

TRAVEL AND EXPENSE

Policy:

The district will provide its members travel expenses in a fiscally responsible manner, during operational and/or general Membership Development training, or while on district business trips. This policy does not apply to members traveling from their personal residences to district facilities, or to members responding to emergency operations within the district.

Definitions:

Incidentals: Expenses on district business-related travel (i.e., toll roads, parking, subway tickets) other than transportation, lodging, and meals.

Introduction:

- A. The district will pay for reasonable and necessary expenditures made by members while on assignments away from the normal work location, with approval by the Board of Trustees. Members are expected to use discretion in all instances in which district funds are used. Expenses should be reasonable for the circumstances and appropriate for the business conducted.
- B. Travel arrangements must be made as far in advance as possible to obtain the best rates available; the Administrative Assistant may coordinate travel arrangements for staff. All documentation for trips (i.e. per diem requests; PO's for hotel, airlines, and rental cars) should be completed and submitted to the Chief simultaneously, unless circumstances exist which make this impractical.
- C. With prior approval, a family member or friend may accompany district members on district-related travel when the presence of a companion will not interfere with successful completion of business objectives. Additional expenses arising from the accompanying companion are the responsibility of the member. Generally, members are permitted to combine personal travel with business travel, as long as leave time is approved for career members by their direct supervisor. Additional expenses arising from such non-business travel are the responsibility of the member.
- D. Abuse of the provisions of this SOG may result in denial of future travel benefits and/or disciplinary action.

Transportation:

- A. Transportation shall be provided by the district for all authorized travel. When available, the member is requested to use a district vehicle for transportation, or, when applicable, commercial transportation. If no district vehicle or commercial transportation is available, the district will reimburse members for use of their privately owned vehicle at a rate per mile equal to the allowable Internal Revenue Service rate upon submission of an approved mileage reimbursement form to the Chief and/or Assistant Chief; mileage will not be reimbursed if a district vehicle is available. If more than one member is attending the same seminar, convention, meeting, or class, carpooling shall be practiced whenever possible.
- B. If commercial airline transportation is used, the least expensive coach class airfare or other reduced rate available at the time of reservation will be utilized. When non-refundable airline tickets are purchased and not used, the member will reimburse the district for the cost of the tickets. In situations where mitigating circumstances exist beyond the member's control, the Chief may waive the above requirement.
- C. If significant airfare savings can be obtained by members extending a business trip through a Saturday, the district will pay for the added hotel, tax, and meals (provided they do not exceed the amount saved) with pre-approval by the member's direct supervisor.
- D. Airport buses or other public transportation, as well as complimentary hotel pick-up and delivery shuttles, are available at most major airports and should be used to travel between airports and business destinations whenever possible. Taxi cabs and rental cars may be used when other means are unavailable or impractical. If rental cars are used, no extra insurance needs to be purchased.

Lodging:

- A. Lodging expenses will be paid by the district for all authorized travel. Lodging will be prepaid by the district, whenever possible, or the district may be directly billed by the hotel/motel. A reasonable class of accommodation shall be selected where choice is available. Government rates are available at many hotel/motel chains and should be used.
- B. The number of single or double occupancy rooms available (which may be shared by family member or friend), will be announced at the same time as group training/travel opportunities. When two or more members are attending the same seminar, convention, meeting, or training, shared lodging is encouraged.
- C. Hotel/motel receipts must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant within 48 hours of the member's return.

Meals:

- A. Each member shall be authorized \$35.00 per day meal allowance for all approved district business travel. The meal money will be paid in advance of the activity. The activity must be more than 5 hours long to receive any money.
- B. If the allowable daily amount is not sufficient because of the location of the event, reimbursement for reasonable and appropriate amounts above the \$35.00 per day rate will be made upon submission of meal receipts to the Administrative Assistant.
- C. If the member does not attend the scheduled activity but has already been paid their \$35.00 per day meal allowance, the member must re-pay the district any money received.

Business Meeting Meals:

The district recognizes the occasional need for a member to pay for a business meeting meal; reimbursement will be made to the member upon submission of the meal receipts and a letter stating why the reimbursement is necessary to the Administrative Assistant.

Telephone Calls:

Costs of personal telephone calls during out of town trips are the member's responsibility. Members may request and use a district calling card for business telephone calls during authorized travel.

Incidentals:

Reimbursement for reasonable and appropriate incidentals will be made to members upon submission of receipts to the Administrative Assistant.

Non-Allowable Expenses:

Expenses not authorized for petty cash advances or reimbursements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Laundry, cleaning, or valet service (except for trips of over one week's duration).
- B. Tobacco.
- C. Alcoholic beverages.
- D. Entertainment, including in-hotel room movies.
- E. First class travel accommodations when economy or coach class is available.
- F. Meals and lodging in lieu of those provided by the registration fee for seminars, conferences, meetings, or classes.
- G. Fines, forfeitures, parking tickets, or penalties.

- H. Rental vehicles (except as pre-approved by the member's direct supervisor).
- I. Expenses of a spouse or other non-member.
- J. Loss or damage to personal property.
- K. Barber, beauty parlor, shoe shines, or toiletries.
- L. Personal postage.