



**TRAVEL POLICY
AND
PROCEDURES**

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ATTACHMENT A – Travel Request and Expense Report Procedure

TRAVEL POLICY

1.00 PURPOSE

To insure consistent application of expenses and reimbursements related to City approved travel and training, and to insure accountability and proper use of City funds.

2.00 POLICY

City employees, City Council and commission members, while traveling on City business, will be reimbursed for actual authorized and reasonable expenses as set forth in this policy. Travel and accommodations must be approved and arranged in accordance with departmental procedure and City policy.

2.01 Travel Request and Expense Report Required

A Travel Request and Expense Report form is required for all travel, with the exception of one-day travel. One-day travel is defined as travel not requiring overnight lodging.

2.02 Exceptions

ALL EXCEPTIONS to this travel policy must be approved by the City Manager or his/her designee. **Failure to obtain prior authorization for exceptions will cause the employee to be solely responsible for the unauthorized expenses.**

2.03 Travel Policy Acknowledgment

Every employee who travels must have a signed copy of the Travel Policy Acknowledgment on file with the individual in their Service Area who is responsible for making travel arrangements.

3.00 TRAVEL APPROVAL

3.01 One-Day Travel

One-day travel shall require prior approval from the Service Area Director and shall be reimbursed at actual expenses, not to exceed the established per diem rates. Original receipts will be required for reimbursement of one-day travel.

3.02 Advance Approval Required

Travel and overnight accommodations and associated costs to attend conventions, conferences, training seminars and similar meetings must be approved by the Service Area Director prior to the actual travel. Travel Requests for Service Area Directors, City Attorney and City Council members must be approved by the City Manager.

3.03 Expense Advances

To guarantee travel expenses in advance, the Finance Office must receive the demand(s) a minimum of two weeks prior to the event. Trip advances will be based on established per diem, lodging costs and other trip expenses approved by the Service Area Director.

3.04 Out-of-State Travel

Travel outside the State of California or the country requires special permission. When such travel is considered in the best interest of the City, specific approval must be obtained in advance from the requesting employee's Service Area Director and must be authorized and approved by the City Manager.

4.00 TRANSPORTATION

Non-exempt employees will be compensated, from the City offices to their destination and returning back to City offices, for travel time which falls outside of their assigned work schedule.

4.01 Selection of Mode of Travel

The most efficient mode of travel will be determined after considering the time involved and the cost of the alternative modes. The mode of travel which uses the City's resources most efficiently should be the first priority. When air fare is utilized, reservations should be made far enough in advance to take advantage of discount rates. When automobile travel is used as an alternative to air travel, the amount reimbursed will be based on the least expensive mode of travel. Available discounts in air travel, which were in effect at the time the travel arrangements were made, are to be considered when comparing the costs for reimbursement purposes.

4.02 Selection of Alternate Mode of Travel

If a City employee uses a private vehicle for travel to a conference or meeting, and is being reimbursed on the basis of the price of airfare, the cost of transportation to and from the originating and destination airports will be included as part of the cost to be reimbursed. This will be determined by applying the mileage reimbursement rate to the actual miles traveled or the actual cost of the public transportation. If the conference or activity is not at the place of lodging, the travel between the two locations will be reimbursed.

4.03 Use of Personal Vehicles: Proof of Insurance

Use of personal vehicles is discouraged. When a City vehicle is being utilized by one or more conference attendees within the same Service Area and room is available for additional passengers, all associated expenses (including mileage reimbursement) will **not** be allowed for other employees attending the same conference who could have car pooled. When travel by private automobile is utilized, reimbursement will be made at the currently approved per mile rate. Proof of insurance will be required prior to the authorization to use a private vehicle. Proof of insurance will be kept in a file in the affected employees' Service Area and will need to be updated upon expiration of the policy. Only one automobile allowance per automobile traveling will be authorized regardless of the number of persons traveling in the same vehicle. Car pooling is encouraged. **NOTE: According to City policy, only passengers approved by Service Area Directors are allowed in City vehicles.**

4.04 Refueling City Vehicles

When a City owned vehicle is utilized for out of town travel and it is anticipated that refueling will be required before returning, a city credit card should be obtained from the Finance Office or Service Area Director rather than purchasing the gasoline with a personal credit card or with cash.

4.05 Rental Cars

The request to utilize a rental car in lieu of public transportation should be made prior to leaving for the activity. The availability of other public and private means of transportation and their cost should be considered when determining the advantages of using a rental automobile. Automobile rental will be limited to the cost of compact or mid-size cars. Rental car reservations must be made prior to travel and any changes made by the employee which result in additional charges will be the **responsibility of the employee**. Employees

are directed **not** to purchase additional insurance offered by the rental car agency. If an employee chooses to purchase the additional insurance, the City will **not** reimburse the charges incurred for the insurance costs.

4.06 **Mileage Reimbursement Rate**

Mileage reimbursement will be calculated at the IRS Standard Mileage Rate in effect during the time of travel.

Employees who receive a monthly auto allowance and travel outside of a 25 mile radius of the City of Turlock will receive the IRS Standard Mileage Rate less 15 cents per mile (Example: IRS Rate – 40.9 cents per mile; employees with auto allowance will receive 25.9 cents per mile).

4.07 **Mileage Between Employee's Residence and Workplace**

There is no mileage reimbursement for travel between an employee's residence and the workplace. Mileage reimbursements are calculated from the employee's place of work to the specified destination.

5.00 **PER DIEM**

5.01 **Per Diem Policy**

The cost of meals, including a reasonable tip based on current tipping courtesy, is covered by the per diem allowance paid to the employee attending or traveling to or from conferences or meetings on behalf of the City. However, when the employee chooses to travel by vehicle rather than to fly, per diem will be allowed based on time required for air travel. "Reasonable" travel time is allowed before and after the conference or meeting. "Reasonable" arrival time at a conference/training would be no sooner than 30 minutes prior to the first official session or class.

5.02 **Per Diem Prorated**

Per diem will be calculated at the IRS Standard Rate in effect during the time of travel. ***(These rates will be reviewed annually and changes will go into effect on January 1st of each year.)***

Per diem allowance is paid in lieu of itemized expenditures and covers expenses for all meals and breaks, inclusive of tips, for a 24 hour period. For periods of less than 24 hours, the per diem allowance is prorated based on the meal periods listed below. Receipts will be required for periods of less than 24 hours for meals where travel exceeds the anticipated departure or return times. Where estimated departure and return times fall within an hour of the defined meal period times cited below, **no advances will be made for the meal in question and reimbursement will be made on actual expenses** incurred based on the receipt provided, and reimbursement will not exceed the established amount allowed for meals.

When travel is less than 110 miles from the City of Turlock, requests for prior night lodging must be submitted as an exception. If this exception is approved, **dinner will be reimbursed on actual expenses incurred** based on the receipt provided, not to exceed the established allowed amounts.

Per diem will be paid in accordance with the following schedule:

	<u>Departure Time is Before:</u>	<u>Return Time is After:</u>
Breakfast:	6:30 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
Lunch:	12:00 noon	1:00 p.m.
Dinner:	5:00 p.m.	6:30 p.m.

5.03 Meals Included in Registration

Meals included in the registration fee will not be reimbursed. A continental breakfast is not considered a meal for purposes of figuring per diem allowance. Meals provided as part of a training seminar or association meeting that exceed meal limits are allowable but are considered an exception requiring the City Manager's approval.

5.04 Meals Exceeding Per Diem Allowance

When the nature of the event causes a meal to exceed the allowed amount, an explanation should be made on the expense claim form and will require approval of the City Manager or his/her designee for the employee to obtain a reimbursement above the allowed amount. The cost of alcoholic beverages is not reimbursable.

5.05 Receipts Required

Receipts for per diem are not required *except* for the following circumstances:

- meals not advanced due to the departure/return times being unclear or within an hour of the meal time period defined.
- one-day travel where the meal expense is not included as part of the meeting cost

6.00 HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

6.01 Lodging Policy

Reimbursement for the cost of lodging incurred on City business will be made on the basis of the actual cost of the accommodation. Rooms offered in the mid-price range for the area will be used to determine what is acceptable as a reasonable expense. Single rates shall prevail except when the room is occupied by more than one City employee. Sharing of rooms is encouraged, but not required. A copy of the paid hotel bill must accompany the expense form.

Saturday night stay-overs are encouraged when the cost of meals and lodging is more than offset by savings in airfare.

6.02 Additional Nights Lodging

Lodging expenses for the night prior to the beginning of a conference or meeting will be allowed if the employee would be required to leave prior to 6:00 a.m. to attend the conference. Lodging expenses for the night following the conclusion of the conference or meeting will be allowed if the employee's return time would fall after 9:00 p.m. Any exceptions will require the approval of the City Manager or his/her designee. "Reasonable" travel time is allowed before and after the conference or meeting. Reasonable arrival time at a conference/training would be no sooner than 30 minutes prior to the first official session or class.

6.03 **Lodging for Alternate Mode of Travel**

Whenever the employee chooses to travel by vehicle rather than travel by air and this results in additional night(s) lodging, the allowable lodging expense will be based on lodging which would have been required if the employee had traveled by air.

6.04 **Personal Costs**

Personal telephone calls will be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$7.50 per day, provided receipts specifying date and cost of call are submitted.

Personal costs for room service, movies, personal telephone calls (over \$7.50 per day with receipt), etc., are **not** allowable expenses.

Costs associated with a spouse/guest attending a conference or meeting with the City employee or representative will be the sole responsibility of the employee. Expenses associated with spouse/guest attendance shall be deducted from all bills prior to submittal for reimbursement.

If an employee chooses to travel by vehicle rather than fly and chooses to stop overnight, the cost of lodging and meals will be the responsibility of the employee.

7.00 **SUMMARY OF EXPENSES**

Approved for Reimbursement

Not Approved for Reimbursement

Registration
Lodging
Transportation
Meals
Receipted Parking Fees
Reasonable Local Transportation
Business Related Telephone Calls
\$7.50 per day for Personal Telephone Calls

Dry Cleaning
Laundry
Alcoholic Beverages
Snacks
Personal Telephone Calls (in excess of \$7.50/day)
Entertainment
In-room Movies
Room Service Charges
Recreation
Clothing, etc.

8.00 **FINALIZING TRAVEL REQUEST**

Completed Travel Request and Expense Reports shall be filed with the Finance Office within thirty (30) days of return from authorized travel. The balance of the advance must be returned at that time. A fully complete Travel Expense Report should include:

- Record of all prepaid expenses.
- Show **all** expenses related to the travel/conference.
- **Original receipts** where receipts are **required**, unless previously provided on a demand. (Exception: Credit Card Receipts. Original credit card receipts should be attached to the demand to pay the monthly credit card bill; a copy of the credit card receipt should be attached to the finalized Travel Expense Report with the appropriate information indicated in Section IV.)
- After 30 days, if there is a Net Returned on a finalized Travel Expense Report and the employee has not reimbursed the City, invoice the employee through a

City of Turlock Statement and attach a copy of the Statement to the finalized Travel Expense Report. (This will complete your Travel Expense Report and follow up will be through the Finance "Statement Process.")

9.00 CANCELLATION POLICY

When an employee cancels his/her attendance and non-refundable expenses are incurred by the City, the **employee will be personally responsible for 50% of the non-refundable expenses**. Exceptions to this policy are cancellations due to a serious illness, death in the family, or when the Service Area Director determines that the employee's absence would create an **unforeseen** hardship on the department. All exceptions must be approved by the City Manager.

ATTACHMENT A

TRAVEL REQUEST AND EXPENSE REPORT PROCEDURE

1. Request a Travel Request and Expense Report number from the City of Turlock's Intranet (under "Blank/Online Forms).
2. Complete Section I and II of the Travel Expense Worksheet found on the P: / drive under City of Turlock Forms, Travel. Save this file to your personal directory to use when the travel is completed and you final the Travel Request. The employee(s) and Service Area Director must sign this section. ***The City Manager's signature is required for all exceptions and his initials are required next to each exception on the Travel Expense Worksheet.***
3. After completion of Sections I and II, including signatures of the employee(s) and Service Area Director, make a copy for your records and send the following to the Finance Office "ATTN: Travel."
 - 1) the original (printed on PINK paper or highlight the TR# in "PINK"),
 - 2) the Travel Expense Worksheet, and
 - 3) a complete copy of the conference or training brochure/flyer, hotel confirmation(s), airfare confirmation(s) and all information used to project expenses.
4. When the conference/event is over, complete Sections III and IV of the Travel Request and Expense Report. The employee(s) and Service Area Director must sign the completed report. Any amount due to the City from the employee(s) should be collected and deposited with a Miscellaneous Receipt. A copy of the validated Miscellaneous Receipt must be provided in the supporting documentation behind the Travel Request and Expense Report.
5. Make a copy of the signed Travel Request and Expense Report on YELLOW paper or highlight the TR# in "YELLOW." Forward the **original** and yellow copy of the Travel Request and Expense Report to the Finance Office, "ATTN: Travel, with all **original** receipts (for exceptions see Section 8.00 of the Travel Policy) and copies of demands for advances and miscellaneous receipts for reimbursements made by the employee(s) to the City. A signed Demand or an **unsigned** Petty Cash approval for the amount reimbursable to the employee should be paper clipped to the **top** of the entire packet.
6. The Finance Office will review and sign the Travel Request and Expense Report. After auditing, the Finance Office will return the copy (within 30 days) to the department to indicate the process is complete. The original copy and the accompanying documentation will be retained in the Finance Office for future reference. At this time, approved/signed Petty Cash forms will be returned to the designated contact person (department to make reimbursement to employee through the department's petty cash) and Demands will be processed.

AUDITING PROCESS:

Double check policy, per diem, and receipts as each Demand is issued for accuracy. Payments are only issued with original receipts.

CANCELLATIONS:

If the training/conference is canceled and a check has been issued but has not been cashed, the check should be immediately returned to Accounts Payable to be voided.

FORMS:

Each department should maintain a log of Travel Expense and Request Forms, which indicates the Travel Request number issued, employee's name, event (school/conference) and dates of travel. Copies of any voided forms should be forwarded to Finance for their records (departments are accountable for each unused/voided form).

DEMANDS FOR TRAVEL:

Demands for advance payment of expenses should include a reference to the Travel Request number, name and date of conference, name of attendee(s), and description of what is being paid.

Provided the "PINK" copy of the Travel Expense and Request Report and accompanying documentation (as required in Step 3) has been properly provided to Finance, the Demand will only require a copy of the Travel Request form as backup.

Demands for final reimbursement should be dated for the next demand cycle and should be paper clipped to the **top** of the completed Travel Request and Expense Report. (See Step 5)

REIMBURSEMENTS TO EMPLOYEES:

Reimbursements of \$75.00 or less may be made through petty cash, **only** after the Travel Request and documentation has been audited. (See Steps 5 & 6)

Reimbursements over \$75.00 shall be made on a Demand. (See Steps 5 & 6)

RECAP

- PINK:** **Finance Copy** (forwarded to Finance with copy of the brochure and worksheets attached as soon as the travel has been authorized)
- WHITE:** **Finance Copy** (forwarded to Finance with all receipts and documentation upon completion of the conference/event)
- YELLOW:** **Department Copy** (Finance returns to department after auditing the documentation to indicate the travel is finalized)