



# ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

## Office of the City Manager

Number	301
Sections	1-7
Effective Date	5/1/2013
Responsible Department	Finance
Review Date	5/1/2018

### **SUBJECT: Official Travel and Other Business and Reimbursement of Expenses Policy**

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to set forth the policies governing reimbursement for travel expenses and to establish certain procedures concerning travel authorization, documentation and accounting for City Employees and all City elected Officials.
2. **Authority:** Section 401 of the Huntington Beach City Charter.
3. **Application:** All Departments, Employees, and elected Officials shall conform to the rules and procedures established in this policy.
4. **Definitions:**
  - 4.1. **Per Diem** - Per Diem is the allowance for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses. The General Services Administration (GSA) establishes per diem rates for destinations within the Continental United States. The Per Diem allowance rate will be those established by the Federal Government which can be accessed via the internet at [www.gsa.gov/perdiem](http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem). The breakdown per meal can be accessed via the internet at [www.gsa.gov/mie](http://www.gsa.gov/mie).
5. **Policy:**
  - 5.1. **A City employee may be eligible for travel reimbursement or cash advances for travel expenditures when at least one of the following criteria is met:**
    - 5.1.1 Conducting City Business while attending a City approved conference, training seminar or business meeting.
    - 5.1.2 Attending an approved City activity or meeting.
    - 5.1.3 Hosting an approved City activity or meeting.
  - 5.2. To conserve City resources and keep expenses within community standards for public officials and staff, expenditures should adhere to the following guidelines. In the event that expenses are incurred which exceed these guidelines, the cost borne or reimbursed by the City will be limited to the costs that fall within these guidelines.
  - 5.3. For purposes of this policy, the term "local travel" shall be used for any official travel within a fifty (50) mile radius from the City of Huntington Beach.
  - 5.4. All exceptions shall have prior written approval from the City Manager.
6. **Procedures:**
  - 6.1. **Permitted expenses and limitations are as follows:**
    - 6.1.1. **Registration and Fees:** Registration and fees must be payable to the conference organization and shall be for those expenses indicated in the published information. It is understood that timeliness may require the advancing

of an employee's own money. Should an employee pre-pay registration, reimbursement will be authorized once the travel-training has been approved by the department head or City Manager

**6.1.2. Transportation**

- 6.1.2.1. Air Transportation:** When reserving and purchasing airline tickets, Officials and Employees shall attempt to ensure the most cost efficient travel arrangements are made, when at all possible. Employees are encouraged to make air reservations as early as feasible to obtain the greatest discount and to consider the use of alternate, but nearby airports with ground transportation to take advantage of the lowest fares. Travel should be charged on a City credit card. Personal credit card purchases will be reimbursed only for the actual round-trip fare and only after the trip. Officials and Employees may, at their own expense, pay to upgrade their airline accommodations. An employee may use City travel to qualify for frequent flyer credits, but the selection of an airline for a given trip shall not be made for the purpose of accumulating such credits. Expense for local transportation shall be allowed when necessary to conduct city business.
- 6.1.2.2. Taxis/Shuttles:** Taxi or shuttle fares may be reimbursed, including a fifteen percent (15%) gratuity per fare, when the cost of such fares is equal or less than the cost of car rentals, gasoline and parking combined, or when such transportation is necessary for time efficiency.
- 6.1.2.3. Parking:** The City will reimburse for reasonable parking costs related to business related travel. Travelers should make every effort to keep parking costs to a minimum by limiting in and out trips and opting for lower cost parking when offered.
- 6.1.2.4. Personal Vehicle:** Officials and Employees will be reimbursed for actual mileage, (not to exceed coach class airfare, where airline travel is a reasonable alternative), for the use of their private cars in travel to and from designated place(s) on City business outside the City. The reimbursement rate will be the current Internal Revenue Service rate. Officials and Employees who do not receive a monthly auto allowance shall be reimbursed for total round-trip miles. The number of miles used for reimbursement calculations will be either from the Official or Employees home or from City Hall, whichever is the least number of miles. Officials and Employees are required to verify mileage claimed via [www.maps.google.com](http://www.maps.google.com) or [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com) and submit such printed mileage verification for reimbursement.

Employees receiving mileage reimbursement or car allowance for use of their personal vehicle on City related business must continuously maintain the State mandated limits for vehicle insurance, and may be required to show proof of insurance upon request.

Employees, who receive a monthly car allowance, as authorized by the City Manager, are expected to use their vehicles without further reimbursement for all local travel and for the first 50 miles of non-local travel to points further than 50 miles from City Hall. Full mileage reimbursement may be made when authorized for that portion of travel that is beyond the 50 mile radius.

**6.1.2.5. Use of City-Owned Vehicle:** There shall be no allowance or reimbursement for transportation when a City-owned vehicle is used. However, any out-of-pocket expenses, including gas or maintenance costs incurred in operation of the vehicle during City business shall be reimbursed based upon representation of receipts. Officials and Employees shall review the City of Huntington Beach Fleet Policy for any further requirements related to this section.

**6.1.2.6 Car Rental Arrangement:** Prior to requesting a rental car, Employees and Officials traveling on official business shall consider whether a rental car is the least expensive means of transportation at the destination. The designated individual in each Department responsible for travel arrangements shall book the most economical and reasonable rental rate that is available.

**6.1.3. Lodging:**

**6.1.3.1. Local Accommodations:** Except where necessary and where approved in advance, Officials and Employees will not be reimbursed for lodging expenditures incurred for events occurring within a 50-mile radius of Huntington Beach. In the event reimbursement is warranted, such reimbursement shall be only for the reasonable rate of said accommodations as set forth the below.

**6.1.3.2. Non-Local Accommodations:** Travel outside the 50-mile radius of Huntington Beach shall be reimbursed the reasonable cost of the lodging may either receive funds in advance, use the preferred method of a City-issued credit card or be reimbursed for personal funds expended upon return from the trip. Reimbursement will be made at actual rates, including occupancy taxes, for single accommodations on those nights that the traveler must spend away from home on official City business. Receipted copies of itemized hotel bill must be submitted to secure reimbursement. When the hotel bill is double-occupancy, (and when the traveler is accompanied by a guest), the equivalent single-occupancy rate must be stated.

**6.1.4. Meals:**

**6.1.4.1 Meals in Conjunction with Travel:** Officials and Employees may be reimbursed for expenses incurred for meals consumed in conjunction with travel on official business. For travel within California, Officials and Employees may be reimbursed for meals in amounts that do not exceed the breakdown per meal as established at [www.gsa.gov/mie](http://www.gsa.gov/mie).

**6.1.4.2.** For travel outside of California, Officials and Employees may be reimbursed for meals in amounts that do not exceed the above amounts or the per-meal amounts for the particular locale as published by the U.S. General Services Administration in the document entitled "Per Diem Rates," available at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov), whichever is higher.

**6.1.4.3.** If a meal is provided by a conference or organized educational activity, or otherwise included in the payment of registration fees, City Officials and Employees may not be reimbursed for meals purchased in lieu of, or in addition to, the provided meal.

**6.1.4.4.** Meals for spouses, family member, and other third parties shall not be reimbursed.

- 6.1.5. **Per Diem Allowance:** Per Diem will be allowed in lieu of detailed accounting of expenses. This **WILL INCLUDE** the following items:
  - 6.1.5.1. Meals purchased during the inclusive dates of the trip.
  - 6.1.5.2. Tips and gratuities of reasonable amounts for meals.
  - 6.1.5.3. Separate reimbursement will not be made for items identified as being covered by the per diem allowance.
  - 6.1.5.4. The individual shall be responsible for all personal record keeping which may be necessary to meet Internal Revenue Service requirements relative to his or her taxes.
  - 6.1.5.5. **Exceptions:** One-day meetings, conferences, and conventions, which do not qualify for Per Diem allowance, will be subject to reimbursement based on reasonable, actual, and itemized expenses.
  - 6.1.5.6. **NOT INCLUDED IN PER DIEM, YET REIMBURSABLE:** Transportation, Taxis/Shuttles, and Parking will be reimbursed as outlined in 6.1.2.

7.1. **Records:** Records of expenses as outlined above shall be maintained on the city's Request for Reimbursement form (Exhibit A). A template is available on Surfnet under the section "Forms & Templates." The template is listed as "Request for Reimbursement-Petty Cash Refund." Within ten working days of the employee's return to the workplace, the employee shall submit the Request for Reimbursement form along with the original itemized expense receipts to their approving authority. If the employee is unable to provide a receipt for any item the employee shall provide the date, amount, purpose, and reason why the receipt is not available. Upon approval from the Department, the entire form and supporting documents will be sent to the Finance Department for review and final approval.

7.2. **Miscellaneous:**

- 7.2.1. Cost of miscellaneous items may be allowed when it is specifically shown that such items were necessary to conduct city business.
- 7.2.2. All additional charges incurred shall be at the employee's expense.
- 7.2.3. Amendments or changes to this AR, other than clerical changes, rewrites, or procedural changes shall require the authorization of the City Manager.
- 7.2.4. Travel time reimbursement will be in accordance with current Fair Labor Standards Act (FSLA) regulations.



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Fred A. Wilson, City Manager