

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION 7400

SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

HUMAN RESOURCES

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL PROGRAM

Conference attendance and travel expenses must be approved by the appropriate management team member prior to the trip. Employee travel outside of the United States must also be approved by the college president and the Vice Chancellor, Business Services or designee at least 30 days before the travel dates.

A pre-approval must be completed prior to any trip(s), excluding mileage only travel. There are two primary reasons for this requirement. First, all employees are covered by District paid Workers' Compensation and Life Insurance. Coverage could be in jeopardy if any injury or accident occurs while an employee is away from the immediate area unless an approved travel request is on file. Second, funds for District paid travel must be available in the appropriate budget account for such travel to be approved.

The travel procedures that follow pertain to all funds and programs of the District regardless of funding source. All original detailed itemized receipts referenced below must be scanned and attached to the appropriate pre-approval/expense report for submittal. Original receipts must be maintained until verification of payment issued is confirmed. Credit card/bank statements alone are not sufficient for reimbursement of any travel expenses.

Travel may be booked through the District approved travel program. Contact District Accounting for program access.

This regulation does not apply to employees that are traveling with students for approved student activities (BP/AR 4300 – *Field Trips, Excursions, and Field Study Courses*).

I. PRE-APPROVAL

Requests for travel must be submitted electronically utilizing the Emburse system. A pre-approval for each employee must be completed for each trip before the trip begins if there are expenses associated with the trip. When preparing the pre-approval, estimated expenses should include all anticipated costs including taxes and miscellaneous expenses. A copy of the detailed conference agenda or other communication from the meeting organizer detailing the dates and location of the meeting (e.g. save the date) must also be attached to the pre-approval.

II. MILEAGE

Local business mileage shall be reimbursed at the prevailing IRS standard rate. Mileage will be reimbursed from the employee's regular work location. Additional

mileage associated with a family member/friend driving an employee to the airport can only be reimbursed as one roundtrip to/from the airport. Mileage stipends were incorporated into the Management Team Salary Schedule as additional compensation effective January 1, 2022. Accordingly, management team members at Ranges 15 or above, may not claim mileage between colleges or to District educational sites.

Employees who drive their own vehicles must carry their own auto insurance.

Mileage claims for local travel not associated with a pre-approval are processed monthly by completing an expense report at the end of each month and attaching proof of miles travelled for each unique trip.

III. TRANSPORTATION

Reimbursable transportation expenses include all necessary official travel on airplanes, railroads, buses, private vehicles, and other usual means of conveyance. Rental cars will be reimbursed at the most economical and/or appropriate rate for the number of passengers. Claims for reimbursement must be supported by attaching/scanning the original ticket stub or receipt provided by the commercial carrier or rental car company to the expense report.

- A. The District will only reimburse the employee for the most economical, refundable mode of transportation.

The District will not cover additional fees such as extra legroom, seat selection fees, early check-in fees, exit row upgrades, additional baggage fees over a single checked bag plus a single carry-on bag if applicable, or any other upgraded or additional costs, unless they are part of the most economical, refundable fare. Any upgraded or additional costs are personal expenses and will not be reimbursed.

- B. Reimbursement for travel by private vehicle shall not exceed the lowest commercial airfare determined by researching flights departing and arriving on the same days that would have been used for the conference attended at least two weeks away from the date of research plus the cost of mileage to/from the airport and estimated parking fees at the airport.
- C. Other allowable transportation related expenses are: parking fees (excluding valet parking unless self-parking is not reasonably available or if self-parking is more expensive than valet in which case the employee must submit a written justification for the expense), highway tolls, shuttles, rideshares, and taxi cabs. These expenses shall be authenticated by attached/scanned original receipts. Tips must be detailed on the itemized receipt and cannot exceed 20% of the original (undiscounted) fare.
- D. For rental cars, the optional additional insurance shall be included and will be reimbursed through the expense report.

- E. Costs for electric vehicle charging of an employee's private vehicle are not reimbursable.

IV. REGISTRATION

Registration fees charged in connection with approved attendance at conferences, conventions, committee meetings, in-service training seminars, and so forth, are allowable at actual cost. Actual charges must be verified by registration receipt or bona fide registration application form from the event organizer.

V. LODGING

Lodging is not permitted if travel is within Orange County unless approved in advance by the Chancellor or the college president, as appropriate. The following criteria shall be used when determining whether an exception is warranted for travel within Orange County:

- A. The employee is responsible for leading and/or organizing the conference;
- B. The employee is presenting at the conference with the presentation start time of 9:00 a.m. or earlier; or finish time of 6:00 p.m. or later;
- C. The employee is a member of a team representing multiple, non-District colleges; or
- D. The conference events/activities begin before 9:00 a.m. or conclude after 7:00 p.m.

Actual lodging cost, not to exceed charges at the single occupancy rate, shall be allowed. An itemized receipt (e.g. hotel folio) for lodging expenses must be submitted with the expense report for the expenses to be allowable.

Lodging will be reimbursed starting, at the earliest, the night prior to conference commencement and ending on the day the conference ends, unless conference timing prevents reasonable travel home.

For the safety of our employees and to limit liability exposure, employees traveling on District business are only authorized to stay in established hotels/motels. The District will not approve nor reimburse lodging expenses at Airbnb, Vrbo, or other types of personal property rentals.

VI. MEALS

Meal allowances are applicable when travel requires absence from home or the District overnight during a usual and customary meal period. Meal allowances will not be provided for conferences or meetings where no overnight stay occurs.

Meal allowances shall not exceed the annual IRS published Special Per Diem Rates. Meal receipts are not required. The intent of meal allowances is to cover the

incremental expense of having to eat out and not having the ability to eat at home. It is not intended to cover the entire cost of the meal. When the cost of meals is included in the registration fee of a conference, workshop, or meeting, a meal allowance will not be reimbursed unless reasonably justified (e.g. dietary restrictions prescribed by a physician, or only appetizers are served at an evening reception) and approved by the supervisor.

When taking flights or trains, meals will be reimbursed in accordance with the following guidelines:

- A. On the day of departure meal allowances are based on the scheduled flight/train departure time:
 - 1. Breakfast: Eligible when departure is at or before 10:30 a.m.;
 - 2. Lunch: Eligible when departure is at or before 2:30 p.m.;
 - 3. Dinner: Eligible when departure is at or before 8:30 p.m.; and
 - 4. No meal allowance is eligible when departure is after 8:30 p.m.
- B. On the day of return, meal allowances are based on the scheduled flight/train arrival time:
 - 1. Breakfast: Eligible on the day of return;
 - 2. Lunch: Eligible when arrival is at or after 1:00 p.m.; and
 - 3. Dinner: Eligible when arrival is at or after 6:00 p.m.

When traveling by any means other than air/train, meal reimbursement eligibility will be based on travel time from the employee's work location and the following guidelines:

- A. On the day of departure, meal allowances are based on the required departure time:
 - 1. Breakfast: Eligible when departure is at or before 9:00 a.m.;
 - 2. Lunch: Eligible when departure is at or before 1:00 p.m.; and
 - 3. Dinner: Eligible when departure is at or before 7:00 p.m.
 - 4. No meal allowance is eligible when departure is after 7:00 p.m.
- B. On the day of return, meal allowances are based on the arrival time:
 - 1. Breakfast: Eligible on the day of return;
 - 2. Lunch: Eligible when arrival is at or after 1:00 p.m.; and
 - 3. Dinner: Eligible when arrival is at or after 6:00 p.m.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Reimbursement for telephone calls, internet access, and business center expenses will be allowed if incurred solely for conducting District business.
- B. Individual membership dues are not reimbursable by the District unless it is required in the cost of the conference registration pursuant to Administrative Regulation 6303 – *Institutional Memberships in Organizations*.
- C. No reimbursement will be made for alcoholic beverages under any circumstance.
- D. If an employee's stay exceeds the days allowed in Section 5 above, the appropriate type of absence must be charged against the employee's leave balance and approved by their supervisor. In those cases, additional expenses for hotel, meals, car rental, rideshares, etc. will not be reimbursable for the additional days.
- E. Tips for incidentals (e.g. baggage handlers, bellhop, valets, etc.) will not be reimbursed.
- F. Employees shall not pay for travel related expenses of other District employees. If a District employee is unable to cover the costs of travel themselves, they shall avail themselves of the travel program established by District Accounting, or request either the prepayment or travel advance options described below.
- G. Personal items lost or stolen during travel will not be reimbursed by the District.

VIII. PREPAYMENTS OR EMPLOYEE TRAVEL ADVANCE

Prepaid travel expenses are authorized for employees on official business of the District under the following conditions:

- A. Prepayment will be allowed for travel, lodging, and registration fees paid directly to vendor;
- B. Persons requesting prepayments shall complete a pre-approval for prepaid expenses not less than 15 business days prior to the need of prepayment using the prepaid expense items;
- C. In lieu of prepaid travel expenses, an employee may request a cash advance for registration, hotel, airfare, and train expenses by completing a pre-approval and selecting the cash advance expense category. This request must be completed no less than 15 business days before the travel occurs. All receipts and documents must be attached to the expense report or funds will be owed back to the District; and
- D. If a prepayment is made for travel, lodging, and/or registration fees and the prepayment results in an overpayment or the attendee cancels their

attendance, District Accounting must be notified that a refund is to be issued within 20 business days of cancellation or upon receipt of overpayment notice, whichever occurs later. An expense report showing the amount of the unspent cash advance must be created with a deposit slip attached for the amount to reimburse the District. If an employee resigns, retires, or is terminated prior to repaying the unspent cash advance, payroll will deduct the amount due to the District from the employee's final paycheck.

- E. The District credit card shall not be used for travel related expenses for employees. The District credit card may be used for travel related expenses for students and Board members.

IX. SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

The District recognizes that a sponsoring organization may offer to pay for an employee's travel expenses. While not strictly prohibited for employees not subject to conflict of interest provisions in BP/AR 2712 – *Conflict of Interest Code* for members of the Board of Trustees, and BP/AR 3050 – *Institutional Code of Ethics* for District employees, caution must be exercised on the part of the employee, their supervisor, and the District in order to protect the employee and the District from liability. Thus, in situations where a sponsoring organization offers to pay for expenses on behalf of a District employee, the following procedure must be followed:

- A. A pre-approval must be completed and approved by the Vice Chancellor of Business Services or designee and the employee's supervisor using the appropriate FOAP even if no reimbursement is being requested;
- B. A copy of the conference agenda or detailed explanation of the purpose of the trip including benefit to the District/college must be attached to the pre-approval detailing the dates of travel;
- C. The name of the sponsoring organization and the estimated amount of expenses to be paid by the sponsoring organization must be included in the pre-approval header justification;
- D. The employee must either submit an expense report for any incidental reimbursements or close the expense report after returning to work; and
- E. The employee is barred from making any recommendations related to contracting with or purchasing from the sponsored organization for at least one year from the date of travel.
- F. The employee is barred from accepting payment from the sponsoring organization if they participated in the decision to contract with the organization at any time in the past.

X. REIMBURSEMENTS

Claims must be submitted for reimbursement within 20 business days after travel has occurred, but not later than June 15 of each fiscal year by completing an expense report. Travel during the month of June shall follow the year-end closing deadlines to ensure it is properly booked. All receipts must be scanned and attached to the expense report. In addition, a detailed conference agenda must be attached to the expense report.

XI. EXCEPTIONS

Any exceptions to the above provisions must be requested in writing with justification noted and individually approved by the Chancellor, or designees. The written approval must be attached to the travel documents in Emburse or appropriate platform.

References:

California Education Code, Section 87032
IRC Section 162 (a)(2); RR-75-170; RR 75-432
26 U.S. Code Section 62 subdivision (c)
2 Code of Federal Regulations Part 200.475
IRS Publication 463
IRS Publication 15-B