

## **DISTRICT TRAVEL AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY FOR TRUSTEES AND DISTRICT EMPLOYEES**

### **A. AUTHORIZED EXPENSES**

The following types of occurrences qualify a Trustee and/or District employee to receive reimbursement for expenses incurred in the performance of official duties relating to travel, meals, lodging, and other actual and necessary expenses that constitute authorized expenses, provided the requirements of this policy are met:

- (1) Communicating with representatives of regional, state, and national government on issues or matters affecting the District or on District adopted policy or political positions;
- (2) Attending professional, educational, or vocational meetings, seminars, workshops, programs and conferences designed to improve the expertise and information levels, including, but not limited to, ethics training required pursuant to Government Code Section 53234;
- (3) Participating in regional, state, and national organizations whose activities or interests may affect the District's interests;
- (4) Attending District sponsored or co-sponsored events or other community events;
- (5) Implementing a District-approved strategy for attracting or retaining revenue to the District;
- (6) Attending court proceedings related to the District; and
- (7) Attending off-site District business meetings and off-site events the Trustee and/or District employee is required to attend on behalf of the District.

All other reimbursement expenses that are not specifically authorized by this policy shall be approved by the Board in a public meeting before the expense is incurred.

## **B. EXPENSE AND REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES**

To conserve District resources and keep expenses within appropriate standards for public agencies, expenditures, whether paid directly by the District or reimbursed to a Trustee and/or District employee, should comply with the following guidelines. All expenses not covered by this policy, or which are in excess of the reimbursable rates set forth in this policy, shall not be reimbursable unless approved by the Board at a public meeting before the expense is incurred.

### **(1) Transportation**

Trustees and/or District employee requesting reimbursement of travel expenses should attempt to travel by the means most economical to the District consistent with scheduling needs and cargo space. In selecting a particular method of transportation, consideration shall be given for the total cost to the District that will result; including overtime, lost work, and actual transportation costs. In the event that a more expensive transportation form is used, the cost borne by the District will be limited to the cost of the most economical, direct, efficient and reasonable transportation form unless otherwise approved by the Board of Trustees. Government and group rates must be used when available.

Transportation by car may be done either with a personal vehicle or an official District vehicle. For personal vehicle travel, net mileage will be reimbursed at the current Internal Revenue Service Rates (see [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)). These rates are designed to compensate the Trustee and/or District employee for gasoline, insurance, maintenance, and other expenses associated with operating the Trustee's and/or District employee's personal vehicle. Net mileage equals roundtrip mileage minus any regular commute miles. Mileage will not be reimbursed for portions of the trip made for non-business related matters.

The Internal Revenue Service rates will not be paid for District vehicles or rental vehicles; only receipted fuel and rental expenses will be reimbursed for the use of rental vehicles.

When the use of public air carrier transportation is approved, private automobile use to and from the airport shall be reimbursed for all allowable miles at the current Internal Revenue Service Rates or commercial auto rental will be allowed if necessary and alternative personal or public transportation is unavailable or unreasonable.

Bridge and road tolls are reimbursable.

Air and Ground Travel shall be subject to the following limitations:

- Reimbursement shall be made for coach air travel if the cost of such air travel is competitive with other passenger airlines' coach fares.

- Reimbursement shall be made for coach rail travel if the cost of such rail travel is competitive with other coach rail travel fares.
- Charges for taxi service or other private transportation service such as, but not limited to Uber and Lyft, are reimbursable if such transportation is the most economical, practicable and efficient mode of transportation available under the circumstances. The actual cost of tips up to 15% shall be reimbursable, if a tip was in fact provided to the driver.
- Charges for shuttle service are reimbursable if such transportation is the most economical, practicable and efficient mode of transportation available under the circumstances.
- Charges for bus service are reimbursable if such transportation is the most economical, practicable and efficient mode of transportation available under the circumstances.

Actual fuel charges for vehicle rental are reimbursable if such transportation is the most economical, practicable and efficient mode of transportation available under the circumstances. Charges for rental vehicles may be reimbursed under this provision if more than one District Trustee and/or District employee is attending an authorized event, and it is determined that sharing a rental vehicle is more economical than other forms of transportation. When determining the type of rental car to be used, consideration should be given to the economic standards set forth in this policy and the appropriate use and stewardship of District funds, including but not limited to, the cost of the rental vehicle, parking and gasoline as compared to the combined cost of such other forms of transportation. Government and group rates must be used when available. Rental rates that are equal or less than those available through the State of California's website <http://www.dgs.ca.gov/travel/Programs/CarRentals.aspx> shall be considered the most economical and reasonable for purposes of reimbursement under this policy.

Reimbursement for fuel and other out-of-pocket expenses incurred as a result of the use of a District owned vehicle is permissible provided that use of the District owned vehicle is the most economical, practicable and efficient mode of transportation available under the circumstances.

Use of chartered travel shall be reimbursable only if such transportation is the most economical, practicable and efficient mode of transportation available under the circumstances.

Airport parking is reimbursable used during travel related to attending an authorized event. Long-term parking must be use when attending an authorized event that involves travel exceeding 24 hours.

## **(2) Lodging**

Lodging costs will be reimbursed or paid for when travel on official District business reasonably requires an overnight stay. Government and group rates offered by a provider of lodging services shall be used when available. Adjacent lodging facilities may be used if lower rates are found. If exercising the option to utilize alternate lodging, daily hotel cost plus reimbursable driving distance (to and from) must be less than the group rate offered.

## **(3) Meals**

Meal expenses and associated gratuities should be moderate, taking into account community standards and the prevailing restaurant costs of the area. Actual meal expenses and associated gratuities will be reimbursed or paid when incurred by the Trustee and/or District employee in the performance of official duties. Receipts are required to substantiate the expenses. Trustees and/or District employees may receive a reimbursement of \$125.00 per day for meals, plus taxes and up to 20% in gratuities. Trustees and/or District employees shall not be reimbursed for alcohol consumption.

## **(4) Telephone and Facsimile Expenses**

Trustees and/or District employees will be reimbursed for actual telephone and facsimile expenses incurred on District business. Telephone bills should identify which calls were made on District business. For cellular calls when the Trustee and/or District employee has a particular number of minutes included in the plan, the Trustee and/or District employee can identify the percentage of calls made on public business.

## **(5) Internet Access**

Trustees and/or District employees will be reimbursed for internet access connection and/or usage fees away from home, if internet access is necessary for District-related business.

## **(6) Materials and Memberships**

Trustees and/or District employees will be reimbursed for business-related reading and educational materials and organizational memberships will be reimbursed.

## **(7) Non-Reimbursable Expenses**

The following personal expenses shall not be reimbursed:

- Attendance or travel related to an unauthorized event;

- Barber and/or beauty shop charges;
- Fines for traffic violations;
- Private automobile repairs unless needed due to damage being caused by use while attending or participating in an authorized event;
- Purchase of personal items, unless needed while attending or participating in an authorized event;
- Pet accommodations and pet services, unless pet is sharing the same accommodations as the Trustee and/or District employee while attending or participating in an authorized event;
- Fitness/Health Facilities or Massages;
- Political or charitable contributions or events;
- Alcohol;
- Personal losses incurred while on District business;
- Entertainment expenses, including theater, movies (either in-room or at the theater), sporting events or other cultural events unless it is a part of the scheduled program of an authorized event;
- Laundering unless it is immediately necessary while attending or participating in an authorized event; and/or
- Guests, including without limitation, spouses, friends and relatives who are not employed by the District.

A spouse and/or other family member(s) may accompany a Trustee and/or District employee, if their presence does not detract from the performance of District duties. The attendance at the meetings and conferences by such family members of District Trustees and/or District employees is to be considered the sole responsibility of the individual Trustee and/or District employee, and all differences in costs brought about by the attendance and/or accompanying travel of a family member shall not be borne, paid or reimbursed by the District.

### **C. EXPENSE REPORT CONTENT AND SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

Expense reports must document that the expense in question meets the requirements of this policy.

Trustees and/or District employees must submit their expense reports within 60 days of an expense being incurred, which shall be accompanied by receipts documenting each expense. Restaurant receipts, in addition to any credit card receipts, are also part of the necessary documentation.

Pursuant to state law, expense reimbursement report forms are public records subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

**D. BRIEF REPORTS TO BOARD**

At the following meeting of the Board, Trustees and/or District employees shall briefly report, either verbally or in written form, on any meetings attended at the District's expense. If multiple Trustees and/or District employees attended the meeting at District expense, a joint report may be made to the Board.