



## Administrative Policies and Procedures

Policy Title: Travel Policy	Policy Number: 504
Effective: 8/23	
Supersedes: APR #504, Revised 8/07, 1/11, 10/13, 2/16	
Approval: <i>Milton Dohoney Jr.</i>	Page 1 of 7

### 1. Purpose

To establish a policy governing travel expense allowances for city employees and councilmembers who travel on official City business for either overnight trips or single day trips.

### 2. Policy

- 2.1 Preauthorization may be required. Each Service Area Administrator may establish a procedure for preauthorization of trips for their service area. Approving managers are responsible for ensuring travel expenditures are contained within the respective budget. If travel is being expensed to a federal grant, preauthorization may be needed by the Federal grantor agency under CFR 200.474.
- 2.2 General travel limitations include budget constraints, preauthorization from Service Area Administrators or designee, and grant restrictions. All employees are permitted to travel for City-related business, such as:
  - City work-related conferences, seminars, training, or certification programs
  - Continuing education, or other similar work-related educational events
  - Professional events
  - Any authorized business on behalf of the City
- 2.3 The number of employees from a single service area allowed to attend the same function or business opportunity requiring travel will be at the Service Area Administrator's discretion.
- 2.4 Overnight travel will be used only for opportunities that cannot be achieved

locally. Attendance at a function or business opportunity which is within a 90-mile radius of the worksite, will not be authorized for overnight lodging or overnight meal reimbursement unless hazardous traveling conditions exist and are documented. The Service Area Administrator may approve a request based on individual circumstances of the situation.

## 2.5 Expense Reimbursement

2.5.1 Seminars, Trainings, Educational Events: Persons requesting expense reimbursement for seminars, trainings, educational events, and similar travel are required to provide registration materials, which clearly indicate whether meals and other expenses are a part of the program registration fee. Meal expenses included in the program registration or other fee will be deducted from the allowed per diem schedule.

2.5.2 Other Business Travel: Employees requesting expense reimbursement for other City business-related travel are required to provide documentation regarding the business travel which identifies the purpose of the trip, as well as documentation regarding any requested reimbursements.

## 2.6 Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE)

2.6.1 Employees will be reimbursed for meals and incidental expenses during business-related travel based on the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) per diem tables at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). The daily per diem will be adjusted for the first and last day of travel and partial days. The rate is also adjusted for meals provided through registration fees, hotels, or other special arrangements, regardless of whether the employee partakes in the meal.

2.6.2 If multiple locations in the same day are involved, the highest M&IE rate is used. If the exact location is not listed on the GSA website, use the standard rate for that state.

2.6.3 When travel is less than 12 hours, no per diem for M&IE is received.

2.6.4 When travel is more than 12 hours but less than 24 hours, reimbursement is at 75% the applicable M&IE rate.

2.6.5 When travel is 24 hours or more, you will receive the following:

- The day of departure: 75% of the applicable M&IE rate.
- Full day of travel: 100% of the applicable M&IE rate.
- Last day of travel: 75% of the applicable M&IE rate.

2.6.6 No receipts are required to receive M&IE per diems.

- 2.6.7 No other charges related to meals and incidentals will be reimbursed separately (e.g. gratuities and gifts, laundry services, amenities, newspapers, room service fees, cost of meals in excess of the per diem, etc.)

## 2.7 Transportation

- 2.7.1 In general, the most cost-effective method of transportation should be used unless extenuating circumstances exist. Air travel is recommended for trips with a distance of 250 miles or more (one way) and ground travel is recommended for distances less than 250 miles.
- 2.7.2 If an employee chooses to remain in the destination city longer than the business-related event, the employee will be required to use their own time (e.g., vacation, personal day, floating holiday) for the additional days.
- 2.7.3 Airfare will be reimbursed for flights taken the day prior to a scheduled business-related event and returning the day the business-related event ends.
- 2.7.3.1 If an employee chooses to leave earlier or return later than noted above, the airfare will be reimbursed if it is not at an increased rate. Written documentation of both rates is required. If the airfare is higher for the chosen flight than on the day the business event ends, the employee will be responsible for paying the difference.
- 2.7.3.2 Air travel will be reimbursed at coach or equivalent passage, voluntary expenses will not be reimbursed.
- 2.7.3.3 When air transportation is used, expenses for car rental or other means of ground travel to reach a destination will be subject to prior approval and the restrictions stated in Section 2.5.2.
- 2.7.4 Personal vehicle reimbursement will be limited to the current IRS standard mileage rate multiplied by the actual miles traveled via the most direct route.
- 2.7.1.1 Miles traveled is calculated as the lesser of miles from home to destination or work location to destination (see APP #505).
- 2.7.1.2 All City employees must maintain insurance as required by current Michigan law before personal or rental vehicles are used for City-related travel. Proof of insurance may be required by the Service Area Administrator, or designee, prior to travel approval.
- 2.7.1.3 Mileage will not be reimbursed to a non-employee giving a ride to an employee.
- 2.7.5 When bus or rail ground transportation is used, expenses for vehicle rental to reach a destination will be subject to approval.
- 2.7.6 Ridesharing and taxi services will be reimbursed, and a receipt is required. Reimbursement may include a maximum 15% tip in addition to actual cost.

2.7.7 Subject to availability, rented vehicles will be limited to a compact car for one person or a mid-sized car for more than one person. Upgrades to ground transportation may be accepted without prior approval if no additional charges apply or if the employee chooses to pay the difference. Employees will not be reimbursed on a per mile rate for rental vehicles. Reimbursement for rental vehicles will be limited to the cost of the rental and the cost of gasoline purchased for the rental vehicle. Receipts must be furnished to receive reimbursement.

2.7.8 City vehicle use is encouraged when practical and available. Employees will be reimbursed for necessary vehicle expenses (towing, repairs, fuel, oil, or similar fluids) for the safe operation of the vehicle while on City business. Employees using City vehicles must drive directly to the business-related destination and return directly from the business-related destination. Personal trips are prohibited in City vehicles.

## 2.8 Lodging

2.8.1 Hotel accommodations will be based on a single room rate. The City will reimburse for a single room rate unless the room is shared with other employees. Upgrades to improved accommodations will be allowed without prior approval if no additional charges apply.

2.8.1.1 For conferences, negotiated rates may be used in lieu of single room rate if they are less expensive.

2.8.1.2 The City will reimburse the cost of a room the night before a business related event, through the night prior to the last day of the business related event, exceptions may be granted on a case by case circumstance.

## 2.9 Other Business Activities

2.9.1 Long-distance business calls, internet access, copying costs, and faxes will be allowed only for documented official use.

## 2.10 Registration/Materials Fees

2.10.1 Fees charged for materials and supplies that were not included in the registration fee at any approved educational or professional event will be reimbursed subject to approval of the Service Area Administrator or designee.

## 2.11 Non-reimbursable Expenses

2.11.1 If unsure whether an expenditure is reimbursable under this policy, seek preapproval from the Service Area Administrator. The following expenses are disallowed:

- Social events, such as leisure tours, golf outings, concerts, etc., associated with a conference or training, or on personal time while traveling.
- In-room movies, games, or other entertainment
- Purchase of alcoholic beverages
- Any voluntary expense not otherwise required, where incurrence of the expense is optional

### 3.1 Forms

- 3.1.2 All forms are available and may be downloaded from the Financial Services SharePoint site.

### 3.2 Pre-Travel Expenses; Use of Purchasing Cards

- 3.2.2 When possible, the following expenses should be paid using a City Purchasing Card (P-Card) or paid directly via Accounts Payable:

Registration fees  
Hotel stays\*  
Airline tickets  
Other expenses purchased, reserved, or booked in advance

*\*Hotel stays generally require a credit card to hold a reservation rather than being paid in advance. If you use a P-Card in another person's name, the cardholder must complete a credit card authorization form that is provided by the hotel when requested. This typically occurs at the point a reservation is made. When the travelling staff person arrives, the credit card authorization allows the P-card to be charged without being physically present at check in.*

- 3.2.3 If you do not have a P-Card, ask your supervisor if one is available for use within your Service Area. If no P-Card is available for use, ask vendors to invoice items and send those invoices to Accounts Payable following your service area's typical invoice process. Ask your supervisor what your invoice process is if you are unsure.
- 3.2.4 When a City P-Card is used for travel, the original detailed receipt must accompany the Travel Expense Report. Copies of the original receipt are filed with the credit card statement and submitted to Finance per APP #512.
- 3.2.5 In the event that these expenses are not paid in advance using a P-Card or directly via Accounts Payable, submit these expenses for reimbursement pursuant to section 3.3.

### 3.3 Post Travel Reporting

- 3.3.1 Travel Expense Report form must be approved and submitted to the Accounting Services Area within **thirty (30) days** after completion of travel. Detailed receipts must support all items required by this policy and requests should include all other supporting documentation (conference brochures, mileage calculations, etc.).
- 3.3.2 The Financial Services Unit carefully reviews all staff reimbursement requests for compliance with this policy. However, it is the ultimate responsibility of the Service Area Administrators, managers, and the traveler to understand the requirements prior to traveling and requesting reimbursement.

### 3.4 Advance Payments for Anticipated Per Diems

- 3.4.1 Travel advances for anticipated per diem expenses are available to staff when needed and requested via the Travel Expense Report form on the Financial Services SharePoint site. No advance payments for per diems will be made unless pre-approved by the Service Area Administrator or their designee.
- 3.4.2 Travel advances will only include the anticipated per diems. The purchase of other items requiring a pre-payment to be made (registration fees, hotel stays, airline tickets, etc.) are expected to be paid directly via Accounts Payable or Purchasing Cards prior to the trip.
- 3.4.3 Advance payments do not constitute approval of the expenditure. All expenditures must be justified, documented, approved and are subject to the restrictions in Section 2.2.
- 3.4.4 Requests for advance payment of per diems may be submitted to the Accounting Services Unit with an approved travel advance request. Advances may be picked-up from the Accounting Services Unit on the normal account payable payment date prior to the employee's departure date.
- 3.4.5 Employees must submit a detailed Travel Expense Report with appropriate documentation and approval within **thirty (30) days** of return from travel.
- 3.4.6 If the amount advanced is less than the final amount of the travel expenses, you will be reimbursed the net amount. If the advance exceeds the reimbursable amount, you should immediately refund the excess to Customer Service to credit the appropriate account. The transaction receipt for that payment must be attached to the Travel Expense Report when submitted to Accounting Services as proof of payment. Cash, money orders, or personal checks should NOT be submitted to Accounting Services.
- 3.4.7 Amounts due to an employee will be processed with the next available disbursement check run after all required approvals, forms and copies of receipted bills and other documentation is received.
- 3.4.8 Accounts Payable will track all travel advances and will follow up with the traveler, manager, and/or the Service Area Administrator if deadlines are missed.
- 3.4.9 Failure to reconcile an advance with Accounting Services within **thirty (30) days** of return from travel will result in a referral to the Attorney's Office for collection.

### 3.5 Grant Travel Expenses

- 3.5.1 When travelling for grant-funded activities, the charges are generally allowable when you can justify that participation is necessary to the Federal award and the costs are reasonable. Travel costs charged to a grant must conform with this policy and the specific grant guidelines. Also see APP #508.