



City of Camarillo

CITY COUNCIL POLICY

Section: City Council

Date Adopted: March 22, 1989

Last Amended: April 24, 2024

Subject: **Reimbursement of Travel and Expenses
for Elected and Appointed Officials**

Number: 1.03

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PURPOSE

To establish a policy for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by elected and appointed officials in the performance of City business [in accordance with AB 1234](#). This Policy will be applicable to members of the Camarillo City Council, commissioners of the Camarillo Community Development Commission, directors of the Camarillo Sanitary District, directors of the Camarillo Library Board, the Successor Agency, commissioners of the Camarillo Planning Commission, and appointed officials (hereafter "officials").

POLICY

It is the policy of the City to reimburse actual and necessary expenses incurred by officials in the performance of City business. Camarillo Planning Commissioners, however, are restricted to reimbursements related to pre-authorized conferences only.

A. Activities Eligible for Expense Reimbursement

Expenses incurred in connection with the following types of activities are eligible for reimbursement:

1. Attendance and participation at meetings of the official's legislative body or at meetings of an advisory body of the legislative body.
2. Attendance and participation at meetings of any body or organization to which the official has been appointed by the official's governing or legislative body or at which the official serves as a designated representative of the City.
3. Communicating with constituents on matters within the jurisdiction of the official's legislative body.
4. Attending community events as a representative of the City. Councilmembers designated to provide official City representation at events such as retirement and separation functions, awards, special ceremonies and similar activities may incur necessary meals and food-related expenses. In such cases, the individual is acting in their official capacity and the expense of the Councilmember is incurred for the benefit of the City and is reimbursable at full cost, if the City has not already purchased admission for the Councilmember.

5. Councilmembers attending non-political fund-raising events from 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations related to the City of Camarillo: the Mayor shall be eligible for reimbursement for attendance at an unlimited number of such events (or, at the Mayor's request, the Vice Mayor or another Councilmember may attend such event); and Councilmembers shall be eligible for attendance at two such events per fiscal year. Reimbursement will only be made for the initial entrance ticket to the event.
6. Communicating with representatives of local, regional, state and national government on City matters, policy positions, or legislation that may affect the City.
7. Participating in local, regional, state and national organizations and entities whose activities affect the City's interests.
8. Attending seminars designed to improve officials' skill and information levels.

Activities not authorized above require prior approval by the City Council or applicable governing legislative body.

B. Expenses Authorized for Reimbursement

1. 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.

42. Transportation. Transportation expenses incurred in connection with activities authorized under Section A of this Policy are subject to the following requirements:

- a. Airlines and Other Commercial Carriers: Travel is generally limited to the most economical and reasonable ~~each-class~~ refundable economy fare.
- b. Automobile (Personal Vehicle): Travel outside the County of Ventura

using personal vehicles will be reimbursed at the IRS established mileage rate in effect at the time.

- c. Car Rental: Rental vehicles may be used if more economical and reasonable than other forms of transportation. Rental is generally limited to the most economical and reasonable mid-sized vehicle.
- d. Taxis/Shuttles/RideShare: Taxi ~~or~~ shuttle or rideshare fares, when reasonable and necessary, will be reimbursed, including a ~~45~~2018% gratuity per fare.

2.3. Lodging. Lodging expenses incurred in connection with activities authorized under Section A of this Policy when travel requires an overnight stay are subject to the following requirements:

- a. Lodging rates should be the most economical and reasonable available.
- b. Lodging expenses will be reimbursed at the single occupancy rate.
- c. If lodging is in connection with a conference, lodging expenses must not exceed the group rate if such rates are available at the time of booking.
- d. Officials must consider government rates for lodging.

34. Meals. Meal expenses incurred in connection with activities authorized under Section A of this Policy are subject to the following requirements:

- a. Meal expenses will be reimbursed at the applicable individual or cumulative IRS meal rates in effect at the time. The cost guideline for meals, including beverage and tip, shall be the United States General Services Administration (GSA) daily rate for the travelers location.
- b. Meal reimbursement will not be provided for meals 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 cost guidelines when considering general meal prices at the location in which the meal expense is incurred. The City Manager or designee will approve any reimbursement requests for meals in excess of the GSA daily rate.
- b.c. In accordance with 85 Op. Cal. Att'y. Gen. 210 (2002), meal expenses for third parties such as constituents, legislators and private business owners shall not be reimbursed.

45. Miscellaneous. Miscellaneous business expenses, as defined by the IRS, that are actual and necessary in connection with authorized activities authorized under Section A of this Policy, may be reimbursed up to an amount not to exceed \$300 per month.

Expenses not authorized above require approval by the City Manager.

C. Unauthorized Expenses

1. The personal portion of any trip.
2. Political or charitable contributions.
3. 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.
4. Family Guest expenses, including those of a partner when accompanying a Councilmember or appointed official on official business, as well as child or pet-related expenses.
5. Non-mileage personal automobile expenses including repairs, traffic citations, or insurance.
6. Personal losses incurred while on City business.
7. Alcoholic beverages.
8. Any expenses disallowed for 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.

D. Vehicle Allowance

Under Government Code section 1223, commencing July 1, 2010, members of the City Council will receive a monthly vehicle allowance of \$200, in addition to reimbursement authorized by section B.1.b. of this policy.

E. Reporting Requests for Reimbursement

1. ~~Single Activities of \$250 or more. Any single activity eligible for reimbursement under Section A of this Policy, equal to or exceeding \$250 must be submitted on a City travel authorization form and be pre-approved by the City Manager.~~

Within 15 business 30 days of completion of the activity, ~~a reconciled travel authorization form requests for reimbursement~~, with all receipts and documentation must be submitted.

At the discretion of the City Manager, ~~F~~failure to submit a reconciliation within the specified time shall cause the official to be ineligible for advances or pre-payment of expenses for a period of six months.

2. General Reimbursable Expenses. An authorized monthly expense report form with required documentation and receipts should be submitted within 90 days after the end of the month in which the expense was incurred, but not later than 60 days after the end of the fiscal year.

Failure to submit a monthly expense report by the 60th day after the end of the fiscal year may cause the official to be ineligible for reimbursement.

3. Reports to City Council, Board or Commission. At the next regular City Council or applicable Board or Commission meeting, each official must briefly report on meetings subject to the Brown Act that were attended at City expense. If multiple officials attended such a meeting, a joint report may be made.
4. Expense Reports As Public Records. All expense reports of officials and City reimbursement expenditures are public records subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act and other applicable laws. The City will retain such records in accordance with the City's applicable records retention policies.

F. Violation Of This Policy

Use of public resources or falsifying expense reports in violation of this policy may result in any or all of the following.

1. Loss of reimbursement privileges.
2. A demand for restitution to City.
3. City's reporting the expenses as income to the elected official to the state and federal tax authorities.
4. Imposition of civil penalties for misuse of public resources pursuant to Government Code Section 8314.
5. Prosecution for misuse of public resources.

G. 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.