

The U. S. Department of Education authorizes: *An allowance for ... and, at the discretion of the school, costs incurred in traveling to a residency interview for a medical student. Under this provision, the costs must be incurred during (not after) a period of enrollment, even if the exam is after the end of the period.*

FSA Handbook, Vol 3, Ch 2, p 3-35(emphasis added).

Each year a generous allowance for transportation is included for the fourth year medical school student. This amount covers the equivalent of 7,629 miles driven for educational purposes over 11 months at the current IRS mileage rate, plus an allowance for Step 2 travel based on an average of travel costs for all locations. Because of the competitive nature of residency interviews, there may be circumstances where additional funds may be justified. These guidelines will help students and staff understand the proper steps for requesting and reporting on such budget increase requests.

Student responsibilities:

1. Keep a mileage log for all educational travel expenses during year 4 (to and from rotations, classes, study groups, etc.). Document with Googlemaps or similar app.
2. Carefully assess your interview needs and prepare a list of potential sites. Use the availability of rooms provided by interview sites where possible. Plan circuit routes which will allow you to travel by air or car to an area and cover many interviews on one trip. Plan for safe but economical lodging. Students may include residency application fees but these will be subject to program approval as to reasonableness.
3. Confer with your program about the reasonableness of your plan.
 - a. If you are asking for more than a \$2,500 increase, the Vice Dean of Medical Education must approve the reasonableness of your request.
 - b. If your initial request is \$2,500 and you return for additional funds, you must provide detailed receipts (lodging, travel and food) for documented interviews and complete the steps for an increase greater than \$2,500. This must be completed before additional adjustments can be made.
 - c. If you determine you need an increase greater than \$2,500, use the Residency Interview Travel Template (online) documenting the locations of your projected (or completed) interviews, reasonable economy round trip travel (air, train, ground transportation and/or automobile), the GSA (www.gsa.gov/perdiem) per diem for lodging and meals. Send template to FA electronically.
 - d. Submit your information a **minimum of 3 weeks prior** to the time you anticipate needing funds.
4. If approved, you should keep detailed receipts of how funds are spent, even if only requesting \$2,500.
5. If approved for more than \$2,500 increase in transportation in advance, your funding will be released in thirds.
 - a. Complete a voucher and provide receipts for first release.
 - b. Once audited by FA staff, the additional third of funding will be released.
 - c. Repeat process for final third of funding.

6. If you are requesting post interview, detailed receipts organized by interview must be provided to FA with request. Funds will be released based on required regulations. If in final term, may be released in full at time of approval.

FA responsibilities:

1. Counsel with student regarding current aggregate debt, current monthly payment and what the aggregate and payment would be if the amount requested is approved.
2. Confirm student has fully completed and provided required documentation for review of travel increase.
3. If amount requested is \$2,500 or less, FA staff may review and approve in office and proceed to process budget and loan increase as requested. Funds must be divided as required by regulation.
4. If request is for more than \$2,500:
 - a. verify completeness of information provided,
 - b. check GSA per diem rates and travel allowances
 - c. seek an appointment with Vice Dean to confirm reasonableness of student's request and the Vice Dean's signature (or Vice Dean's designee).
5. If approved by Vice Dean, initiate release of first third of approved amount.
6. The formula for calculating approved amount is:
 - a. Total requested, subject to confirmation by Vice Dean of Medical Education.
 - b. Subtract transportation allowance included in original COA budget unless receipts provided for how expended thus far.
 - c. Amount approved can be up to \$10,000 over original COA transportation allowance.
7. Promptly review submitted vouchers for completeness and accuracy and release next installment of approved amount.

Vice Dean of Medical Education (or designee) will:

1. Meet with student concerning plan, if requested.
2. Review submitted request and documentation from FA.
3. Confirm reasonableness of student's need for number and locations of interviews based on knowledge of
 - a. Area of interest
 - b. Competitiveness of residency interview process in that field
 - c. Student's individual needs in order to be successful in matching
4. Promptly return signed request form to FA indicating approval, recommended reduction or not approved.

The goal is to assist students in achieving a successful match while helping the student control overall indebtedness.