

**Travel Reimbursement**

All travel and/or attendance at an overnight training or conference event by county employees must be authorized in advance by the responsible Elected Official or Department Head. Overnight travel for Department Heads who report directly to the Board must be authorized in advance by the Board. While traveling, all employees are expected to minimize expenses as much as possible out of respect for the taxpayers funding the travel.

When planning a trip, employees should utilize the most cost-effective means of travel. Alternatives to consider include flying, renting a vehicle and carpooling. If an employee chooses to travel by means other than the most cost-effective method, the employee will only be reimbursed at the most cost-effective amount.

Mileage. The County maintains administrative vehicle(s) for use by employees traveling on official business. These vehicles should be utilized whenever possible. If an appropriate county vehicle is available, but not used, the mileage reimbursement rate will be 50% of the amount set by the IRS. If an employee is required to use a personal vehicle because an appropriate county vehicle is not available, mileage will be paid in accordance with rates set by the IRS.

Employees driving to the same meeting or training are expected to carpool. If one employee chooses to drive their own vehicle, their mileage reimbursement rate will be 50% of the amount set by the IRS.

Mileage reimbursement is not allowed for any portion of travel that is for personal use.

Meals. The County will reimburse actual meal expenses, including tips, up to a maximum of \$50 per day, broken down to \$10 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch and \$25 for dinner. Employees traveling out of the county to participate in a one-day meeting or training will be reimbursed only for their noon meal, and only if it is not provided as part of the training event. If an employee chooses not to consume a meal included in the event registration fee, they will not be reimbursed for that meal purchased separately.

If an employee prefers to be reimbursed in advance of their travel, or prefers not to keep receipts, they may request a per diem rate of \$30, broken down to \$5 for breakfast, \$10 for lunch and \$15 for dinner. All claims for advance per diem reimbursement must be submitted in a timely manner and receive approval during a regular Board meeting. If per diem payment is received, no further meal reimbursement will be allowed.

Every travel expense reimbursement claim, including per diem requests, must include the name(s) of the traveling employee(s) and a copy of the meeting agenda. The agenda should document the training dates and meals provided.

Time. Time spent by an employee traveling to another city for a special one-day assignment or training shall be considered work time. Travel time related to trips that keep an employee away from home overnight is also considered work time. Travel time entered on an employee's time sheet cannot significantly exceed the travel time as calculated by using Mapquest.

Reimbursement. Reimbursable travel expenses are limited to those that are directly related to official business. Reimbursement shall be for actual expenses only, and not based on a per diem rate, except as described under "Meals" above. Use of direct billing for hotel costs is strongly encouraged whenever possible to ensure the county receives tax exempt status. A Claim accompanied by original receipts must be submitted for reimbursement. The number of miles submitted for reimbursement cannot significantly exceed the distance as calculated by using Mapquest.

Non-reimbursable travel expenses include, but are not limited to, those incurred for the sole benefit of the employee such as travel insurance, alcoholic beverages, extra meals, in-room movies, laundry, room service, entertainment, personal long distance telephone calls, etc.

If a spouse or other non-County employee accompanies the employee, reimbursement shall be based on the employee's expenses only, i.e. single room rate. Rental cars are reimbursable only when it is not practical to use taxis, buses, shuttle, or limousine service. The County reserves the right to adjust unreasonably high expenses.