Reconciling Prepaid Travel Expenses

Air and hotel reservations are booked via a designated travel agency (DTA) like Egencia. These prepaid travel reservations must be reconciled in Chrome River. Reconciliation is a process by which IU travelers or their arrangers match requested travel with the actual expenses incurred on IU accounts after booking. There may be discrepancies between the requested travel and the booked travel. Reconciling these expenses allows the report creator to substantiate these differences for approval.

IU prepaid travel expenses (such as lodging or airfare booked in Egencia) generate credit card entries in the traveler’s Chrome River eWallet equal to the dollar amount spent on the reservation. Prepaid expenses should be reconciled as soon as they are available in the eWallet, ideally before the trip. **Prepaid expenses must be reconciled within 120 days to avoid tax implications to the traveler.**

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Import a Pre-Approval Report to your Expense Report

After your pre-approval (PA) report is approved and prepaid travel expenses are available in your eWallet, import the pre-approval report details to an expense report. This auto-populates many of the required fields on the expense report, including the specific expenses estimated on the PA.

First, initiate a new expense report. Click + New in the upper right corner, then select New Expense Report.

Click Import Pre-Approval.

Travel guidance related to COVID-19 is available on the Travel website. COVID guidance is mandatory.
On the next screen, click the drop-down menu titled **Select a pre-approval report.** Click on the pre-approval report you wish to import to your expense report.

Details from the PA report will populate in the right-hand window. Click **Import.**

All trip information from the pre-approval report import onto the new expense report automatically. These lines can be edited or deleted after they appear on the expense report.
Reconcile Prepaid Travel Expenses

Before you can begin reconciling, Chrome River requires two additional fields to be completed: **COVID-19 Related Cost** and **Business Purpose**.

A COVID-19 Related Cost is any expense made necessary by the pandemic and which would not have occurred otherwise. For travel, these are primarily canceled trip costs and medical/humanitarian missions, COVID-preparedness/inspections, educators training schools on eLearning, etc. Marking **Yes** for the **COVID-19 related cost** question opens a **Description** field. In the **Description** field, explain the COVID-19 related cost.

In the **Business Purpose** field, explain how the trip serves IU’s mission. The **Business Purpose** field offers ample space to explain the reason for your trip; **do not use acronyms in this field**. “Representing IU at National Association of Education Procurement (NAEP) annual conference,” is an example of a Business Purpose.

When all required fields are filled, click **Save** in the upper right corner.
On the next screen, click **Credit Card** to locate the prepaid expenses in your eWallet.

Your prepaid expenses populate in the right-hand window.

**Airfare**

When airfare is booked using a DTA, a prepaid credit card expense equal to the amount of the purchase is added to the expense owner’s eWallet. **Click and Drag** the prepaid expense from the right-hand window to the associated PA line item on the left.

As your mouse hovers over the line item in the left-hand window, it will change to say, “**Attach to Line Item.**” Release the mouse to drop the prepaid expense onto the associated expense line.

A data entry validation warning appears at the top of the next page. To resolve this, fill out additional details about the flight reservation, including the **trip dates, airline, class of fare, travel agency** (in most cases this will be Egencia), and
departure airport. Airports are listed in alphabetical order of the airport code. The airport code for Indianapolis International Airport is IND.

To find reservation details, contact the travel agency used to book the flight, or log into Egencia and click Trips at the top of the page. All the necessary information is on the receipt.

When all required fields are complete, click Save in the upper right corner.
After clicking Save, you should see a green checkmark next to the expense in the left-hand window. This indicates the expense has been reconciled. To reconcile more expenses, click the **white plus sign** at the top of the left-hand window.

Visit the [Resolving Discrepancies section](#) of this document to learn how to document differences in price between PA and eWallet amounts.

**$5 Egencia Airline Booking Fee**

All Egencia air reservations generate a $5 booking fee expense, which appear as lodging fees, in your eWallet.

Change the expense type by clicking the **drop-down button** on the $5 expense in your eWallet. Select the **Air Travel** mosaic. A submenu opens. Select the **Other - Air Travel** drawer.
On the next screen, check the box in the upper right corner of the $5 expense. Click Add in the upper right corner of the eWallet.

Chrome River prompts you to complete two required fields. In the Business Purpose field, enter “$5 Egencia booking fee.” In the Allocation field, enter the account funding the travel. Click Save in the upper right corner.

The $5 expense will move from the eWallet into the expense report on the left.
Hotel

When lodging is booked using a DTA, a prepaid credit card expense equal to the amount of the purchase is added to the expense owner’s eWallet. The expense in the eWallet is a lump sum representing the nightly rate plus taxes & fees found in the Credit Card section.

In the expense report, access the eWallet by clicking the white plus sign. Click on the Credit Card tab. Click and Drag the prepaid expense from the right-hand window to the associated PA line item on the left. As your mouse hovers over the line item in the left-hand window, it will change to say, “Attach to Line Item.” Release the mouse to drop the prepaid expense onto the associated expense line.

A “Data entry validation” warning will appear at the top of the next page. To resolve this, enter the check-in and check-out dates of your stay. Select the hotel name from the Hotel dropdown list and enter the city and state of the lodging. Additional fields are optional, but may be required by your department.

Click Save at the top of the page.
The expense appears in the left-hand window of the expense report. Prepaid lodging reconciliation is complete when a green check mark displays on the expense line as shown in the image below. The “Pay Me Amount” should be $0.00.

If there are any other lodging related expenses which were prepaid by IU, repeat the process until all prepaid costs are itemized and display green check marks next to them.
Visit the Resolving Discrepancies section of this document to learn how to document differences in price between PA and eWallet amounts. To reconcile more expenses, click the white plus sign at the top of the left-hand window.

“Other” Imported Expenses

The Other tile on PA reports is a flexible catch-all expense tile. As part of prepaid expense reconciliation, these imported Other expenses need to be edited and assigned a more accurate expense tile, or deleted and reconciled or reimbursed separately.

Reconciling “Other” Expenses

To reconcile an Other expense, begin by changing the expense type to a more specific tile. Click on the Other Misc expense in the left-hand window. The expense opens in the right-hand window. Click Edit in the upper right corner.

The Other expense tile turns into a clickable drop-down menu. Select the expense tile that most accurately describes the Other expense.

In the example below, we change the Other expense to an airline baggage fee by clicking the expense tile, followed the Air Travel mosaic, and then the Airline - Baggage Fee drawer.

Update or fill out any missing information on the next page and click Save in the upper right corner.
Handling Multiple Other Expenses Imported as One Lump Expense

If you combined multiple prepaid Other expenses in a single Other expense line on your PA, they must be separated during the reconciliation. Separate out each expense by adding new expense lines for each until all prepaid amounts are reconciled.

**Remember:** expenses like per diem and mileage will be reimbursed *after* the trip.

Follow the instructions in the Reconciling “Other” Expenses section of this document to reconcile one of the expenses. **Change the Spent Amount** to reflect the amount of the individual expense you’re reconciling.

In the example below, the total Other amount imported from the PA is $200. We’ve changed the Spent amount to $50. Click **save**. The expense in the left-hand window will update to reflect the new expense type and amount.

Next, create a new expense line by clicking the **white plus sign** at the top of the left-hand window.

On the expense tile screen, select the tile that matches the expense you’re reconciling. Fill out any missing information and click **Save** in the upper right corner.
To reconcile more expenses, click the **white plus sign** at the top of the left-hand window. Visit the [Resolving Discrepancies section](#) of this document to learn how to document differences in price between PA and eWallet amounts.

**Deleting “Other” Expenses**

If your PA imported Other items that will be reimbursed after the trip such as mileage or per diem, delete these expenses. You will be able to import them again later by following the steps in the [Import a Pre-Approval](#) section of this document.

Click on the **Other Misc** expense in the left-hand window. The expense opens in the right-hand window. Click **Delete** in the upper right corner as shown in the screenshot below.

A popup will confirm that you want to delete the expense. Click **delete**. The expense disappears from your expense report.

**Resolving Discrepancies**

If there is a discrepancy between a cost estimated on your PA and the actual expense in your eWallet, you can still **drag & drop** from the eWallet as normal. However, you must **log a comment** explaining the discrepancy.

In the example below, we estimated $50 for Taxi/Shuttle on the PA, as shown in the left-hand window of the expense report. As shown in the eWallet on the right-hand side, the prepaid reservation ended up costing $98.
After attaching the eWallet expense to the PA line, a data entry validation warning appears. The **Spent** amount automatically updates to reflect the actual cost of the expense. Fill out any missing information. In this example, we’ll specify the **Vendor**, such as Uber/Lyft, Limo, Taxi etc. in the dropdown menu.

Document the discrepancy by scrolling to the bottom of the expense and logging a **Comment**. The following are examples of discrepancy explanations:

- “Discrepancy: flight price increased between PA submission and approval”
- “Discrepancy: hotel room downgraded from king bed to double queen.”

In this example, we’ve entered “Discrepancy: Accidentally estimated one-way ($50) on PA. Forgot to include round trip. Expense now reflects round trip cost ($98).” Attach any substantiation required by your department in the attachments section. Click **Post**, then **Save**.
The comment becomes part of the audit record for that expense. In the left-hand window, the **Spent** amount changes to reflect the new amount. The green checkmark indicates the expense is reconciled.

The discrepancy is documented, and the expense is reconciled. To reconcile more expenses, click the **white plus sign** at the top of the left-hand window.

**Submitting the Expense Report**

Repeat the **Drag and Drop** matching process until a green check mark appears next to all line items. The “Total Pay Me Amount” should be $0.00 as shown below because all reconciled expenses were prepaid by IU.

If you have unreconciled expenses, Chrome River assumes the expense was paid for out of pocket and the “Total Pay Me Amount” will equal the cost of the unreconciled transactions. Ensure all prepaid costs have been reconciled, and any out of pocket expenses are deleted until $0.00 displays in the “Total Pay Me Amount.” Out of pocket expenses are reimbursed in a separate expense report after the trip.
When all items are reconciled, click Submit.

Chrome River prompts you to confirm that all expenses are correct to the best of your knowledge and for legitimate business purposes. If this is true, click Submit again to submit the report.