

**412.4 SUBJECT: TRAVEL AND TRAINING REGULATIONS**

**:1 OBJECTIVE:**

To provide rules and procedures for travel and reimbursement for City employees, elected officials, advisory board members, and other authorized persons.

**:2 AUTHORITY:**

This procedure amended by City Council September 15, 2003.

**:3 DIRECTION:**

Management, Budget & Accounting Director, as an appointed official, serves at the pleasure of the Mayor.

**:4 METHOD OF OPERATION:**

**A. General Information**

This procedure contains travel regulations and instructions to complete the Travel Request and Expense Voucher.

Elected officials, appointed officials, advisory board members, employees, and other authorized officials traveling on official business for the City of Orlando are expected to use reasonably priced lodging accommodations and are required to use economy or tourist class air travel fares unless no other alternative class is available and the Traveler has prior written approval by the Mayor or the Chief Administrative Officer to travel first-class. Under no circumstances are travelers on City business permitted to accept gratuitous upgrades to first class. Meals, tips and lodging must be reasonable in relation to the area visited; and reimbursement will be limited to a reasonable allowance.

Preplanning by management to obtain advance registration discount rates and minimizing the number of staff who will attend the same training session will contribute toward cost control.

Travel, whether by public transportation, privately-owned automobile, City-owned vehicle, or a for-hire conveyance, shall be over the most direct, practicable route. Any deviations from a direct route must be explained on the voucher.

**B. Travel Authorization**

Elected officials authorize their own travel and must comply with all policies stated herein. Advisory Board Members' and other authorized persons' travel will be authorized in advance by the Mayor or his/her

designee.

The authorizing official for each employee traveling for the benefit of the City will be the higher of their Bureau Chief or their immediate supervisor except as specified at B1 and B2 below; i.e., non-appointed employees' travel is approved by the Bureau Chief, the Bureau Chiefs by the Department Directors and the Directors by the CAO. Travel cannot be authorized by an employee who is not an appointed official, regardless of any capacity that employee might be in at the time (i.e., Acting Bureau Chief). Only one authorizing signature is required on the Travel Request and Expense Voucher.

Travel during work hours and/or at the City's expense will be authorized in advance of travel. Specific expenses and/or conditions of travel must be authorized by the designated official as described below:

1. Mayor, CAO, or their designees:
  - a. Car rental
  - b. Entertainment expenses
  - c. Travel by motor vehicle in excess of 1000 miles round trip outside of Florida.
  - d. Travel and training in excess of 5 consecutive work days.
  - e. Out-of-state travel.
  - f. To hold position in a professional organization for which travel to meetings is required.
  - g. Waiver of reimbursement agreement.
  - h. Out-of-country travel.
  
2. Department Directors, Office Heads, Bureau Chiefs:
  - a. Technical training necessary to complete the job assignment.
  - b. General training for job performance enhancement.
  - c. Training to maintain professional certification or license, i.e., CPE, CPD.
  - d. Use of privately-owned vehicle in-state.
  - e. All other travel not defined. For example, to evaluate a product or to give testimony.

In the event of a public safety emergency situation when the employee cannot obtain prior authorization, travel documents shall be approved upon the employee's return to work.

#### C. Travel/Training Guidelines

All travel covered by this policy must be for the direct benefit of the City. A direct benefit to the City will promote the economic and financial welfare of the continuing professional education and new technological and management training, or represent the interests of the City at board and committee meetings of an organization in which the employee was authorized to hold an office. Employees whose travel expense is to be reimbursed by an outside agency must so indicate on the Travel Request and Expense Voucher and initiate a billing to the agency immediately upon return to work. A copy of the billing must accompany the final reconciliation submitted to Accounting and collection is the responsibility of the traveler.

D. Travel Reimbursement Requirements

In certain situations travel and training will also provide a significant benefit to the employee. The City desires to ensure the City's benefit is realized by establishing reimbursement requirements.

The employee will be required to sign an agreement which stipulates that should the employee leave City service within one year from the completion of the travel, the traveler will reimburse the City on a pro rata basis for travel expenses incurred in the 12 months preceding termination which exceed \$1,200 per trip. Credit will be given for months of service worked subsequent to completion of travel.

A waiver of the reimbursement agreement may be obtained when training is necessary to complete the job responsibilities. See Section B.g. above.

E. Prior/Post Travel Accountability

Although travel costs have been included in the City budget, City officials and employees shall obtain written approval to perform the travel, attend meeting, etc., before making any commitment to pay registration fee, to purchase a transportation ticket or to incur any other cost. Each official or employee shall first prepare a Travel Request and Expense Voucher for individual expenses and submit to the appropriate authorizing official as defined in Section B. Detailed instructions concerning completion of the form and travel authorization are outlined on the reverse side. The reimbursement agreement must accompany any travel request with an estimated cost in excess of \$1,200. In no event shall a travel form be submitted for approval unless funds for payment of the proposed travel are available in the proper charge code.

When the travel form has been approved and funds certified as available, the official or employee is then authorized to be absent from work for the period specified to travel, to incur expense and to be reimbursed, but not in excess of traveler to draw a travel advance and to initiate invoices for payment in advance for room deposits, registration or tuition fees and tickets on common carriers. Amount paid by invoice shall be deducted from the amount authorized for travel before applying for a travel advance. Such advance may not be drawn more than ten days prior to the beginning of travel. The traveler must use the Travel Expense Worksheet to account for all expenses. This form is designed for daily use to assist the traveler in keeping an accurate accounting of each item of expense. A section is provided for each category of expense included on the travel form. At the completion of travel, the traveler will sum each category and transfer the total to the appropriate item of the Travel Request and Expense Voucher.

The Travel Expense Worksheet and receipts for all expenses, where it is feasible or possible to obtain receipts, shall be attached to the completed Travel Request and Expense Voucher form. Receipts for hotels, public transportation, convention registration fees, car rental, tolls, and similar items must be attached. All items for which a receipt cannot or was not obtained must be explained in writing. Tips and similar items normally cannot be substantiated unless charged to hotel rooms and are therefore included in per diem amounts (see F.3.). All items of a miscellaneous nature must be itemized. The compiled Travel Request and Expense Voucher must be prepared by the traveler and submitted to the Office Head/Bureau Chief or Department Director within seven working days of completing travel.

The compiled Travel Request and Expense Voucher and the completed Travel Expense Worksheet must be prepared by the traveler, signed and submitted to the authorizing official within seven working days of completing travel. The official should review the forms before approving and should obtain explanation on any questionable item, keeping in mind they are certifying that the expenses were incurred on City business and are a legal obligation of the City. If costs incurred exceed the amount of expense authorized by the appropriate official and the employee requests reimbursement for the additional amount, the authorizing official should provide a complete explanation and a recommendation to the Accounting and Control Bureau for payment. All forms must be submitted to Accounting within ten working days of completing travel.

The Accounting Operations Supervisor shall review the expenses to make certain that all items of expense are properly charged and are not otherwise questionable. If additional information is needed for approval, it shall be the City procedures, the form shall be returned to the Department for revision. If the charges are found to be correct and allowable, the voucher will be forwarded to Accounts Payable for final audit and payment.

All unused portions of money paid directly to the traveler or advanced by use of City VISA card for non-City charges shall be repaid within ten (10) working days from time of return to work. If the traveler has not settled the cash advance(s) within 30 calendar days of return to work, the Management, Budget & Accounting Director shall authorize a deduction of the amount advanced from the traveler's salary.

F. Governing Regulations

The following regulations are established and will be the basis upon which reimbursement of expenses will be approved.

1. Transportation

- a. Travelers are expected to use the mode of travel that is most advantageous to the City. This would include consideration of bus or limousine service to and from terminals or extended parking at terminals versus use of a common carrier. The traveler is permitted mileage from point of departure (home or work location), whichever is the shorter distance.

The use of a privately-owned vehicle for official travel in lieu of publicly-owned vehicles or common carriers may be authorized by the Department Director. Whenever travel is by privately-owned vehicle, the traveler shall be entitled to a mileage allowance at a fixed rate not to exceed IRS guidelines per mile or the air carrier rate for such travel, whichever is lower. Where two or more authorized persons travel in one private vehicle, the person supplying the vehicle shall receive transportation reimbursement at the rate consistent with IRS regulations.

Employees deviating from the most direct route will have to bear the extra cost.

- b. City Vehicle  
When authorization is requested to use a City vehicle, indicate the car number. All travelers *must* attach gas/other auto-related expense receipts for reimbursement.

Fleet Management Bureau may be contacted between 6:00 a.m. and 11:30 p.m. for a purchase order number to be used for emergency repairs to City Vehicle.

- c. Taxicabs  
Reimbursement for taxicabs to and from airports, train stations, etc., will be made only when receipts are provided.

- d. Car Rentals  
Prior approval must be received from the Mayor or the Chief Administrative Officer if the traveler must rent a car.

- e. Airline  
Airline reservations may be acquired if approved by the appropriate official. Tickets may be purchased through a local travel agency (at no extra charge). The local travel agency must then contact Accounting and Control for issuance of U.A.T.P. (Universal Air Travel Pass). A verbal approval to use the City's air credit card is prohibited in order to maintain proper accounting controls. The traveler may also purchase the tickets and request reimbursement.

Air travelers must attach their boarding passes to the Travel Request and Expense Vouchers and completed Travel Expense Worksheets.

- f. Reimbursable MSA Travel  
Travelers within the MSA (Orange, Seminole, Osceola Counties) are reimbursed for lodging when justifiable cause is documented. Mileage and tolls are based on the shorter distance from home or office. See F.3. for per diem regulation.

## 2. Lodging

- a. Expenses may vary with the area traveled, but all expenditures must be reasonable; primary responsibility for the reasonableness of amounts charged rests with the

official who authorized the voucher. Excessive charges will be questioned by the Finance Department and must be explained fully in a written memorandum by the Department Director.

When additional nights of lodging and per diems are charged to the City based on more economical fares for weekend stays, a cost comparison prepared by an independent party with third-party verification (i.e., travel agent, airline rate schedule) must be approved and attached to completed Travel Expense Worksheet.

- b. When traveling in the State of Florida, the advance check should be made payable to hotel, motel, lodge, etc., to ensure exemption of sales tax. Accounting will include the Tax Exempt #58-12-094438-54C on the check stub. When lodging is not paid in advance, the traveler must seek exemption from payment of tax on rental of hotel rooms. All travelers will be provided a Tax Exempt Card made out to the hotel/motel concerned. If the hotel does not honor the tax exempt card, please indicate in your travel voucher that the card was presented to the hotel but was denied. Accounting will then follow-up to insure exemption is honored in the future.

### 3. Meals and Tips

- a. Reimbursement for meals and tips in non-major cities is based on the following per diem amount:  
Breakfast: \$ 6.00 includes tip and tax  
Lunch: \$ 8.00 includes tip and tax  
Dinner: \$14.00 includes tip and tax  
Tips, etc.: \$ 2.00

The Accounting and Control Bureau maintains the Internal Revenue Code list of major cities in which reimbursement for meals and tips cannot exceed the following:

Breakfast: \$ 7.00 includes tip and tax  
Lunch: \$10.00 includes tip and tax  
Dinner: \$16.00 includes tip and tax  
Tips, etc.: \$ 3.00

- b. Same day travel by employees or elected officials allows

reimbursement for reasonable meal expenses. In cases where the traveler did not find it necessary to spend the night out of town but was unable to return home by 7:00 p.m. in time for dinner, reimbursement will be allowed for the evening meal. Similarly, when the traveler finds it necessary to leave home before 7:00 a.m., reimbursement for breakfast would be in order. Employees engaged in constant daily routine travel are not reimbursed for meals.

- c. Reimbursement of \$50.00 per day, in lieu of the meals and tips per diem and lodging costs, may be authorized by the Department Director provided that the \$50.00 per day does not exceed the amount permitted in paragraph (3) for meals and tips, plus the estimated average daily cost of lodging for the individual reimbursed.
  - d. Meals provided as part of registration or by an airline should be reported on the Travel Expense Worksheet as meals furnished.
4. Other
- a. Registration fees for functions related to City business may be reimbursed when an employee is expected to attend due to the nature of the position.
  - b. Telephone calls and telegrams related to official business and paid for by the traveler may be claimed on the reimbursement voucher. The traveler must explain toll calls shown on the hotel bill including the location, parties and purpose. If out-of-town travel extends three days or more, one three minute personal call home is allowable for reimbursement. No other personal calls are reimbursable.
  - c. While entertainment on behalf of the City, under certain circumstances and conditions, clearly meets a public purpose, these instances are subject to planning and preparation; and thus it is a specific policy of the City to require approval by either the Mayor, the Chief Administrative Officer, or their designees of the nature, purpose, and anticipated cost of entertainment undertaken with public funds. For purposes of this policy, "entertainment" means meals, sporting events, theatrical

productions, concerts and similar activities. When approval is granted, it is specifically required that the nature of the entertainment, those present and a brief summary of the business discussed be provided for inclusion in the City's records. Further, although the purchase of alcoholic beverages is discouraged, expenditures for such purchases may be approved by the Mayor or Chief Administrative Officer, or their designees, in connection with approved entertainment. The following exceptions/classification to this policy are stated and made a part hereof:

- (1) When the City agrees to reimburse a job applicant for expenses to come to an interview (air-fare, motel and meals), the meal allowances applied will be consistent with the existing City travel policy.
  - (2) While the City acknowledges that attendance and participation in professional association meetings constitutes a public purpose in relation to the training and education of its professionals, the City will reimburse the cost of meals and attendance to such meetings only if it is established that the meeting has a professional and not social purpose and the fee for the meal is at a standard rate per attendee.
  - (3) In recognition of a City Commissioner's entertainment commitments while traveling, the City will reimburse reasonable meal costs for other than City Officials or employees. These expenses should be reasonable and not include alcoholic beverages. Upon submitting receipts for entertainment meals, a Commissioner should justify the purpose and the attendees in writing to the Comptroller's Office. Commissioners will use their own judgment in determining the public purpose and City benefit.
- d. Out-of-state travel, whether by personal or City-owned automobile, in excess of 1,000 miles for the round trip requires prior written approval the Mayor, the Chief Administrative Officer, or their designees. Approval to use a City vehicle provides the traveler(s) a substitute for an

airline ticket; therefore, "en-route" expenses other than gasoline/vehicle expense will not be reimbursed. Travel time in excess of the most advantageous mode of travel to the City will be chargeable as leave to the employee(s).

- e. A traveler may request to use a City of Orlando VISA card when circumstances so warrant. Such circumstances could include, but are not all inclusive, car rental at destination point, hotel checkout, approved entertainment expenses. The card is available in the Management, Budget & Accounting Director's office. The traveler is required to sign a VISA card agreement assuming all responsibility for charges made to the card from date of delivery until the card is returned, at which time the Report of City Credit Charges form must be submitted with all VISA receipts attached along with a personal check for any non-City charges.

:5 FORMS:

Travel Request and Expense Voucher; Travel Expense Worksheet.

:6 COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES:

None.

:7 REFERENCES:

Florida Statutes 1986, Section 112.061. Special Act 2114 authorizing City of Orlando to provide, by ordinance, uniform maximum rates of per diem and travel expenses, without regard to any limitation by general law, June 10, 1971. City Code, Chapter 2, Article XXVII, Section 2.256-2.262. Procedure approved by City Council August 17, 1970, Item 27; amended December 4, 1972; Item 17; amended October 24, 1973; Item 54; amended August 27, 1974, Item 26; amended January 3, 1977, Item 42. City Code Chapter 2.259 amended January 1980. Procedure amended October 12, 1987, Item 21A-53; amended December 17, 1990, Item 46; amended August 3, 1992, Item 2CC; amended October 5, 1992, Item 4GGG; amended June 21, 1993, Item 2-P; amended October 3, 1994, Item 3-S; amended July 24, 1995, Item 7-U; amended September 23, 1996, Item 3EE; amended August 11, 1997, Item 6-A.

:8 EFFECTIVE DATE:

This procedure effective September 15, 2003.

