



# TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE

Appendix I  
Section 1

Effective Date  
8-18-16

## Appendix I

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the District to provide reasonable standards for travel and subsistence that are consistent with the prudent use of public funds, best business practices, and in compliance with applicable laws and Board policies.

#### A. General Policies

Travel related expenses may be authorized for District regular employees.

All District employees traveling on District business will be held accountable and be fiscally responsible, in accordance with Board Governance Policies.

District staff may travel to out-of-county, in-state, or out-of-state professional or training conferences or workshops only if required by District business needs and if an overnight stay is required, only if authorized by the Board of Directors. Some examples of business needs are:

- Need to gain technical or related knowledge required for a current or planned District activity.
- Response to a request from an outside agency or organization for District staff to participate in a conference or workshop to share their expertise.
- Response to a request from an outside group for District staff to participate in a conference or workshop as part of group planning, negotiations, or decision making.

Employee travel will be via the lowest cost alternative and consistent with good business practices. Luxury modes of transportation and accommodations are not authorized for reimbursement. The Procurement Travel Coordinator will determine the least expensive mode of travel at the time of booking in keeping with Board Executive Limitations against spending extravagantly, inefficiently, or in ways costlier than necessary.

Travel reservations shall be made at the early enough to take advantage of discounted airtime and lodging rates. Emergency or urgent travel requests that are made in less than three (3) weeks prior to the actual start date of the event will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with the approval of the appropriate authority.

#### B. Travel Time

Travel time occurring during an employee's scheduled time off, on a designated District holiday, or outside the employee's regularly scheduled work time will not be compensated for overtime. The only exception of this will be when travel is required by the District related to the performance of the employee's job duties and the overtime is authorized and approved prior to the travel by the appropriate Appointing Authority, in accordance with the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs).

Employees who extend the length of the business trip for personal reasons must charge those days to an available leave balance, such as vacation, personal leave, or compensatory time. Employees who attend conferences or seminars and leave early for personal reasons other than illness or family emergency, shall reimburse the District on a pro-rated basis.



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Additionally, any additional travel cost or lodging expense incurred as a result of extending the length of any business trip for personal reasons shall be reimbursed or paid by the employee.

#### **C. Travel Locations**

##### **In-State Travel**

In-state travel should always be the first option over out-of-state travel. All in-state travel must have prior authorization by the Board of Directors.

##### **Out-of-State Travel/Out-of-Country Travel**

Out-of-state and out-of-country travel is limited to business purposes that cannot be met by any other means. Each Appointing Authority will determine at the beginning of each fiscal year, the total number of trips which will be allowed for their respective areas of responsibility.

All out-of-state travel must have prior authorization from the Board of Directors.

#### **D. Registration Costs**

District policy is to prepay all costs for seminars, conferences, workshops, and meetings when employee has been authorized to travel to events.

District will prepay social event costs associated with registering for event, and notify Accounts Receivable to invoice the employee for such costs. This also includes any guest registration costs. Invoices must be paid in a timely manner (within thirty [30] days). Social costs will be anything that is outside the normal hours of operation for the event, and are deemed social on the registration forms.

#### **E. Airline and Ground Transportation**

Air travel must be via the most direct and economical means, accommodating the traveler's needs.

The District standard is to purchase non-refundable coach/economy class tickets. If the District can realize \$500 or more in savings by booking a Saturday night stay airfare, and the employee agrees to extend their travel time for the one day, then the District will reimburse the employee for the extra night's hotel stay, as well as an extra day of meal reimbursement.

The District will not purchase any family or guest travel. Employees who wish to have their families accompany them may do so but must make and pay for their own arrangements. Employees who wish to upgrade or use a different carrier than the lowest carrier at the time of booking, may do so, however, they will be invoiced for the difference. The invoice must be paid in a timely manner (within thirty [30] days).

Employees wishing to combine personal travel with business travel which results in a higher airfare than the business travel alone will be sent an invoice for the difference. The invoice must be paid in a timely manner (within thirty [30] days).



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Employees wishing to change travel plans for personal reasons must have prior authorization by the appointing authority.

Employees whose plans change and who fail to notify the Appointing authority prior to the actual travel date will be invoiced for any additional charges incurred due to change in the travel plans or the total nonrefundable cost associated with the trip in the event of employee’s cancellation of the trip.

### **F. Rental Cars**

Rental cars may be used if shuttle services are not available and it is the most economical means of transportation.

When picking up a rental car, the traveler should check with the rental agent for any additional promotional rates, last minute specials, or free upgrades which will reduce the cost to the District. At the time of rental, the car should be inspected and any damage found should be noted on the contract before the vehicle is accepted.

The District standard will be midsize for rental cars, unless there is a group of employees traveling together.

When renting a vehicle for District business, employees should accept the Loss Damage Waiver Coverage for physical damage to the car and decline the Liability Insurance Supplement coverage offered by the rental agency. Employees desiring either Personal Accident or Personal Effects Coverage must pay for these on their own. The District will not reimburse for personal insurance.

Rental car receipts must include the dates, number of days, type of vehicle rented, and mileage.

Employees who have a rental car and are extending their business trip for personal reasons will not be reimbursed for the extra rental days.

Only one (1) rental car will be rented for a group of employees traveling together to the same location. Exceptions must be approved by the Manager.

### **G. Mileage Reimbursement**

Use of a personal vehicle on District business will be reimbursed at the current Internal Revenue Service rate per mile.

Personal car mileage reimbursement covers the operating cost of the vehicles, such as cost of gas, oil, wear and tear, and any servicing needed during the trip.

Personal vehicle mileage must be approved by the Manager for emergency calls for work not anticipated or scheduled and which could not be performed during the normal working hours on the next regularly scheduled working day.



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Employees who travel for business meetings or conferences will be reimbursed mileage for travel from home to airport, round trip, and to/from the meeting site, including any incidental travel such as travel to the lodging place and restaurant.

#### **H. Lodging and Accommodations**

The District will pay for lodging for as many nights as necessary for the business purpose of the trip.

If possible, the hotel that will be reserved by the Management or directed staff will be the host hotel of the event, if there is one. In the event that hotel is sold out, then the Management or directed staff will seek accommodation on the next best hotel in the closest proximity to the host hotel location (safety, distance, and price are considered).

The Manager or directed staff will secure the best rate available at time of booking (i.e., conference rate, government rate, special booking rate).

Employees who wish to upgrade rooms, have additional guest charges, or use a hotel of their choosing, and the cost is more expensive than that of the host hotel, will not be reimbursed for the cost difference.

Employees will each have their own accommodations.

Employees who fail to show up at the hotel on the day the reservation is guaranteed for and have not notified Management of the change in the time allotted by the hotel will be invoiced for the no-show charge, if such charge is incurred.

Hotel stay will only be reimbursable if event location is more than fifty (50) miles from employee's home. Exceptions may be made by Management in cases involving evening meetings/events, etc.

#### **I. Meal Reimbursement**

Travel related meals and expenses will be paid on Per Diem Rates Schedule of the Approved GSA travel portal (<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>). All rules and regulations associated with Per Diem Rates on the GSA travel portal will be observed.

No reimbursements will be made to the employee for their family/guest meal expenses.

#### **J. Miscellaneous Reimbursable Expenses for Travel**

The following travel expenses are reimbursable:

- Public transportation to and from airport roundtrip
- Parking expenses (both long and short term)
- Fuel for rental cars



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- Personal telephone calls –employees are expected to use discretion as to the number and duration of calls. Guidelines are up to two (2) calls per day and up to five (5) minutes per call. Unusual circumstances may warrant exceptions to these guidelines.

Exceptions may be approved by the responsible manager. The employee will be invoiced for charges that exceed these guidelines.

- Expenses such as faxing, postage, copy charges, business calls, internet access fees when related to District business.
- Laundry (six [6] nights stay or more.)
- Tipping.

### K. Non-Reimbursable Expenses for Travel

The following travel expenses are not eligible for reimbursement:

- Traffic and parking violations
- Personal entertainment (e.g., in-room movies, saunas, fee for exercise room, etc.)
- Alcoholic beverages/wet bar
- Family/guest expenses
- Social events at conferences
- Laundry (if stay is five [5] nights or fewer)

### L. Travel Advances

#### 2. PURPOSE

The purposes of this policy are:

1. To provide guidelines for authorization of travel and payment of travel expenses for District employees.
2. To place fiduciary responsibility and cost-effective use of public funds first.
3. To ensure fair and equitable treatment of all employees by defining policies and procedures for authorized business travel and guidelines for expense reimbursement.
4. To facilitate the reimbursement of employees for allowable expenses incurred during travel on District business.

#### 3. SCOPE, ASSUMPTIONS & EXCEPTIONS

This policy applies to all District employees, both exempt and non-exempt, and intermittent or temporary workers allowed and approved to travel on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate Appointing Authority.

#### 4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

##### Managers

All Managers shall be knowledgeable on the current travel policies and procedures and inform their departmental staff of such policies and procedures. In order to maintain cost control over expenditures, any expenses submitted which do not comply with the



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guidelines in this policy will not be reimbursed, unless accompanied by a valid exception signed by the respective employee's Manager.

- Ensuring all employee travel request meet the objective of the employee's performance work plan and strategic plan.
- Ensuring reimbursement is made for actual reasonable business expenses in connection with authorized travel as defined in this policy.
- Regularly reviewing this policy with employees, especially new employees.

### **Employees**

Employees are responsible for the following:

- Employees who need to travel on District business must obtain prior approval as noted on the forms to travel.
- To obtain approval for any travel, employees must complete Off Site Training/Travel
- Employees should choose the most efficient, direct, and economical travel options available to them.
- Employees who coordinate their own travel arrangements will only be reimbursed if proper policy was followed and the appropriate forms are submitted for reimbursement.
- Employees must submit to the Bookkeeper all travel-related expense reimbursements no later than thirty (30) days from the date of return from the trip.
- Exceptions to submitting travel expense reimbursement form later than thirty (30) days will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

### **5. DEFINITIONS**

**Luxury Transportation/Accommodations** – Limousines, vehicles designated by rental agency as "luxury" or "large size", first class or business class air travel, any accommodations other than "standard" (i.e. one king, or two queen beds). Four-star accommodations would be considered "luxury", unless they are approved conference/event site or location.

**Travel Time** – The time an employee is on official District business, including the actual event dates and the time necessary to travel to and from the event, not to exceed one (1) day prior and one (1) day after the event. Exceptions such as illnesses, emergencies, and unforeseen events will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

### **6. CHANGE HISTORY**

**DATE REVISION COMMENTS**