

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 155

Administrative Order No. 140, adopted May 1, 2019, is hereby amended.

Pursuant to the authority granted to the City Administrator in BMCC Section 2-300, I hereby establish the following:

“Travel Procedures”

The policy statement was adopted by the City Council via Resolution 18-10756 on September 18, 2018.

Dated this 10/13/2023.

DocuSigned by:

33A3E4F6D5384F5
-ss- Chris A. Kukulski,
City Administrator



TRAVEL PROCEDURES

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PURPOSE

The City of Billings recognizes the constructive value of professional seminars, meetings and training conferences and provides travel funds for employees, as well as City elected and appointed officials, who attend such official events.

To constitute “official business for the City of Billings,” the activities of an official or employee (collectively “Traveler”) must clearly demonstrate that there is a valid City interest to be served or gained through the travel; and there is:

- Relevance to City operations or the individual’s role in such operations; and/or
- Promotion or development of City programs, methods or administration.

Travelers shall be entitled to reimbursement for their reasonable expenses associated with travel, meals, lodging and other actual and necessary expenses associated with attending such events in a manner and in the amounts as set forth in this Procedure. The purpose of this Procedure is to establish consistent, reasonable, and accountable standards to record and control the cost of business travel. Business Travel means conducting City business at a location other than Traveler’s usual designated work site(s).

RESPONSIBILITIES

Controlling travel costs is the responsibility of each Traveler. It is expected that good judgment be exercised when authorizing the use of and/or when utilizing City funds.

Department Directors are responsible for determining that:

1. The travel Procedure is being followed;
2. Proper accounts are being charged; and,
3. There are budgeted funds available.

TRAVEL REQUISITION/APPROVAL

A Traveler must receive permission from his/her supervisor prior to submitting a travel requisition.

A travel requisition is required for all travel of 100 miles or more, and must be submitted, after Departmental approval, to Finance (and the City Administrator, for Department Director travel) for approval.

A travel requisition must be completed for any traveler whose expenses will be paid by the City (whether directly or indirectly), even if that person is not a City employee. Each requisition shall have a conference or training agenda, itinerary, schedule, or other documentation attached.

TRAVEL EXPENSE REPORT/REIMBURSEMENT

A completed travel expense report showing all expenses, and a detailed meeting/conference agenda, must be filed with Finance within ten (10) days upon the return from the trip, regardless of whether or not reimbursement is being requested.

Travel expenses shall be supported by vendor receipts – in most cases, itemized receipts are required. No reimbursements will be made without vendor receipts or documentation (this shall include taxicabs, shuttles, baggage fees, fuel, parking charges, reasonable tips, etc.) Money spent for entertainment or personal items will not be reimbursed.

Finance will validate the completed travel requisition for compliance with this Procedure. Employees may be asked for additional information or documentation prior to reimbursement.

THIRD PARTY REIMBURSEMENT AND/OR PAYMENT

City staff is encouraged to assist and support other agencies, municipalities, and organizations and to promote employee initiative and efforts at self-improvement. These functions must directly benefit the City for a department to pay the travel costs associated with efforts in these areas. Although the department may not be able to pay for the travel costs associated with a function, the department director, or other approving authority, has the discretionary authority to compensate an employee for their regular work time to attend a function, or give time-off with pay for an employee to participate in a function.

In these situations, an outside party may reimburse an employee or the City for travel incurred on behalf of the third party. Examples of these types of situations include the following:

1. An employee is invited to make a presentation at a training conference or national meeting of an organization and the organization pays all travel costs associated with the conference; or,
2. An employee is an officer or board member of a national organization that engages in activities related to the employee's job, and the employee must attend several meetings each year for which the organization reimburses the travel costs incurred; or,
3. An employee manages a federal program that sponsors conferences at which representation from each state is recommended, and the federal government or a sponsoring agency is willing to arrange for and provide an airline ticket, lodging, and all other costs for the employee to attend this conference.

In each of these situations, the outside third party may reimburse the City, or the employee as an individual, for the travel costs incurred; or the third party may make all travel arrangements and provide for all lodging and meals so that neither the employee nor the City incurs any costs directly. When travel by an employee is paid by a third party, but the employee/City initially paid for the travel arrangements, subsequent reimbursements received from the third party must go to the City, including any amounts reimbursed that exceed the state per diem rates.

City statutes and policies must be adhered to for all costs

PURCHASING CARD (PCARD) USE AND PAYMENT

Employees are required to utilize a City-issued Procurement Card (Pcard) for air travel, lodging, and vehicle rental, unless it can be documented that another payment method is in the City's best interest. Personal credit cards or other form of payment are not to be used to book registration, airline tickets, hotel rooms, etc., unless a City-issued Pcard is not accepted or available. No exceptions.

Departments must follow the guidelines established for general procurement card use.

Reimbursement shall be made by expense report and invoice only. Travel expenses shall not be reimbursed through petty cash or any means other than an invoice – no exceptions.

FOREIGN TRAVEL

All travel outside the Continental limits of the United States and Canada must be reviewed and approved by the City Council.

TRANSPORTATION

Airfare

The City will reimburse for economy/coach air only. Business or First Class is not reimbursable. Upgrades are not reimbursable.

Air ticket must be purchased in advance to take advantage of the most economical fares available. Same day or near travel day ticket purchases are not reimbursable unless approved by the Department Director and properly justified.

Air travel itinerary is required to be submitted with travel claim documentation.

If airline charges for checked luggage, the City will reimburse the cost of first checked bag only. Additional baggage check-in costs will not be reimbursed.

Ground Transportation

If travel by automobile is determined to be appropriate in terms of cost and time, the employee may use a City-owned vehicle. Departments who do not have a vehicle for such travel may contact the Motor Pool for assistance. Or, if approved by the Supervisor, a private vehicle may be used.

When private vehicles are used, reimbursement will be limited to tourist class airfare or the allowable mileage rate, whichever is less. Documentation justifying the means of transportation and/or cost savings must be attached to the travel requisition. Allowable mileage rates are based on the annual standard mileage rate published by the U. S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The standard IRS mileage rate is updated every January 1st at a minimum and the City's mileage rates are updated at the same time. Reimbursement for mileage will be from the employee's workplace to the travel destination and returning to their work place.

When practical, employees will carpool when attending the same conference or training. An employee may take their own car but will be reimbursed for fuel receipts, not mileage, or upon agreement, split the reimbursement with the other drivers.

If a City employee is driving a City-owned vehicle, a passenger of a personal nature may not ride in the vehicle. If an employee of another agency is attending the training or conference, it is allowable for that person to be a passenger in a City-owned vehicle.

Employees who receive a vehicle allowance are eligible for reimbursement for gasoline purchases only for travel exceeding 100 miles round trip.

Rental Car

Explanation for the necessity of a rental car will be included on or attached to the travel requisition form. Rental vehicles must always be booked at the most economical prices. The following guidelines for car rentals apply:

One or two people – compact or economy

Three or four people – mid-size

If a larger or more expensive car is leased, the Traveler is responsible for paying for the upgrade.

Travelers must fill the gas tank before returning a rental car to avoid fuel surcharges. Fuel pre-payment at the counter is not allowed and will not be reimbursed. Receipts are necessary for reimbursement of fuel costs.

Basic level of insurance offered by the rental car agency shall be accepted and paid for by the City.

LODGING

The accommodations must be reasonable and consider factors such as travel purpose, location, cost, safety and convenience. Lodging costs will be reimbursed at the “single occupancy” rate for a standard room. Travelers should consider nearby hotels for conventions or seminars that specify hotels. Travelers should request local government rates, promotional rates, Internet rates or other discounts in order to locate the lowest hotel rates.

Lodging in a Private Residence: Travelers who stay in a private residence with relatives or friends while traveling on business are not eligible for reimbursement of lodging costs.

Lodging at short-term rentals such as Airbnb or similar service: costs for lodging other than hotels are not approved by the City and will not be reimbursed unless the Traveler can prove cost savings to the City prior to traveling.

Actual receipts must be presented. Hotel booking confirmation instead of the receipt for payment of the hotel bill is not acceptable.

No reimbursement will be made for phone calls (including long distance charges) or internet access charges, except for fixed hotel telephone access charges.

MEALS

Per diem allowance is the only allowable method for reimbursement for meals except for same-day travel. City-issued Pcards may not be used for meal purchases. Food purchases may also not be charged to hotel rooms paid by Pcard, unless paid for by employee prior to hotel check-out, and indicated on hotel invoice as paid.

Per diem shall be paid on a lump sum rate, with $\frac{1}{2}$ of the lump sum paid on travel days unless training or conference occurs on the same day as travel. The table below lists the full daily amount employees receive for a single calendar day of travel when that day is neither the first nor last day of travel.

The separate amounts for breakfast, lunch and dinner listed in the chart are provided should any meals need to be deducted from an expense report. For example, if a trip includes meals that are already provided, the per diem allowance will need to be deducted from the expense report for those meals.

IN STATE:

Breakfast	10
Lunch	15
<u>Dinner</u>	<u>25</u>
Total:	50

OUT OF STATE:

Breakfast	10
Lunch	20
<u>Dinner</u>	<u>30</u>
Total:	60

50% of total on travel days unless training/conference occurs on same day as travel.

The employee is unable to claim a meal if it is included in the registration cost of the training/conference, even if the employee does not take advantage of that provided meal. Exceptions include continental breakfasts, additional costs for banquets (receipt shall be attached to expense report), and when the employee attends a training session or required business meeting during a scheduled meal.

If an employee is traveling from in-state to out-of-state, and vice versa, or to multiple states, the geographical location of the lodging facility determines the applicable meal reimbursement rate.

Same-Day Travel

Same-day travel will not be paid on a per diem basis. Employees must submit **itemized** receipts for meals incurred and reimbursement will be up to the maximum per diem amount/meal below plus 20% for taxes. The increased amount will be paid to the employee and added to the employee's W-2. Each meal will be calculated separately on the expense report.

Example: An employee has a breakfast receipt for travel within the State. The itemized receipt is \$12.25. The employee would receive the \$10 breakfast allotment, plus the 20% for taxes.

Therefore, the employee would be reimbursed \$12.50, which will also be the amount added to the employee's W-2 as gross wages.

COMBINED PERSONAL TRIPS

All personal trips made together with official trips must be approved by the appropriate supervisor(s) **before** the trip is made and must cause no additional expense to the City. Documentation of such **shall** be attached to the travel requisition.

CHANGES OR CANCELLATION COSTS

Generally, tickets are non-refundable and non-transferable and fees will be incurred for any changes made once the reservations are booked.

- 1) If cancellation occurs due to a City-related change or circumstances beyond the traveler's control, the City will pay for the cancellation fee (reschedule if possible or traveler may reimburse City if a personal use is desired).
- 2) If the cancellation fee is due to a cancellation penalty for not canceling in a timely manner, the traveler is responsible for the fee.

- 3) If cancelled or changed due to personal demands, all charges are payable by traveler, including the cost of the ticket.
- 4) In either case, the City is not responsible for costs for companions.

COST SAVINGS

Travel arrangements, including airline and rail tickets, lodging, and rental cars, must be booked at the most economical pricing. The City encourages purchasing decisions that minimize the total cost of business trips. Travelers should always request government or group rates, when available, for transportation, lodging, meals, and all other travel-related expenses.

When a purchasing decision results in discounts for a travel expense, the amount saved belongs to the City. The savings cannot be used at the traveler's discretion to pay for other aspects of the business trip.

COMPLIANCE

All elected officials, appointed members of boards, commissions, or councils, and all other City employees are subject to this Procedure. Failure to comply with any portion of this procedure may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

EXCEPTIONS

The City Administrator may approve exceptions to this Procedure.

All forms are to be routed through DocuSign.

Travel forms are located at: <\\it-w12k07\All Users\Purchasing\Travel Procedure and Forms>

Certificate Of Completion

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Certificate Pages: 2

Initials: 0

Liz Kampa

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kampal@billingsmt.gov

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Chris A. Kukulski



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kukulskic@billingsmt.gov

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City Administrator

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City of Billings

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