

Madison Area Educational Special Services Unit

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

Approved 2/1/17

Travel Policy

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I. Overview

The Madison Area Special Services Unit encourages professional development among its employees. The Board of Directors strongly supports travel in pursuit of knowledge which will benefit our local educational programs, while respecting the limits of our financial resources.

As public employees, we must be mindful that we are funded by the taxpayers. Moreover, we are overseen by the Indiana State Board of Accounts, whose mission is to protect those taxpayers. Therefore, it is imperative that we be responsible when using tax revenues and documenting travel expenses.

Our travel policy and requirement for documentation need not be complicated or confusing. In order to be fully reimbursed for legitimately incurred expenses, preparation of travel plans and related documentation must be organized. With this goal in mind, we have prepared this step-by-step procedure manual.

II. General Policy

Our policy is centered on the principle of reimbursing the employee for expenses incurred during approved travel. In most cases, the employee bears the burden of the initial expenditure and the school corporation provides timely reimbursement. Prior to departure, employees must gain approval from the Administrative Council through the Travel Request Form. In most cases, the Administrative Council meets on the first Wednesday of the month. Employees can expect to be reimbursed for the predetermined travel and associated costs when on official school corporation business. There is no per diem allowance.

Employees are responsible for arranging their own itineraries, recording expenses while traveling, and submitting proper documentation for reimbursement.

Reimbursement payments are usually rendered once a month (the first Wednesday of the month) after the Board approves the payment. Employees can expect to be reimbursed promptly if post-travel documentation is in order and presented to the Business Office in a timely fashion. The Unit takes pride in assisting its employees in getting prompt reimbursement of their expenses.

III. Meals

Reimbursements for meals are up to the amount approved on your travel request, with a maximum of \$10 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch, and \$20 for dinner. A maximum gratuity of up to 15% may be added to the bill.

The original itemized receipt must be presented. A credit card sales slip and/or statement are NOT acceptable.

Alcohol, gum, candy, ice cream cones, or other snacks are not a reimbursable expense.

Reimbursements of lunch and dinner expenses for one day trips are made only if advanced approval is obtained from the Executive Director.

IV. Transportation/Lodging

Reimbursement for expenses can be reported in two ways.

1. Mileage must be reported on the Mileage Claim Form #101. Frequent and/or daily work related travel (as a condition of employment), primarily within The Co-op Area does NOT require pre-approval. Starting and ending odometer reading must be recorded or the approved Business Office mileage chart may be used: claim forms should be submitted not less than quarterly.

When more than one employee is attending the same conference, they are required to car-pool.

2. Accounts Payable Form Voucher #523 is used for trips primarily outside the Co-op Area and these expenses are approved through the Travel Request. Lodging, air travel, food, etc. expenses should be listed on this form.

Mileage is reimbursed at the current IRS allowable rate. Employees may use that rate

Air travel expenses are to be reasonable and cost efficient and must be pre-approved using the Travel Request form.

An original itemized receipt is required for car rental, for parking, taxi, and shuttle reimbursement.

Employees will be reimbursed for valet parking only if the hotel requires it.

Reimbursement for authorized travel may include sales and excise tax paid during the trip only for meals and lodging.

Appropriate reimbursement documentation must consist of the following:

Valid original itemized business receipts/cash register sales slips containing business name and itemized total (no generic sales slips will be accepted.)

Original itemized hotel/restaurant bills.

Employees will not be reimbursed for coat checks, alcohol, movies, laundry expenses, or other items of a personal nature.

Personal items listed on receipts must be circled and marked personal.

V. Documentation

The Staff Absence Report is the document for obtaining permission for Professional Leave and should be turned in with your travel request. This form must be submitted to your supervisor before the monthly Administrative Council meeting and prior to the anticipated departure date.

Accounts Payable Form Voucher #523 is used for reimbursement of all legitimately incurred expenses (e.g. travel, meals, supplies, registration fees.)

Mileage Claim form #101 is used to claim reimbursement for all mileage.

VI. The Do's and Don't's

(To ensure maximum reimbursement)

DO:

Prior to Departure:

Shop for the lowest transportation and lodging rates.

Determine number of meals to be reimbursed.

Determine registration fee (if applicable).

Predetermine mileage.

Complete and submit Travel Request Form and Staff

Absence Report.

While Traveling:

Request original itemized receipts with company name printed on receipt for hotel/motel, registration, parking, car rental, taxi, restaurant, materials, supplies, and meals.

Request separate receipts for personal items.

Request that your checks be separate from others in your party (if applicable).

When You Return:

Photocopy all receipts and retain for your records.

Attach original itemized receipts to the Accounts Payable Voucher and sign where appropriate. Complete the Mileage Claim Form #101 (if necessary) and submit to the Business Office.

DON'T:

Accept generic receipts from vendors; be sure the company name is indicated.

Submit photocopies of receipts.

Submit vouchers for taxes incurred (excluding lodging, transportation, and restaurants).

Submit vouchers for alcohol, movie rental, non-business related telephone charges, or items such as gum, candy, ice cream, sodas, laundry services, coat check, etc.

Submit vouchers for non-employees.