

CITY OF TRACY
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

SUBJECT: : TRAVEL EXPENSE - *Procedure*
DATE ISSUED: : *Revised May 21, 2019*
SECTION: : T

SECTION 1: PURPOSE

The purpose of this Travel Expense procedure is to provide employees information on travel requests and expenses.

SECTION 2: PROCEDURE

A. POLICY

It is in the best interest of the City that employees remain informed and trained in activities, developments and professional trends affecting the affairs of the City. As such, attendance at institutes, hearings, meetings, conferences or other gatherings is of value to the City and its citizens.

B. APPROVAL REQUIRED

All overnight travel and/or consecutive day travel must be approved by the City Manager or designee in advance.

The City Manager or designee has the responsibility to determine the reasonableness of travel requests as justified by the purpose of the travel. The intent is to make travel as economical as possible:

1. By examining each trip to determine necessity. Travel is not to be permitted when it can be handled by mail or telephone.
2. By minimizing the number of people who must travel for a single purpose.

3. By use of air travel when it is less costly than the use of private vehicle, unless otherwise approved.
4. By requiring the use of City vehicles, unless there is a valid reason for the use of a personal vehicle.

C. TRAVEL REQUEST REQUIRED

All City employees shall submit a travel request listing the expected expenses of the trip. This request must be approved by the Finance Director or designee. The employee must sign this request and is liable to the City for all monies advanced until an expense report, per "D" below, is filed.

Prior to submitting the request for consideration by the Finance Director or designee, it is the responsibility of the Department Head to ensure that the employee has provided proof of automobile insurance to the City when private transportation will be used in the course of the travel.

D. EXPENSE REPORT

The employee must file a completed expense report within seven (7) days of the conclusion of the trip and attach all necessary receipts to document the travel expenses. Any monies advanced, but not used for authorized expenses, must be returned to the City. Failure of the employee to file an expense report or submission of a false report may be grounds for disciplinary action.

E. PERMITTED EXPENSE RATES

1. Lodging - Actual cost for a single occupancy room at a motel or hotel with average quality accommodations. The government and group rates should be requested where available. Lodging will be paid at the Standard Room Rate (unless the conference room rate is less). Receipts for lodging costs must be presented. Non-compensable lodging expenses not considered a City expense include, but are not limited to:
 - Late check-out and guarantee charges
 - Personal services (i.e. barber/hair salon, shoeshines, health club and/or massage.
 - Entertainment, including but not limited to in-room movies.
 - Pet-related expenses.

2. Meals - Costs for meals not provided as a part of a registration fee will be calculated according to the meals and incidental expenses per diem rate established by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. Meals provided by the conference or included in the registration fee will not be eligible for per diem. A continental breakfast is not considered a meal for purposes of calculating meal allowance

Registration materials indicating which meals are provided as part of the registration must be submitted prior to receipt of per diem.

3. Transportation & Mileage - Travel by private car will be reimbursed at the current rate per mile approved by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service for use in connection with City business. For employees receiving a vehicle allowance, mileage reimbursement will be adjusted according to the applicable compensation & benefit plan. When attending conferences or meetings that are of such distance that it is more economical to take commercial transportation, if an employee proposes to drive their car in those cases, commercial air fare will be paid and not automobile mileage. Employees are strongly encouraged to choose the lowest cost for ground transportation taking into consideration reasonable travel time and other related cost factors such as parking. Airfare will be reimbursed at the cost of a coach fare.

4. Other Expenses - Actual cost of conference registration, business related telephone calls and internet connection services, parking and other legitimate expenses will be allowed.

Employees shall document all allowable travel-related expenditures with itemized receipts or invoices. For missing documents, the employee shall attach a Memorandum signed by the Department Head.

F. COSTS NOT ALLOWED

Costs for spouses or other family members accompanying City employees will not be reimbursed. Meals in the Tracy area, entertainment, laundry and valet services will not be reimbursed.

G. OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL

Travel out-of-state, which exceeds \$2,000, shall be approved by the City Manager. Travel out-of-state under \$2,000 may be approved by the Finance Director or designee.

H. BUDGETARY PROVISIONS

All anticipated conferences, conventions and professional meetings shall be budgeted for by the respective departments and offices in the current operating budget. The City Manager or designee may substitute one meeting for another to cover unusual or unexpected meetings of an urgent nature.

I. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Voluntary contributions by outside agencies or by City employees themselves may be considered and approved as part of a travel request to help offset travel costs. In such cases, City funds may be used to cover part of the costs and work hours approved for employee attendance at a training seminar or conference, where the activity provides benefit to the City, contributes to the professional development of a City staff member and does not involve a conflict of interest.

Amended by Resolution 93-008, January 5, 1993
Amended by Resolution 97-021, January 7, 1997
Amended by Resolution 2019-XXX, May 21, 2019