

## **CITY OF RICHARDSON INTERDEPARTMENTAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **BUSINESS TRAVEL AND MEALS**

#### **POLICY**

It is the policy of the City of Richardson to establish the following set of guidelines with regard to employee out-of-town travel, travel expenses, and employee training expenses.

#### **PROCEDURE**

##### **I. BASIC POLICIES**

###### **A. Prior Approval for Travel or Training**

1. Prior approval from the department head or his/her designee is required for overnight business travel and/or training. All overnight business travel for department heads must be approved by the City Manager (“CMO”) or his/her designee. Approval should be obtained using the pre-travel authorization & travel advance form, prior to incurring any training or travel related expenses.
2. For travel and training, for which an advance is requested, a pre-travel authorization & travel advance form with estimated expenses should be completed and submitted to Accounting 14 days in advance of the expected travel or training date.

###### **B. Travel Reconciliation**

1. A travel expense form must be submitted to Accounting within 30 days of returning to the office after overnight travel, even if no reimbursement is requested. This includes travel where all expenses have been placed on a pro card.

###### **C. Reimbursable Expenses for Overnight Travel**

1. The City will pay the actual amount of meals and tips (provided receipts are maintained), or the US General Services Administration (GSA) approved per diem allowance. Where receipts are maintained, GSA rates will be used to determine reasonableness of the expenses reimbursed. Additionally, GSA guidelines dictate first and last travel day per diems are calculated at 75% because only meals incurred while actually traveling are deemed to be a direct travel expense. If receipts are available for some, but not all, meals for a day, the employee may submit a missing receipt affidavit attesting to the cost of the meal for which a receipt is not available. A link to the GSA per diem rates can be found on the Purchasing Department’s intranet page.

###### **D. Registration Fees for Conferences and Trainings**

1. Will be paid directly by the City through the accounts payable system or with the Pro Card. Employees should avoid writing a personal check for registration fees.
2. Employees are encouraged to take advantage of early registration to obtain a discounted rate.

###### **E. Transportation**

1. Airfare

The City will pay for roundtrip, economy class airfare and applicable baggage fees. Employees are encouraged to take advantage of discounts when available. A la carte upgrades such as early-bird check in, preferred seating, and extra legroom must be approved through the CMO prior to purchase. If CMO approval is not obtained, the employee will be responsible for upgrade costs. The City will pay for in-flight Wi-Fi for legitimate business purposes only with prior approval from the department head.

If the employee makes first class travel reservations, the employee will pay the differential between first and economy classes.

2. Vehicle Rental

Vehicle rental (when required) will be reimbursed.

**NOTE: Liability insurance is not needed as that is covered by the City's Fleet insurance policy. See the Vehicle Liability Insurance Card form posted on the Intranet under H.R. - Forms. Download that form and take it with you to present to the vehicle rental vendor.**

a) **For employees who have a City Pro Card (in their own name):**

When renting a vehicle for city business, employees who have their own City Pro Card (with the employee's own name on it) should use that to pay for the rental (if for 31 consecutive days or less). Rental vehicles should be a car, minivan, or small SUV under \$50,000 in value. When using the Pro Card, waive the damage waiver for physical damage (which is covered under the Pro Card's MasterCard benefits), and waive the liability coverage (which is covered under the city's liability insurance). If any damage to the rental vehicle should occur, employees must contact the City Purchasing department immediately for further direction. (Police report is required for claims involving damage to the rental.)

b) **For employees who do not have their own City Pro Card:**

Employees who need to rent a vehicle for city business (but who do not have their own City Pro Card) should accept the collision insurance coverage offered by the vehicle rental company but waive the liability coverage (which is covered under the city's liability insurance – see Note above). The City will reimburse the collision insurance cost.

When applicable, call the local police to report that a rental vehicle involved in business travel was involved in an accident, stolen, vandalized, and/or if items were stolen from that vehicle. Follow up to obtain a copy of the police report when it is available, and provide that to the appropriate departmental supervisor/manager; the insurance company will require a copy of it also.

3. Ground Transportation

Ground transportation (i.e. taxis, buses, ridehailing/ridesharing services, and shuttles) will be reimbursed. Carpooling with other City employees at the same training is encouraged. Employees should choose the most cost effective option from among the available and appropriate ground transportation offerings.

4. City Vehicles

City vehicles may be used at the discretion of the department head except for employees that receive an Auto Allowance. A City fuel card should be used for all fuel purchases. A Pro Card

or personal funds should only be used in the event payment by fuel card is not possible. Direct expenses, such as gas and oil, associated with the use of City vehicles will be reimbursed.

5. Parking

Parking fees will be reimbursed when related to travel for business purposes. Airport parking fees, parking fees for personal vehicle, City vehicle, or rented vehicle will be reimbursed as well. Employees should choose the most cost effective option from among the available and appropriate parking offerings.

6. Tolls

Tolls will be reimbursed when related to travel for business purposes.

7. Airline Credits

The City allows each employee to accrue the benefits of frequent flier programs provided that the airline tickets accruing the frequent flier benefits were not more costly than other available substitutes.

F. Personal Vehicles

1. Staff with Auto Allowances, City Manager, First Assistant City Manager, Assistant City Managers, Assistant to City Manager, Chief Financial Officer, Budget Officer, Eisemann Center Managing Director, Department Heads, and Assistant Department Heads, etc.

a) Mileage costs will be reimbursed based on a percentage of the current IRS statute rate.

b) For business travel over 60 miles one-way in distance, mileage will be reimbursed for the entire distance. For example:

- Round trip mileage to/from D/FW airport is fifty-five miles – no reimbursement is due (less than sixty miles).
- Round trip mileage to/from Austin is 500 miles – mileage for 500 miles is reimbursable.

2. Staff without Auto Allowances (This does not include those persons listed in Section 1 above)

a) Mileage costs will be reimbursed at the current IRS statute rate.

b) Mileage will be reimbursed for any business travel in a personal vehicle.

G. Accommodations

1. Lodging expenses will be reimbursed for actual number of days of the conference or training, plus reasonable accommodations for travel time before or after scheduled activities.

2. Employees are encouraged to reserve lodging in the same hotel where the conference or training is located to minimize ground transportation fees. Alternative lodging services, such as Airbnb, may be used with the approval of the Department head or his/her designee. In such case, the employee must include proof of cost savings with their pre-travel expense form.

3. Lodging per night will not exceed actual room cost plus tax and tips on a standard room. Employees are responsible for any differential costs on upgraded accommodations.

4. Hotel stays within the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex must be approved by department head prior to booking.
5. An itemized receipt is required for meals or snacks charged to the room. In the case an itemized receipt is not available, the employee must write the items purchased on the final hotel bill.

#### H. Internet/Phone Calls

1. Reasonable internet service costs for legitimate work purposes will be reimbursed at the discretion of the department head.
2. The City will reimburse the employee for all business-related phone calls.
3. Reasonable costs for personal phone calls will be reimbursed.
4. Prior approval from the City Manager's Office is required if it is determined that a temporary change to the service coverage plan for a City-issued cell phone is needed.

#### I. Expenses for Spouses

1. Costs for spouse travel, including transportation, meals, hotel upcharges, or other incidentals will not be reimbursed by the City unless approved by the City Manager's Office.

#### J. Other Categories

##### 1. Business Meals

- a) The City will reimburse business meals at the discretion of the department head or his/her designee. Business meals include the following types of events:
  - Receptions;
  - Meetings discussing City business;
  - Employee recognition luncheons; and
  - Employee working lunches.
- b) Funds for these expenses should be included in the departmental travel budgets.
- c) Itemized receipts are required for reimbursement.
- d) Per IRS regulations, the City will not reimburse meals associated with training or conferences where no overnight travel is required.

##### 2. Incidental Expenses

- a) Incidental expenses will be reimbursed at the discretion of the department head.

## II. PROCEDURES FOR REIMBURSEMENT/ADVANCE

### A. Cash Advances

1. Estimated expenses should be included on the pre-travel authorization & travel advance form.

2. Cash advances equal to or less than \$100 will be paid as petty cash. Cash advances over \$100 will be paid as ACH deposits, and issued no earlier than five working days in advance of the scheduled departure.
3. After returning to work, the employee must submit an expense report to Accounting within 30 days and include receipts, where appropriate.
4. If money must be returned to the City, payment shall be made to the City within 30 days of returning to work. A receipt verifying payment to the City must be attached to the expense report.
5. Employees will not be issued new travel advances until expense reports have been submitted for all prior trips and any amounts due to the City have been cleared.
6. At the end of a calendar year, if receipts have not been received for obligations older than 30 days, amounts advanced will be treated as taxable income as they represent liabilities still to be settled by the employee.

#### B. Reimbursement

1. Each employee shall submit an expense report within 30 days of returning to work after travel.
2. Receipts for hotel, airfare, vehicle rental, etc. are required to receive reimbursement.
3. If a receipt for purchases or services is not retained, reimbursement is at the discretion of the department head. When receipts do not accompany the expense report, a missing receipt affidavit should be completed. The missing receipt affidavit can be found on the Purchasing Department's intranet page.
4. The employee's signature on the expense report is certification that all incurred expenses are true and accurate.

#### C. Required Documentation

1. The standard City expense report, available on the City intranet, includes the following information:
  - a) Dates of travel;
  - b) Destination and purpose for travel;
  - c) Reimbursable expenses;
  - d) An explanation of incidental expenses and personal phone calls;
  - e) Account code to charge expenses;
  - f) Signature of employee; and
  - g) Authorization for travel from appropriate department head or designee, or from the City Manager or designee (for department heads).

#### D. Petty Cash

1. Reimbursements valued at \$100 or less will be made through petty cash. Reimbursements over \$100 will be paid as ACH deposits.

### III. TRAVEL FOR NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

- A. Home to regular worksite commuting is not considered work time.
- B. Employees will be paid while traveling if travel occurs:
  - 1. During normal working days and hours: If an employee is traveling during normal working hours on a normal working day and for the benefit of the employer or to perform the principle activity of the assigned job, the employee will be compensated for their travel time. (Travel time is not paid during designated, unpaid lunch breaks).
  - 2. Outside of normal work days and hours while performing required assigned work or travelling to or from required assigned work.
  - 3. At any time, if the required work duty is being the assigned assistant to a driver while travelling on city business.

*Signed by Dan Johnson on 10/01/2017*

*Created 12/2000, Revised 10/2010, 10/2017*

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Dan Johnson, City Manager

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Date

*For Current GSA Per Diem Rate Table, refer to [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)*

*Standard Pre-Travel and Travel Expense Forms are available on the Intranet at [www.cor.gov](http://www.cor.gov)*