City of Winder Personnel Policy Manual
Title: Travel Policy
Date Issued: 4/2011
Policy: 110

Mayor

City Administrator

110.10 Purpose

All associated travel, whether in-state or out-of-state, shall fall under this policy. When employees, appointed committees/boards, or elected officials of the City are required to travel on official business for meetings, conferences, and training programs, the City shall pay reasonable amounts for transportation, meals, lodging, and miscellaneous approved expenses. Education and training opportunitics shall bc considered on the basis of merit to the City and allocated resources.

110.11 Provisions

A. All business travel where expenses may occur outside of Barrow County must be authorized in advance. Requests for training, conferences, meetings, or other official functions which require overnight accommodations must be approved by the Department Head. Travel out-of state or where the total cost of the travel (to include registration fees) exceeds $1,000, must be approved by the City Administrator. Approval will be documented on the "Request for Travel Expenditures Form", and submitted through the employee's direct supervisor.

B. All travel is subject to review and audit. By requesting funds through the City (for travel) the traveler agrees to only use the money as intended according to this policy.

C. The Department Heads shall determine the most cost effective mode of travel.

D. This policy may not apply to contract employees or those pre-hired and sponsored for an employment certification.

E. Travelers who choose to extend a business trip for personal reasons either before or after business is conducted, will be responsible for all non-business related charges.

F. Travel expenses must be authorized or the traveler will be held responsible for all non-authorized expenses.

110.12 **Meal Expenses Per Diem**

A. Any employee traveling on City Business may receive an allowance of up to $48.00 per day, including tax and tip, for meals if all meals are paid for by the employee. Per Diem is intended to supplement the high cost incurred due to business travel and is not intended to cover excessive expenses.

B. A traveler on a one-day business trip may be eligible for meals if his work schedule (for the business of the City) extends beyond four hours and is outside of Barrow County.

1. Breakfast $ 10.00

   When required to travel before 8:00 a.m.

2. Lunch $14.00

3. Dinner $24.00

   When expected return is estimated to be after 6:00 p.m.

C. Where conference registration or training tuition fees include one or more meals, only those meals not covered by such fees shall be reimbursed by the City.

D. No receipts are required unless a conference/meeting offers meals in conjunction that exceeds the per diem rate with the conference program, but does not include those meals in the registration fee. If the employee elects not to participate in one or more meals offered by the conference, the regular per diem guidelines maximums shall be used for those meals and a receipt must be turned in for reimbursement.

E. Business related meals may be reimbursed when authorized by the City Administrator to pay for meals for others. The City Administrator's expenses shall be authorized by the Mayor. In addition to the restaurant's itemized receipts, all of the following information must be documented:

1. The name and location of the restaurant.
2. The number of people served and names.
3. The date.
4. Total expense.
5. Gratuity amount (not to exceed 18%).
6. Name of person providing the authorization and their signature.

110.13 **Use of City Owned Vehicle for Business Travel**

A. Under no circumstances can anyone under the age of 18 ride in a city vehicle.

B. Receipts for gas, oil, and out of town repairs should also be submitted along with any expense reports.

C. Insurance identification card must be kept in the City vehicles at all times.

D. When any employee is driving a City-owned vehicle, he is expected to observe all traffic laws and accept responsibility for the payment of any fines incurred. If a traffic citation is received while operating any City vehicle or an accident occurs the employee must report it immediately to the proper supervisor. The supervisor will be responsible for reporting the incident to his Department Head and the Human Resources Department.

110.14 **Transportation**

A. When practical, employees will carpool when attending the same conference, community meeting, or training. An employee who chooses not to carpool when practical may take their own car but may not be reimbursed for mileage, or upon agreement split the reimbursement with the other drivers when a personal vehicle is authorized. Cost-sharing measures are encouraged and may be enforced by their Department Head when the length of travel is less than 24 hours or when practical and appropriate.

B. *Personal Vehicle* - Travel by personal vehicle will be reimbursed for mileage at the same cents per mile as stated by the IRS mileage allowance. If mileage is disputed the Rand McNally Standard Highway Mileage Guide or internet version will be used.

1. If more than one employee rides in the vehicle, only the owner of the vehicle will be reimbursed for vehicle expenses.

2. All personal vehicles used for City business must be adequately insured for liability, personal injury and property damage.

3. When using a personal automobile for a day trip which originates from home, the mileage reported for reimbursement should be from home or from City Hall, whichever is less.

C. *Rental Vehicles* –Travelers may rent a vehicle at their destination when it is less expensive or more convenient than other transportation modes such as taxis, and airport shuttles.

D. *Rental Vehicles Insurance* - Employees are authorized to accept the minimal insurance to cover the rental car and personal liability during a business trip.

E. *Taxi or public transportation* – will be reimbursed for transportation between the destination airport to the place of lodging or to the meeting site (or vice versa). Shuttle service should be used if it is reasonably and economically available. Receipts are required for fares in excess of $10. Gratuities will not be reimbursed by the City and are at the sole discretion of the traveler.

F. *Air travel* – will only be considered for out of state travel at the lowest rate available. Employees are strongly encouraged to book airfares at least 30 days in advance of travel to take advantage of zone and other discounted airfares.

110.15 **Lodging**

A. Employees must reserve lodging at the government rate or at the least costly room rate within the designated hotel. If an employee is attending a conference, reimbursement will be made for the standard room rate, at the conference facility. A conference facility is either directly at the site of the conference or listed in the brochure as a conference hotel.

B. An employee may submit a request to stay at an alternative comparable hotel based on price and amenities.

C. The City will only pay the actual room rental cost supported by the hotel bill for each day that lodging was approved. Upgrades and other amenities will not be reimbursed without prior approval from the appropriate Department Head.

D. The City will not reimburse for taxes paid on lodging when traveling in Georgia. It is the responsibility of the traveler to obtain a sales/use exemption form and a hotel/motel tax form from the Finance Department.

110.16 **Non Reimbursed Expenses**

A. Expenses of spouse, family, or other persons not directly employed by the City.

B. Alcoholic Beverages.

C. Fines for parking or traffic violations.

D. Airline and other trip insurance not approved in advance.

E. Loss or damaged personal property.

F. Personal entertainment (in-room movies, etc.).

G. The City will not reimburse cellular phone charges using package plan minutes.

H. Non-Approved travel upgrades or extensions.

I. Other items not clearly identified by this policy.

110.17 **Miscellaneous Expenses**

A. Miscellaneous expenses, such as parking fees, internet, tolls, fax transmissions, non-negotiable hotel fees, baggage handling and other bona fide business expenses, shall be paid upon presentation of actual receipts or other suitable documentation. No receipt is needed for baggage handling if the requested amount is less than $5 and documented. Expenses determined to be excessive may be reimbursed at a lower rate at the discretion of the City Administrator.

B. *Clothes laundering* – when business travel extends over five (5) consecutive days, employees may be reimbursed for moderate expenses (i.e. dry cleaning business clothes). Employees must submit all receipts for claimed expenses.

110.18 **Cash Advance for Travel Per Diem**

A. Cash advances for predetermined and approved expenses for travel, may be granted if the request is submitted to the Finance Department five business days in advance.

B. The amount of the travel advance will be based on the estimated cost of travel (excluding lodging and registration).

110.19 **Compliance Auditing**

A. The Department Head/Supervisor signing the Request for Travel Expenditures Form is responsible for ensuring that all travel claims originating from their department is in compliance with the City's Travel Policy. Department Heads should review all submissions for completeness, mathematical accuracy, compliance with expense limitations, and overall compliance with this policy.

B. The traveler is responsible for submitting all receipts and expense documents related to his travel within three (3) business days of returning. The traveler may delegate responsibility for preparation of the forms, but will always retain accountability for travel expenses and must sign all appropriate documentation.

C. The Finance Director is responsible for compliance verification with the City's Travel Policy. Travel claims which are submitted to the Finance Director for payment processing will be processed only if they contain all the necessary documentation.

D. All travel claims which are incomplete will be returned by the Finance Director to the employee's respective Department Head for corrections.

E. The Finance Director will return any requests unpaid to the employees that are not in compliance with this policy.

110.20 **Exceptions**

A. The City Administrator with support from the Mayor shall have the authority to grant exceptions from any part of this policy when deemed in the best interest of the City.

B. All exceptions must be stated in writing, signed by the appropriate parties, and attached to the Request for Travel Expenditures Form for audit inspection.

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