



City of Foley

TRAVEL POLICY & PROCEDURES

Adopted: November 5, 2012 (Resolution #_____-12)

Updated: 11-05-2012

Authorization for travel will not be granted and expenses will not be reimbursed unless the travel request is made and reimbursement claimed in accordance with these regulations and any approved exceptions thereto.

I. GENERAL

(1). **Authorization.** Any out of town travel may not be undertaken unless it is authorized in advance by the proper authority. Travel funds must be available in departmental budgets for travel to be authorized. Unfunded travel requests must go before the City Council for approval by resolution.

When requesting travel, a *City Travel/Reimbursement Form* and all supporting documentation for anticipated expenses must be prepared and submitted for approval to the Department Head (or designee) as far in advance as possible and in accordance with this policy. Backup documentation must include proof of all pre-travel *anticipated* costs and all post-travel *actual* costs for the travel. All requests for travel, along with supporting documentation, must be submitted *electronically* via email as more fully described in this policy.

II. PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING TRAVEL and/or PAYMENTS/REIMBURSEMENT

(1). **General Guidelines.** All requests for travel must be properly prepared and submitted *electronically* via email to the proper authorities for approval and processing. The traveler must prepare all documents as *one PDF file* and *email* to the proper authority for authorization and processing. Questions regarding the electronic process should be directed to the employee's supervisor and/or the City's *IT Services Coordinator*. Travel requests which are not properly executed will be returned to the requestor.

(2). **Documentation and Payments.** Approved City travel is on the basis of reimbursement/payment for the reasonable and necessary business expense incurred. Only the actual cost for the traveler will be authorized for payment. Receipts are required for all charges. The City Credit Card Usage Policy and the Purchasing Policy must be adhered to in all instances and funding should be available.

(3). **Pre-Travel.** The traveler (or travel/training coordinator) must fully research all *anticipated costs* and attach scanned proof of those *anticipated costs* to the *City Travel/Reimbursement Form*. This includes copies of web

pages indicating lodging rates, registration fees, estimated mileage, etc. Estimated mileage should be calculated from the *departure* location address, to the *destination* location address by use of the *Google Map* feature at <http://www.google.com>. A copy of the Google webpage mileage estimation must be attached to the *City Travel/Reimbursement Form*.

After the traveler (or travel/training coordinator) has researched all anticipated travel costs, they will download the *City Travel/Reimbursement Form* from Google Docs at <http://www.google.com> by logging in with their valid City email account and *electronically* prepare the travel packet with all required supporting documentation. Travelers should remember that purchase orders are not required for payment to vendor(s) totaling \$250 or more when a properly approved *City Travel/Reimbursement Form* has been executed.

The traveler (or travel/training coordinator) must submit the entire travel packet *electronically* via email to their Department Head (or designee) for review and approval. Upon approval, the Department Head (or designee) will then return the travel packet *electronically* via email back to the traveler (or travel/training coordinator) so the traveler (or travel/training coordinator) can then confirm the travel plans, obtain confirmation numbers, etc.

Once the traveler (or travel/training coordinator) has confirmed all travel arrangements, the traveler (or travel/training coordinator) must then forward the entire travel packet *electronically* via email to the *Accounts Payable Clerk* for processing. Upon processing, the *Accounts Payable Clerk* will make any necessary arrangements for pre-travel payments and will then return the travel packet *electronically* via email to the traveler (or travel/training coordinator). The traveler (or travel/training coordinator) must then retain the travel packet until such time as they return from travel and are able to complete the *actual* cost portion of the *City Travel/Reimbursement Form* in accordance with the *post-travel* requirements as further described in this policy.

(4). Post-Travel. Upon return from travel, the traveler (or travel/training coordinator) must immediately complete the actual cost(s) section of the *original* electronic *City Travel/Reimbursement Form* (that they received from the *Accounts Payable Clerk*) indicating the *actual* costs incurred during travel. Approved City travel is on the basis of reimbursement/payment for the reasonable and necessary business expense incurred and only the *actual* cost for the traveler will be authorized for payment in accordance with this policy. The *City Credit Card Usage Policy* and the *Purchasing Policy* must be adhered to in all instances.

Scanned copies of receipts are required for all travel costs and must be attached to the *City Travel/Reimbursement Form*. The traveler (or travel/training coordinator) must reconcile all receipts with the *actual* costs being listed on the *City Travel/Reimbursement Form* before the form is submitted *electronically* via email to the Department Head (or designee) for approval. The Department Head (or designee) must review and approve all listed expenditures and ensure that the proper receipts are attached. Upon approval, the Department Head (or designee) will then submit the entire travel packet *electronically* via email to the *Accounts Payable Clerk* for final processing. If the traveler (or travel/training coordinator) fails to provide the required documentation (receipts/invoices) to support out-

of-pocket expenditures for which reimbursement is being requested, the expense will not be reimbursed.

As per the City's *Credit Card Usage Policy*, use of a City credit card for personal use while on City business will be grounds for disciplinary action and/or dismissal in accordance with the City's *Personnel System Policy (PSP)*. In the case of conventions, etc. that include spouses, the employee will reimburse the City for (or the employee shall be responsible for) spouse's meals and/or any other spousal related expense incurred.

Questions regarding proper completion of the *City Travel/Reimbursement Form* should be directed to the *Accounts Payable Clerk*.

III. TRANSPORTATION

(1). General Guidelines. City Agents, when traveling, should be as conservative as circumstances permit. Travelers should make use of City-owned vehicles whenever possible. However, City-owned vehicles should be used ONLY on official business. Travel must be by the most direct route possible. Indirect routes in City vehicles are prohibited and any individual who travels in their personal vehicle by an indirect route must assume any extra expense incurred thereby.

(2). Vehicle Use. When transportation is by City-owned vehicle, all operating expenses such as gas, oil and repair bills are allowable. If a City-owned vehicle is not available and a personally owned vehicle is used, the traveler shall be reimbursed at the current year's Internal Revenue Service (IRS) per mile allowance rate. Each Department Head (or designee) shall be responsible for ensuring that the use of a personally owned vehicle is approved only when necessary.

If the traveler plans to use a personal vehicle, they should reference the IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov> to obtain the current mileage rate and include a copy of the webpage in their *City Travel/Reimbursement Form* packet prior to travel. Estimated mileage should be calculated from the *departure* location address, to the *destination* location address by use of the *Google Map* feature at <http://www.google.com>. A copy of the Google webpage mileage estimation must also be attached to the *City Travel/Reimbursement Form*. (The estimated cost for mileage should be obtained by multiplying the *Google Map* estimated mileage by the current IRS mileage allowance rate, for the total estimated mileage costs).

(3). Common Carrier. If the destination is at such a distance as to necessitate travel by common carrier (airline, bus line, or rail) the *actual* cost of economy fare shall be reimbursed. If no economy fare accommodations are available, the lowest cost accommodations available for the common carrier shall be reimbursed. It is permissible to purchase airline tickets on-line if this is determined to be the lowest cost available. In the case of an on-line ticket purchase that was previously approved, the confirmation/receipt must be submitted in accordance with this policy. Rental of any automobile is allowable as well as insurance on the automobile rental. The type of rental should be economical in accordance with the number of persons traveling.

IV. LODGING

(1). **Hotels and Motels.** The cost of lodging while traveling on City business shall be reserved and paid for via the City's Credit Card that is issued to each department. Travelers have the option of using their personnel credit card for lodging expense and will be eligible for reimbursement of the expense as long as the charges are in compliance with this *Travel Policy* and have been pre-approved via the *City Travel/Reimbursement Form*. Lodging expenses must be reasonable business class for the area. For example, a business class hotel room in Washington D.C. could be expected to cost more than a similar business class hotel room in Montgomery. All expenses must be documented with receipts in accordance with this policy. Requirements for overnight stay are generally as follows:

- a) Lodging the day before the event is eligible for reimbursement if travel is more than 100 miles and the event begins at 10 a.m. or earlier.
- b) Lodging on the final day of the event is eligible for reimbursement if the travel time is more than 100 miles and the event ends at 3 p.m. or later.

V. MEALS

(1). **Meals.** Reimbursement for actual expenses for meals will be made as long as the expense is reasonable business class for the area and good judgment is used. Domestic per diem rates can be obtained by state/county/location at the U.S. General Services Administration's website www.gsa.gov, by accessing per diem rates listed under travel resources on the home page. The traveler or Department Head is responsible for obtaining per diem information from the website, printing this information out, and attaching it with the Travel Request Form. City of Foley authorized attendee's meals will be the only meals authorized for payment without special approval of the exception of the Mayor. Gratuity (tips) for service will not exceed 20% of the meal cost.

VI. EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

Regular commuting time between an employee's home and the job site is not compensable. In contrast, all time spent by employees traveling as part of their regular job duties must be counted as "hours worked."

If an employee is called to perform a job after regular work hours, all the time spent, including the time traveling to and from the job site, is hours worked. Similarly, if an employee who normally works at one location is required to travel from home to another city a significant distance away for a one day special assignment and to return home the same day, all of the travel time will count as time worked, except for bona fide meal periods and for the time normally spent by the employee going from home to work and back.

If an employee is required to take an overnight trip that keeps the employee away from home overnight, all time spent traveling during the employee's regularly-scheduled workday must be counted as hours worked. Similarly, time spent traveling on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays that corresponds to the employee's regularly-scheduled work hours also must be counted as time worked. The time spent traveling outside of regular working hours is not compensable.

Of course, if an employee actually performs work while traveling, the time spent performing the work is compensable (e.g., if an employee on an overnight trip actually performs work while traveling on an airplane after regular scheduled hours, the time worked is compensable.).

(3). **Authorized Attendance.** The number of employees authorized to make any particular trip for City business, or to attend a work-related meeting, conference or seminar, etc. will be limited to the number of employees necessary to achieve the City's business purpose. The Department Head and/or designee is responsible for determining how best to achieve this objective.

VII. OTHER ELIGIBLE EXPENSE

(1). **Long Distance Charges.** Charges for long distance telephone calls on official business will be allowed provided a statement is furnished indicating the date, name and location called. Charges for one personal long distance call per day (24 hour period) on an overnight trip will be allowed provided it does not exceed \$5.

(2). **Fees and Related Expense.** Registration fees for approved conferences, conventions, seminars, meetings, etc., will be allowed including cost of official banquets and/or luncheons. If banquet or luncheon is included in the cost of the conference, etc. the employee should take this into consideration when requesting their Daily Per Diem funds.

(3). **Miscellaneous.** Tolls, cab fares, parking charges, luggage storage, handling expenses, valet service (when required) are all allowable expenses.

VIII. INELIGIBLE EXPENSE

(1). **Entertainment.** Entertainment costs (such as but not limited to, golf tournaments, theatre tickets, local attraction admission tickets, room pay-for-view television shows), laundry, valet service (unless required), alcoholic beverages, etc., are personal charges and will NOT be allowed.

Technical questions regarding this Travel Policy (such as issues completing the fillable PDF document or assembling documents into one PDF file) should be directed to the traveler's supervisor and/or the City's IT Services Coordinator. Questions regarding proper completion of form and required documentation should be directed to the City's Accounts Payable Clerk.