



City of Camarillo

CITY COUNCIL POLICY

Section: General Administration

Date Adopted: December 11, 1991

Last Amended: May 28, 2003

Subject: **Travel Expense Reimbursement**

Number: 2.05

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PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the authorization, attendance and reimbursement of travel expenses for conferences, meetings and training seminars for all employees, except those defined in Policy 1.03.

POLICY

It is the policy of the City to reimburse appropriate expenses incurred by officials and employees of the City while on authorized travel for City business.

A. Authorization

Reimbursement of expenses for travel on City business which exceed \$250 is not included in the annual budget, or which requires an out-of-state stay, requires the submission of a travel authorization form and approval by the City Manager or their designee, all other travel requires departmental approval. Department Heads shall have their travel approved by the City Manager.

B. Sustainable Travel Initiatives

When planning travel, consideration shall be given to the City's Sustainable Initiatives by:

1. Assessing the need to travel over attending a virtual meeting.
2. Combining trips when possible and geographically reasonable.
3. Carpooling.
4. Choosing public transportation over automobiles for trips over 400 miles.
5. Prioritizing Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEV) when renting a vehicle, where the daily rate is equal to or less than the daily rental rate of a comparable automobile, and where adequate charging infrastructure is likely to be

available enroute and/or at the destination.

6. Choosing taxi/ride share ZEV options, if available. If a ZEV is not available, select the vehicle with the highest fuel efficiency.

7. Booking airfare with the least number of layovers.

BC. Types of Authorized Travel Expenses Defined

1. Registration. Registration fees charged for any authorized convention, conference, seminar or meeting are reimbursable. Direct registration payment by the City should be made prior to attendance.

2. Cancellation. Should an attendee find that he/she cannot attend an event, it is the attendee's responsibility to provide notice early enough so that registration and reservations may be canceled and refunds obtained. ~~Failure to give such notification early enough to obtain a refund may result in the attendee assuming financial responsibility for unrecoverable expenditures. Failure to do so twice in a 12-month period shall result in denial of travel advances, use of city credit card, and/or prepayment of all travel/meeting deposits and expenses for six (6) months.~~

3. Transportation

a. Commercial Carrier: Travel shall be limited to standard ~~"coach-class"~~ refundable economy fare. Travel shall be booked at least 30 days in advance, or as soon as the traveler is made aware of the need to travel. Any deviation shall require City Manager approval. ~~Fares shall be paid by the City directly to the ticketing agent whenever practical.~~ A traveler may make his/her own reservations and be reimbursed for the ticket expense. ~~Normally, round trip tickets shall be purchased.~~ Travel expenses of a family member guest of an official or employee are not eligible for City reimbursement. ~~However, the City may make reservations and travel arrangements for family members guests, if approved by the City Manager, and repaid to the City on reconciliation.~~

b. Taxi, Car Rental and Limousine Rideshare Service: ~~Car rental and limousine services other than airport limousine services shall not be reimbursed unless authorized by the City Manager prior to travel.~~ Shuttle, bus, airport limousine rideshare, taxi or other public transportation shall be used between airport, hotel and conference site whenever available. Taxi service should be used only when no other convenient, less costly transportation is available. Car rental shall not be reimbursed unless authorized by the City Manager prior to travel.

(1) Tips for Allowable Transportation Expenses: Tips for allowable

transportation expenses are allowed up to \$2.00 or 18% whichever is greater.

- c. Personal Vehicles: Personal automobiles, when approved as a mode of travel to and from destinations, will be reimbursed at the IRS established mileage rate. Personal vehicles must be insured as required by state law.

Unless authorized, reimbursement for private car mileage shall not exceed the cost of "~~each~~ refundable economy class" fare, plus airport transportation, airport parking, and transportation costs at the destination. Exceptions may be authorized when air service is not available or reasonably convenient.

When a commercial air carrier is used, a traveler will be reimbursed for mileage to and from the airport and the actual cost of airport parking. If two or more travelers share this transportation, reimbursement shall be made to the person driving his/her vehicle. If a van/shuttle is used, the traveler shall be reimbursed for the actual cost.

- (1) ~~Travel of 100 Miles or Less by personal vehicle~~: Monthly vehicle allowances are provided to those officials and employees required to use their personal vehicles on an ongoing basis for City business trips ~~of 100 miles or less round trip within Ventura County~~. For trips outside of Ventura County, all mileage will be reimbursed at the IRS established mileage rate after a mileage reimbursement claim is submitted.

For those who do not receive monthly allowances, ~~travel of 100 miles or less~~ all City business travel shall be approved by the appropriate Department Head and reimbursed at the IRS established mileage rate after a mileage reimbursement claim is submitted.

When leaving from home, the mileage claimed from home to the destination shall not exceed the mileage from City Hall to the destination. The lesser of the two will be paid.

- ~~(1) Travel of More Than 100 Miles: The use of personal vehicles on City authorized business of more than 100 total miles shall be reimbursed at the IRS established mileage rate and based upon the most direct route from point of departure to point of destination. When leaving from home, the mileage claimed from home to the destination shall not exceed the mileage from City Hall to the destination.~~

- (1) d. City Vehicles: Travel in City vehicles, when applicable, is encouraged

~~but must be approved by the City Manager or Department Head subject to the Use of City Vehicles Policy. All receipts for gas, oil charging, fuel, emergency repairs and other supplies necessary en route must be furnished in order to obtain reimbursement.~~

~~(2) — Tips for Allowable Meal and/or Transportation Expenses: Tips for allowable meal and transportation expenses are allowed up to \$2.00 or 20% whichever is greater.~~

4. Lodging. ~~Hotel~~ Lodging expenses will be reimbursed or paid for when travel on official City business reasonably requires an overnight stay. If such lodging is in connection with a conference, lodging expenses must not exceed the group rate published by the conference sponsor if such rates are available at the time of booking. ~~a~~Accommodations may be arranged directly by the traveler or by the City. Required reservation deposits should be requested well in advance of travel when possible. ~~A City credit card for reservation guarantee must be checked out from the Director of Finance and checked back in immediately after the reservation is made.~~ The ~~hotel~~ lodging expense shall be reimbursed only at the single occupancy rate. ~~Hotel~~ ~~e~~Expenses for accompanying ~~family members~~ guests shall not be reimbursed, although the City's advance credit card guarantee may include that rate. When feasible, ~~hotel~~ accommodations should be within easy walking access to the authorized functions.

~~Pre-conference lodging (one day) will be allowed when travel exceeds 60 miles and the event starts at or before 9:00 a.m. In order to avoid night time travel, after conference lodging will be allowed when conference exceeds 60 miles (one way) from City Hall.~~

~~Pre-conference lodging (two day) will be allowed when zone changes and/or flight restrictions do not allow for adequate and reasonable rest for travelers. Such cases will be properly documented on the traveler's expense reimbursement form.~~

5. Per Diem. Each person traveling on official City business which includes an overnight stay is entitled to per diem. Per diem covers meals and incidental expenses, including tips, gratuities and snacks. Receipts are not required to claim per diem.

Per diem shall be calculated as the mid-point rate established by the United States General Services Administration (GSA) for California locations.

a. Travel days shall be calculated as follows:

i. If the travel days begins after 10:00 a.m., the traveler shall be compensated at 75% of per diem.

ii. If the travel day ends by 5:00 p.m., the traveler shall be

compensated at 75% of per diem.

iii. Otherwise, the traveler will receive a full day of per diem.

- a. ~~If the trip is 24 hours or less and includes an overnight stay, the traveler may claim \$55.00 per diem.~~
- b. ~~Per diem starts when travel begins.~~
- c. ~~For each successive 24-hour period full per diem shall be paid.~~
- d. ~~If the last time period is less than 24 hours, the per diem shall be prorated in 6-hour increments.~~
- e. ~~When travel is undertaken on the day preceding or following official business, in order to depart from or arrive at home during reasonable hours, the traveler shall be entitled to the cost of lodging and per diem allowance for the additional day, in accordance with this section.~~
- f. ~~Once the traveler completes the travel reconciliation form, the Director of Finance shall calculate any portion of the per diem that is taxable pursuant to the most recently published IRS Standard Allowable M&IE rate, as published in the *Federal Register*.~~

Group Meals While Traveling: Generally, employee/official shall pay for their own meals and receive per diem as described above. However, City officials and executives, may find it necessary to charge for a group meal. In this case, detailed receipts are required including names of parties included.

Additional Costs for Conference Dinner Galas, Awards Ceremonies, etc.: Periodically, conferences assess an extra charge to participate in a dinner gala or awards ceremony. These charges are usually in addition to registration fees and can be more than the allotted per diem for a meal or occasionally, for the day. The City will pay for attendance at the gala or ceremony as a part of registration costs. If participation cost is more than the daily per diem, the employee will still be eligible for per diem for other meals.

Meal reimbursement will not be disallowed merely because the expense is more than the per diem when considering general meal prices at the location in which the meal expense is incurred. The City Manager or designee will approve all meals in excess of the established per diem.

- 6. Miscellaneous Costs-Travelers will not be reimbursed for costs that are lavish or extravagant. An expense is not considered extravagant if it is reasonable based on the facts and circumstances.

Reimbursement will not be disallowed merely because the expense is more than the per diem when considering general meal prices at the location in

which the meal expense is incurred. The City Manager or designee will approve all meals in excess of the established per diem.

7. Unauthorized Expenses. The following expenses shall not be allowed:

- a. Political or charitable contributions.
- b. The personal portion of any trip.
- c. Entertainment expenses, including theater, movies (either in-room or at the theater), sporting events (including gym, massage and/or golf related expenses), spa treatments, etc.
- d. Guest expenses, including those of a partner when accompanying an employee on official business, as well as child or pet-related expenses.
- e. Non-mileage personal automobile expenses including repairs, traffic citations, or insurance.
- f. Personal losses incurred while on City business.
- g. Alcoholic beverages.
- h. Any expenses disallowed by reimbursement by law.

Any questions regarding the propriety of a particular type of expense should be discussed with and resolved by the City Manager before the expense is incurred.

GD. Expense Reimbursement

- 1. Advances. Payments may be advanced to the traveler based upon estimated costs as detailed on the travel authorization form.
- 2. ~~Credit Cards.~~ City credit cards are available to Councilmembers and staff for use in accordance with Policy 4.1. Purchasing, Sub-section 9 – Credit Card Usage.
- 32. Reconciliation. Travel reconciliation forms shall be submitted to the Finance Department within ~~15 working~~ 30 days following travel. ~~If a reconciliation form is not submitted within time limits, no future travel advance, use of city credit card or prepayment of fees and lodging for that traveler shall be made for six months. If travel is cancelled, the reconciliation form must be turned in within 15 working days from date travel is cancelled. Reimbursement of actual costs which exceed the approved estimates by 10% or more require authorization by the City Manager.~~

43. Single Day Travel. Single day travel expenses are not covered by per diem allowance. The traveler shall itemize the expenses incurred for reimbursement, and include supporting documentation such as receipts or paid invoices ~~with the Travel Authorization and Reconciliation form.~~ ~~Reimbursement for items other than transportation, parking and registration shall not exceed the per diem allowance.~~ Reimbursements above the established daily per diem will need to be approved by the City Manager or designee.
- ~~5. Audio or Video Tapes. Tapes ordered at conferences may be reimbursed up to \$25 per conference. The tapes shall become the property of the City for use by other Councilmembers, Commissioners and staff. Orders shall be coordinated to avoid duplication. Requests for annual League conference tapes shall be submitted to the City Manager, who will submit a master order after the end of the conference.~~
64. Other Expenses. Reimbursement may be claimed for ~~facsimiles~~, hotel or conference parking, or other work-related expenses by submitting original receipts.
- ~~75. Cost Advantage. When travel before or after an event or when staying over a Saturday night results in a cost savings, the City Manager may authorize additional travel days.~~
85. Additional Travel Days. Except as approved by the City Manager in accordance with C.7 above, if a City official or employee elects to travel in advance or stay longer on personal business or vacation status, the City shall not be obligated for any expenses due to the additional personal travel days.

E. Violation of Policy

At the discretion of the City Manager, or their designee, violations of this policy will be subject to the following:

1. Cancellations. Failure to give notice, early enough to obtain a refund, may result in the attendee assuming financial responsibility for unrecoverable expenditures. Failure to do so twice in a 12-month period may result in denial of travel advances, use of City credit card, and/or prepayment of all travel/meeting deposits and expenses for six (6) months.
2. Reconciliations. If a reconciliation form is not submitted within time limits, no future travel advance, use of City credit card or prepayment of fees and lodging for that traveler shall be made for six (6) months. If travel is cancelled, the reconciliation form must be turned in within ~~15 working~~ 30 days from date travel is cancelled.

F. Implementation and Interpretation of Policy

All provisions of this policy will be implemented in a manner consistent with all applicable State and Federal laws. Further, nothing stated within this Policy will be interpreted in a manner that is contrary to State or Federal law.