

Administrative Order No. 113

Travel Procedure

Purpose

This procedure is to be used by City employees and elected officials who travel on City business. All City employees are required to follow these procedures for any travel.

Procedure

The City Administrator has final approval and responsibility for travel. The 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.

A. All travel, including the means of transportation to and from a destination, must be approved by the appropriate Department Director or designee before any trip is made. The use of training or conference requisition is required for all travel (except within the City of Billings) and will be submitted, after Departmental approval, to Finance and the City Administrator 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.

1. A written travel or conference requisition form, when required, should be submitted at least six (6) weeks prior to the travel. Any purchase order(s) relating to the travel will be submitted three (3) to four (4) weeks prior to the travel. Each requisition shall have a conference or training agenda, itinerary, schedule, or other documentation attached. Each individual must have a requisition if they are requesting separate reimbursement.
2. Cash advances are discouraged, but can be requested by employees who have received their Department Director or designee's approval to do so with a minimum of three weeks notice. Cash advances will not be issued for less than \$100.00.

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

C. All transportation shall be by the most economical means -- taking into consideration the direct cost of the carrier, the cost of the employee's time away from the office, and expenses incurred for additional nights lodging and meals. All commercial air travel shall be by the least expensive service available. An employee may be asked for documentation justifying the means of transportation and/or cost savings.

- D. If travel by automobile is decided to be appropriate in terms of cost and time, the employee will use a City-owned vehicle. Exceptions (including the use of a private vehicle) need the approval of the City Administrator, unless stated in Labor Contract Agreements. Departments who do not have a vehicle for such travel may contact the Motor Pool for assistance. 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. The allowable mileage rate shall be established annually based upon the mileage rate currently allowed by the IRS. Employees who receive a vehicle allowance are eligible for reimbursement for gasoline purchases only for travel exceeding 100 miles round trip. Reimbursement for mileage will be from the employee's work place to the travel destination and returning to their work place.
- E. When practical, employees will carpool when attending the same conference or training. An employee may take their own car but will not be reimbursed for mileage, or upon agreement, split the reimbursement with the other drivers.
- F. All things being equal, employees shall stay at the hotel/motel with the most reasonable rate.
- G. Explanation for the necessity of a rental car will be included on the travel requisition form and subject to approval by the City Administrator.
- H. A completed travel expense report showing expenses for reimbursement, and a detailed meeting/conference agenda, must be filed with Finance within ten (10) days upon the return from the trip. Any surplus cash advance must also be returned within ten (10) days upon the return from the trip – no exceptions.
- I. Travel expenses which require reimbursement shall be supported by vendor receipts. 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.
- J. Same day travel will not be paid on a per diem basis. Employees must submit receipts for meals incurred and reimbursement will be up to the per diem amount below plus 20% for taxes. The increased amount will be paid to the employee and added to the employee's W-2.
Example: Using 20% for taxes and \$30.00 in receipts, the employee would be reimbursed \$37.50 which will also be the amount added to the employee's W-2 as gross wages. This amount will only be used to calculate tax withholdings.
- K. 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.

MEALS PER DIEM WITHIN THE STATES OF MONTANA, WYOMING, NORTH DAKOTA AND IDAHO - NO RECEIPTS NEEDED:

Breakfast	\$ 6.00
Lunch	\$ 7.50
Dinner	<u>\$16.50</u>
	\$30.00

MEALS PER DIEM FOR TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE STATE OF MONTANA, EXCEPT FOR WYOMING, NORTH DAKOTA AND IDAHO - NO RECEIPTS NEEDED:

Breakfast	\$ 10.00
Lunch	\$ 12.00
Dinner	<u>\$ 22.00</u>
	\$44.00

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 travel or attendance occurs during the following time slots, per diem payment may be made for the indicated meals.

12:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. -	Breakfast
11:01 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. -	Lunch
5:01 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. -	Dinner

- L. All personal trips made together with official trips must be approved by the City Administrator and appropriate Department Director before the trip is made and must cause no additional expense to the City. Documentation of such shall be attached to the travel requisition.
- M. Telephone cards may be purchased by each department to be used for employees' phone calls. It is the department's responsibility to distribute and monitor the usage of the cards. No reimbursement will be made for phone calls (including long distance charges) or internet access charges, except for fixed hotel telephone access charges. When traveling outside of Montana with a City cell phone, employees must contact IT's administrative secretary at least two (2) days prior to the trip to change their calling plan.
- N. Reimbursement shall be made by Purchase Order only. Travel advances and/or expenses shall not be reimbursed through petty cash or any other means than a Purchase Order – no exceptions.
- O. Finance will validate the completed travel requisition for compliance with this procedure.

- P. Employees may be asked for additional information or documentation prior to reimbursement.
- Q. The City Administrator may approve exceptions to this procedure. Failure to comply with any portion of this procedure may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Christina F. Volek
City Administrator

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