a fringe benefit and the fair market value of the housing may be taxable to the employee.

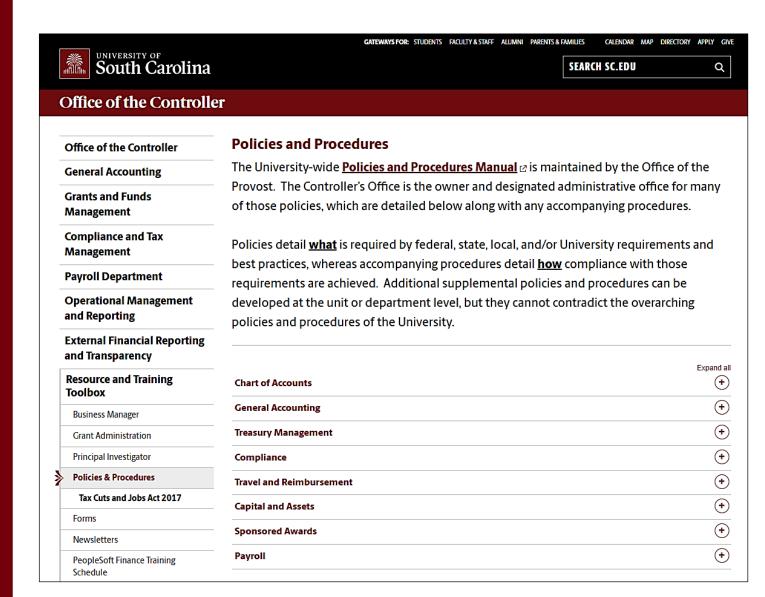
To be **excluded** from taxable income, the following conditions must be met (per the IRS):

- 1. The furnished housing is on the University's premises.
- 2. The housing is furnished to the employee for the convenience of the University, meaning there must be a business purpose for providing the housing.
- Living on campus is a required condition of employment.



# Training and Communication

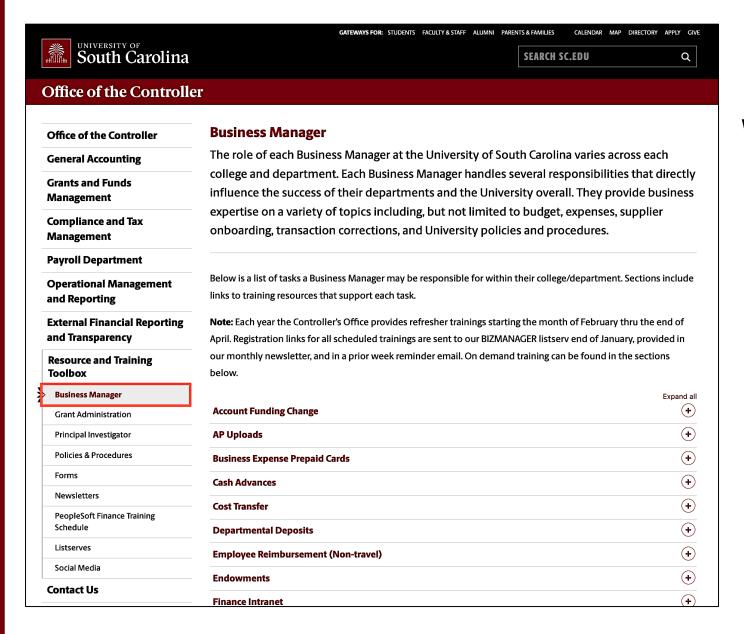




## Where to Find the Resources

For Policy and
Procedure resources,
visit the Policies and
Procedures page found
in the Resource and
Training Toolbox section.





## Where to Find the Resources

For training resources, visit our Business

Manager page in the Resource and Training Toolbox section.



## Questions



### **Controller's Office Contact List**

General Accounting (JEs, JVs, Apex, GL issues/Questions)	Email Address
General Email Address	genacctg@mailbox.sc.edu
Cash Advance Settlement	cashadvc@mailbox.sc.edu
Payroll Retro Journal Entries	retroje@mailbox.sc.edu
Chartfield Maintenance	cfmaint@mailbox.sc.edu
Relocation Mailbox	relocation@sc.edu
PeopleSoft Finance Security Requests	pssecure@mailbox.sc.edu
Accounts Payable	Email Address
General Email Address	ap@mailbox.sc.edu
AP Uploads	apupload@mailbox.sc.edu
Supplier Maintenance	apsupplr@mailbox.sc.edu
Travel Office	Email Address
General Email Address	teoffice@mailbox.sc.edu
Student/Non-employee Travel Authorizations and Travel Reimbursement Vouchers	tesubmit@mailbox.sc.edu

### **Controller's Office Contact List**

Capital Assets	Email Address
Physical Inventory	physinv@mailbox.sc.edu
Capital Leases	lease@sc.edu
Cash Management and Treasury	Email Address
General Treasury Email Address	treasury@mailbox.sc.edu
Program Expense Card	cards@mailbox.sc.edu
Team Card	teamcard@mailbox.sc.edu
Travel Card	travelcard@sc.edu
Compliance and Tax	Email Address
General Compliance Email Address	controllercompliance@sc.edu
General Tax Email Address	tax@mailbox.sc.edu
Research/Development Sales/Use Tax Exemptions	rdequip@mailbox.sc.edu
Time and Effort Reporting	timeandeffort@sc.edu

### **Controller's Office Contact List**

Grants and Funds Management	Email Address
Sponsored Award Specific Questions	Contact your Post Award Accountant (PAA)
Payroll	Email Address
General Email Account	payroll@mailbox.sc.edu



## THANK YOU!



Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much.

#### Office of the Controller



#### **Address:**

1600 Hampton Street Columbia, SC 29208



#### **Contact Number:**

Phone: 803-777-2602 Fax: 803-777-9586



#### **Email Address:**

controller@sc.edu



