Advanced Purchase FAQs

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What is an Advanced Purchase?

An Advanced Purchase is any airfare or hotel expense that is brought into an eBERF and reimbursed before the trip is completed. An Advanced Purchase can be incurred on the Travel Card or on an employee’s personal credit card.

The Advanced Purchase option in the eBERF system is only available for two expense items: Airfare and Hotel.

Why does UM track Advanced Airfare and Hotel Purchases?

Though other expenses can be added to an eBERF before the trip is taken, UM only systematically tracks advanced airfare and hotel expenses. Because the expense is a pre-trip reimbursement, the University tracks it to make sure the trip was taken and the Advanced Purchase was used. In some cases when a trip is not taken, the department may ask for the advanced funds to be refunded by the employee to the University.

What is the Advanced Purchase process, from start to finish?

With Advanced Purchases we actually need 2 eBERFs submitted:

1. Before the trip to request the Advanced Airfare or Hotel Purchase.
   
   *Outcome*
   
   - Departmental account is charged
   - Amount is paid
     - If Paid By Employee, the amount will be reimbursed to the employee
     - If Paid By Travel Card, the amount will be sent to US Bank
2. After the trip, (1) reconcile the Advanced Purchase and (2) request reimbursement for the other applicable trip expenses.

**Outcome**
- The selected Advanced Purchase is cleared.
- The Advanced Purchase Warning message won’t appear on future eBERFs.
- The other expenses entered will be charged to the departmental account and either (1) reimbursed to the employee or (2) paid to US Bank.

How do I request an Advanced Purchase?

To request an Advanced Purchase:

1. Once you have opened an eBERF and entered the Summary information, Click the **Add Items** tab.

![Add Items Tab](image)

```
To request an Advanced Purchase:

1. Once you have opened an eBERF and entered the Summary information, Click the **Add Items** tab.
```

2. Select either **Airfare** or **Hotel**, depending on the situation.

![Select Airfare or Hotel](image)

```
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```
3. Complete the required fields for the expense, i.e. transaction date, amount, etc.

4. Change the **Advanced Purchase** field to **Yes**.

   **Note:** Anytime an expense is marked “Yes” to being an Advanced Purchase (even if it’s in error), the system will treat the expense as an advance. You will be required to follow the Reconciliation process mentioned below.

5. Once all the required expense information is entered, click **Done**.

Once this eBERF is fully approved, the amount will be charged to the departmental account listed in the Accounting section and the reimbursement will be processed.
How do I reconcile an Advanced Purchase?

To reconcile an Advanced Purchase:

1. Complete all of the eBERF expense information. Then click **Continue**.

2. Click the **select** option for the Advanced Purchase Reconciliation field.

3. Check the box to the left of each of the advances that need to be reconciled. Then click **Done**.

![Summary screen with Advanced Purchase highlighted](image)

5. Complete your final eBERF review, making sure all required information has been provided. Then click **Submit**.

![Submit button highlighted](image)

6. Note: The Advanced Purchase Warning message will appear. Click **Submit** again.

![Warning message](image)

Once this eBERF is fully approved, the Advanced Purchase(s) will be removed from the pending list and from the Warning Message.
What if I forgot to reconcile the Advanced Purchase when I returned from my trip?

There is only one way to clear pending Advanced Purchases: reconcile them in an eBERF. So if you forgot to reconcile the advance on the trip’s follow up eBERF, then you’ll need to reconcile it on your next eBERF:

1. Create a new eBERF.
2. Enter the necessary expenses information for your reimbursement.
3. Before submitting, click the select link for the Advanced Purchase Reconciliation field.
4. Check the box to the left of each of the advances that need to be reconciled. The click Done.
5. In the Comments section, enter an explanation about the situation. Explain that the advance(s) should have been reconciled on a previous eBERF. Be sure to enter the appropriate eBERF number.
6. Click Submit.

What happens if I don’t reconcile the Advanced Purchase?

There is only one way to clear pending Advanced Purchases: reconcile them in an eBERF. So if you forgot to reconcile the advance on the trip’s follow up eBERF, then you’ll need to reconcile it on your next eBERF. If an advance is not reconciled, the system will generate a warning message whenever someone submits or approves one of your eBERFs. This warning serves as a reminder that there are outstanding Advanced Purchases that are waiting to be reconciled.

The only way to remove this warning message is to reconcile the outstanding Advanced Purchase(s) in an eBERF and have that eBERF fully approved.