

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY 2005 - 8

SUBJECT: TRAVEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

DATE ISSUED: May 12, 2005

DATE EFFECTIVE: May 16, 2005

APPROVED:


Scott D. Staples, City Manager

SECTION ONE – PURPOSE. To establish guidelines for City employees, City Council members, and board, committee and commission members eligible for payment or reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred while on official City business. It is the policy of the City of Toppenish to encourage the most cost-effective travel. Department directors are expected to utilize available resources in an effective manner and to plan and prioritize professional development opportunities.

SECTION TWO – GENERAL:

- A. **OVERNIGHT TRAVEL.** All overnight travel requires prior approval through completion of a Travel Request form. Overnight travel is authorized for one-way travel distance of greater than 60 miles from the City by an approved Travel Request form. Any employee, except for members of City Council, must receive prior written authorization from the City Manager or his/her designee to stay overnight on official City business within a 60 mile travel distance. Approval is provided on the Travel Request form.
- B. **OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL.** Out-of-state travel requests must be submitted to the Finance Director for review by the City Manager at least fifteen (15) working days in advance of the planned trip. Out-of-state travel requests must be submitted on a Travel Request form. Notes that indicate whether the trip is being funded by another organization or is specifically included in the explanatory notes of the approved budget will be helpful in expediting review of the travel request.
- C. **SAME DAY TRAVEL.** Meals, mileage, gas for a city vehicle and similar expenses for same day travel of an individual or group may be claimed for reimbursement on the Claim for Expenses form. Appropriate details, including purpose of the travel, BARS code, individuals traveling, and attached itemized receipts for expenses must be provided.

SECTION THREE - MODE OF TRAVEL:

- A. **COST.** Travel should be accomplished in the most cost effective manner consistent with the intended purpose of the travel. Travel in City vehicles is generally the most cost effective mode of travel. City vehicles may only be used for City business. Factors such as distance, time, expense, and available vehicles should be considered by the department director in deciding the mode of travel.

- B. **INSURANCE.** Individuals who do not have a City business purpose shall not ride in a City vehicle. When an employee chooses to be accompanied in travel by a family member or other person who does not have a City business purpose, the employee must use a private vehicle for travel.

The mileage rate paid to employees for use of their private vehicle on travel includes reimbursement for private insurance. Employees shall ensure that they have appropriate automobile insurance in accordance with the laws of the state in which they are licensed and their vehicle is registered before requesting travel by private vehicle.

- C. **VEHICLE RENTAL.** Most transportation needs are met through City vehicles, personal vehicles, or air travel. Conferences and seminars usually do not require attendees to do extensive driving during the event. Motel courtesy vehicles or public transportation may satisfy local transportation requirements. However, should the need for a rental car arise, it must be specifically authorized on the travel request before the traveler's departure.

SECTION FOUR - ACCOMMODATION:

- A. **COST.** When overnight accommodations are required, moderation should be exercised in selecting a hotel/motel. Consideration should include cost, location, local transportation, etc. Note: The City authorizes hotel/motel expenses at single room rates only, unless shared by another City employee. Employees on City business should make every reasonable effort to obtain the lowest rate available at the selected accommodation, which is often the government or corporate rate.
- B. **PERSONAL EXPENSES.** Personal expenses must be paid and deleted from the motel bill before being paid with a City credit card. This includes such items as movies, and charges for personal telephone calls.

SECTION FIVE - PAYMENT AND REIMBURSEMENT:

- A. **BUSINESS EXPENSES.** Business expenses should be billed directly to the City when feasible. Direct payment via Accounts Payable is the preferred method, and a City credit card is the next choice. Expenses such as registration, tuition, entrance fees, airfare, and lodging should be billed directly to the City and pre-paid via Accounts Payable whenever possible.
- B. **REIMBURSEMENT.** Employees shall be reimbursed for their travel expenses which have not been reimbursed through other agencies or programs. Travel expenses shall not be claimed or reimbursed which have been paid or are anticipated to be paid by any other source. If an employee receives reimbursement for any expenses after the City has paid for those travel expenses, the employee shall submit this duplicate payment to the City with an appropriate explanation. Travel expenses will be reimbursed as follows:

1. Use of a City vehicle is encouraged for travel when one is available. All reasonable expenses associated with the use of a City vehicle will be reimbursed. A City gas card or City credit card is the preferred means of paying for such expenses.
2. Use of a private vehicle for business travel will be reimbursed at the rate established by the Internal Revenue Service. The mileage rate is intended to cover all vehicle expenses including gasoline, operation and maintenance, depreciation, and automobile insurance coverage.
3. Reimbursement for use of a private vehicle will not exceed economy class air fare plus car rental, if required, to the same location. Mileage will be computed by point-to-point distance, plus local business related travel. Additional pleasure travel will not be reimbursed.
4. Telephone calls to make travel related arrangements, to conduct City business and to arrange business appointments while on travel are business expenses and will be reimbursed. Telephone calls to City of Toppenish facilities are business expenses and will be reimbursed. Short telephone calls to family, less than five minutes, to let them know you have arrived safely, where you can be reached, and if your travel plans change are appropriate business calls.
5. All travel expenses must be supported by an itemized invoice or receipt. Invoices and receipts must include details of charges to show that prohibited items such as alcoholic beverages are not included. For example, when claiming reimbursement for meals, the charge card slip or stub only showing the total cost of the meal is not sufficient. The full bill showing all meal items is required. Alcoholic beverages, if consumed, should be paid separately and not appear on the bill. It is the employee's responsibility to obtain an itemized receipt. If a receipt is lost and the employee cannot obtain a replacement itemized receipt from the vendor, the employee should write up a detailed description of the expenditure, why the receipt is not available and have it reviewed by the department director and Finance Director as part of the Claim for Expenses approval.

SECTION SIX - TRAVEL ADVANCE:

- Employees may request a travel advance draw for anticipated expenses which will not be billed directly to the City. To receive a travel advance draw, employees must complete the travel advance request portion of the Travel Request form.
- Requests for travel advance funds must be received in Finance at least ten (10) working days prior to departure in order to allow time for preparation of the advance draw check. Requests for an advance draw not received at least ten (10) days in advance of the travel date may be returned to the department without preparing an advance draw.

- Expenses eligible for an advance draw when they are applicable to the particular trip are mileage for use of a private vehicle, parking fees, or taxi fares. Most other items should be paid directly via Accounts Payable or by credit card.
- Travel advance checks will be available two (2) working days in advance of the travel date.
- In order to receive an advance draw, an employee must agree to have the full amount of the draw deducted from their next regularly scheduled pay check, if the travel request with receipts for out-of-pocket expenses has not been turned in to Finance five (5) working days after return to work.

SECTION SEVEN - UNAUTHORIZED TRAVEL EXPENSES: There are a number of common questions about authorized expenses. Unauthorized expenditures include, but are not limited to:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Expenses of a spouse or other persons not authorized to receive reimbursement under this policy.
- Beauty parlor or barber services.
- Personal entertainment (movie rental, bowling alley charges, river rafting, etc.)
- Theft, loss, or damage of personal property.
- Damage costs caused by employee/officer actions.
- Airline or other trip insurance.
- Personal postage, reading materials, or non-business related telephone calls.
- Personal toiletry articles.
- Gratuity in excess of 15 %, for meal reimbursement at cost, unless automatically charged by vendor.
- Honor bar charges (candy, juices, snacks, etc.).
- Meal costs when banquet meals are provided with registration or the meal is provided by the airline.
- Meals purchased within Yakima County except in connection with official meetings, conferences, or conventions at which attendance is required and authorized by the department director in the conduct of City business.
- Expenses related to personal travel or time taken in conjunction with authorized travel.

SECTION EIGHT - PROCESSING TRAVEL REQUEST FORM:

A. INITIATING TRAVEL REQUEST:

1. The employee/department must fill out the appropriate sections of a Travel Request form, attached hereto as Attachment "A".
 - (a) Name and department.

- (b) Date - date request is initiated.
- (c) Location of meeting - facility name, city and state.
- (d) Purpose and benefit to the City - a concise statement indicating why the travel is necessary and the expected benefit to the City.
- (e) Place of Lodging/ Phone No. - This is important in case your family, your department or the Finance Director needs to contact you during the period of your absence.
- (f) Departure Date - date travel is planned to start. Travel advance draw checks and credit cards will be available for pick up in Finance up to two (2) working days before this date.
- (g) Return Date - planned return to work date. Five (5) working days after this date, the travel request form with the Actual Expenditures column completed and receipts for out-of-pocket expenses attached is due into the Finance Director.
- (h) Travel Expense Type column – Complete all portions that are applicable.
- (i) Estimates column - Estimate all costs associated with the travel, even prepaid. List the approximate costs of transportation, meals, lodging, registration fees, and incidental expenses.
- (j) Advance Travel Request column - If an advance is requested, enter the amount which will not be covered by direct payment or City credit card on the appropriate line and total at the bottom.

B. SIGNATURES:

1. Employee must sign the request at the bottom of the form with the acknowledgement that completed travel request forms must be turned in to Finance within five (5) working days after return to work.
2. Department director must provide BARS Code - the complete twelve digit budget account number must be listed.
3. Department director must sign approval, whether or not an advance is requested, indicating:
 - (a) the mode of travel, length of stay, lodging and estimated costs are appropriate, and
 - (b) the availability/non-availability of a city vehicle, when traveling by private vehicle, and

- (c) the travel was planned in the approved budget or can be accommodated in the budget through other reductions, and
 - (d) the purpose and benefit to the City make the expenditure of public funds worthwhile.
- 4. The Finance Director must sign approval, and take appropriate actions regarding the advance travel request if applicable.
 - 5. The City Manager must sign approval for department director travel.

C. TRAVEL ADVANCE:

- 1. Submit the yellow copy of the Travel Request form in time to reach the Finance Director at least ten (10) working days in advance of the planned departure date. All of the elements including estimates and advance requested columns, the employee's signature, and the department director's approval signature must be completed as outlined above.
- 2. The Finance Director or his/her designee will ensure that there are sufficient funds available in the travel advance fund, issue a check in the name of the employee, and fill in the advance check number on the yellow copy of the Travel Request form.
- 3. The employee may pick up the travel advance check during regular working hours two (2) working days in advance of the planned departure date.
- 4. If no travel advance is requested, the Travel Request form is retained by the employee until their return. If a travel advance has been requested, the white and pink copies of the Travel Request form are retained by the employee until their return.
- 5. The Finance Director shall maintain a travel advance checking account for the sole purpose of advancing requested travel draws. This account shall not be used for reimbursing travel claims. The fund shall be periodically reimbursed.

D. INITIATING THE CLAIM FOR EXPENSES:

- 1. No later than five (5) working days after return to work, a completed Claim for Expenses form, attached hereto as Attachment 'B', must be submitted to the Finance Director with the department director's signature approving actual expenses. The white copy of the Travel Request form must be attached to the Claims for Expenses form. Completing the Claim for Expenses form within the prescribed time frame is required whether or not additional payment is due to the employee. The completed Claim for Expenses is the authority to pay for travel. An advance draw is simply an advance against the anticipated claim.

The employee/department must fill out the appropriate sections of a Claim for Expenses form, attached hereto as Attachment "B".

- (a) Name and department.
- (b) Date - date request is initiated.
- (c) Meeting Purpose - a concise statement describing the nature of the travel.
- (d) Meeting Location - facility name, city and state.
- (e) Date(s) of Meeting - date travel began and date travel ended.
- (f) City Credit Card Charges section – Complete all portions that are applicable.
- (g) Cash Expenses section – Complete all portions that are applicable.
- (h) Actual Expenditures column – The employee must complete the Actual Expenditures column on the Claim for Expenses form. Itemized receipts for out-of-pocket expenses must be attached to the form and credit card slips and itemized receipts for charged items must be turned in to the Finance Department with the City credit card.

If there has been an advance draw that is in excess of the amount due to the employee, the employee must attach a check for the excess and submit it with the Claim for Expenses form, and the white and pink copies of the completed Travel Request form. If the employee chooses to repay the excess advance in cash, they must do so at the Finance Office and attach a copy of the receipt to the completed Claim for Expenses form.

B. SIGNATURES:

1. The employee must sign the request at the bottom of the form to certify that the claim is true and correct, and to acknowledge that a completed Claim for Expenses form and related documents must be turned in to the Finance Department within five (5) working days after return to work.
2. Department director must provide BARS Code on individual receipts and initial - the complete twelve digit budget account number must be listed.
3. The department director shall review the actual expenditures, review any significant differences from the planned expenses, ensure that all receipts for out-of-pocket expenses are attached and the credit card with charge slips and itemized receipts has been turned in, and sign properly completed Claim for Expenses forms in the "Approved By" block.

4. The Finance Director or his/her designee shall monitor the yellow copies of the travel request forms and initiate a payroll deduction for delinquent travel claims exceeding five (5) working days beyond the return to work date.
5. Finance Department will process the completed Claim for Expenses form:
 - (a) The Finance Director will review the Claim for Expenses form for completion including signatures and itemized receipts for out-of-pocket expenses attached. Incomplete Claim for Expenses forms shall be returned to the department director with an indication of what appears to be missing or incomplete.
 - (b) If there has been a travel advance issued, the Finance Director or his/her designee will match the travel advance request (Travel Request Form yellow copy) and annotate the check number on the white original. The amount due to the employee shall be calculated. If the amount due is zero, the advance and the reimbursement exactly match, the white original shall be filed with the yellow copy and the pink returned to the employee. If there is an amount due to the employee, the white and pink copies shall be so annotated, the white copy forwarded to accounts payable, and the pink copy returned to the employee.
 - (c) The Finance Department will process the amount due to the employee for the next accounts payable processing and file the forms and attachments as support for the accounts payable.

SECTION NINE - CREDIT CARDS:

- A. AUTHORIZED USE OF CITY ISSUED CREDIT CARDS RELATED TO TRAVEL AND MEALS:
 1. City credit cards can be used for authorized travel related costs of City employees and officers. Their use for personal expenses and entertainment is prohibited. Charges for personal expenses should be paid separately and removed from any bill before paying with a City credit card.
 2. Credit card charges must be supported by an itemized vendor's receipt so that charges may be audited as proper City expenses.
 3. Any charges against the credit card not properly identified on the Claim for Expenses form or not allowed following the required department review, shall be promptly reimbursed to the City by the employee or official in the manner determined by the Finance Director.
 4. Credit card charge slips and itemized receipts must be turned in with the credit card to the department upon return to work, with the completed Claim for Expenses form.

5. Return credit cards to the Finance Department the first working day after returning from travel.
6. Meal charges:
 - (a) When meals are reimbursed, all items including beverages must be listed on the receipt. Tips may be included up to 15%. A "stub" is not adequate as it does not provide sufficient data to audit meal expenses for compliance with state law. It is the employee's responsibility to obtain an itemized receipt.
7. Gas credit cards for City vehicles:
 - (a) It is generally less expensive to use gas procured in bulk and available at the City's gasoline vendor. Employees anticipating a trip in a City vehicle will make every reasonable effort to ensure the vehicle is full before starting a trip.
 - (b) City gas credit cards are available for use in City vehicles only. Under no circumstances will a city gas credit card be used to provide fuel for a private vehicle.
 - (c) Upon return, fill up the vehicle at the City's gasoline vendor, so that the vehicle is ready for the next person.
 - (d) Return gas credit cards to the Finance Department the first working day after returning from travel.

SECTION TEN - SINGLE DAY TRAVEL AND BUSINESS MEALS:

- A. BUSINESS MEALS. Claims, including use of credit card, may be submitted for department director approved working meals on the Claim for Expenses form. A Travel Request form is not required. Requests for reimbursement via the Claim for Expenses form submitted with the charge card slip and itemized receipt must include purpose of the meal, BARS code, names and organizations of those in attendance. Business meals which only include City employees would not generally be appropriate to charge to the City, except on special occasions where employees are directed to miss their lunch break to participate in a meeting. Meetings should be scheduled to avoid employee lunch breaks when possible.

Attachment A: Travel Request Form
Attachment B: Claim for Expenses Form

Distribution: Department Directors w/ attachments
Original: Administrative Policy file w/ attachments

City of Toppenish CLAIM FOR EXPENSES

EMPLOYEE: _____ DEPARTMENT: _____

MEETING PURPOSE: _____

MEETING LOCATION: _____

DATE(S) OF MEETING: FROM: _____ TO: _____

Itemize travel and related expenses incurred during the above dates in the appropriate section below and complete the meal related information on the reverse side. An itemized receipt (and credit card slip, if applicable) is required for each expenditure with the exception of vehicle mileage.

CITY CREDIT CARD CHARGES:	ACTUAL EXPENDITURES
Meals (itemize on reverse).....	\$ _____
Lodging Expenses (Facility Name) _____	\$ _____
Transportation: _____	\$ _____
Other Expenses: _____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
TOTAL CREDIT CARD EXPENSES	\$ _____

CASH EXPENSES:	
Meals (itemize on reverse).....	\$ _____
Lodging Expenses (Facility Name) _____	\$ _____
Mileage: From _____ to _____	
and return (if applicable). Total miles _____ @ \$.405 per mile	\$ _____
Transportation: _____	\$ _____
Other Expenses: _____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
TOTAL CASH EXPENSES.....	\$ _____

Less Travel Advance Funds (per Travel Request form)..... \$ _____

NET REIMBURSEMENT OR ADVANCE TO BE RETURNED \$ _____
BY EMPLOYEE WITHIN FIVE (5) BUSINESS DAYS AFTER RETURN FROM TRAVEL

I hereby certify under penalty of perjury that this is a true and correct claim for necessary expenses incurred by me and that no payment has been received by me on account thereof in addition to any Advance Travel Funds shown as received and that I have certified as to the taxable expenses on the reverse side of this form.

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

DATE

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR APPROVAL

DATE

FINANCE DEPT REVIEW: _____	Vendor # _____	BARS # _____		\$ _____
	Vendor # _____	BARS # _____		\$ _____
	Vendor # _____	BARS # _____		\$ _____

SUMMARY OF MEALS

For each meal indicate whether business was conducted while the meal was being consumed. The business conducted would include a planned training program or planned business discussion and does not include incidental conversation regarding work-related matters.

DAY OF MONTH	BREAKFAST	BUSINESS Y/N	LUNCH	BUSINESS Y/N	DINNER	BUSINESS Y/N
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						
26						
27						
28						
29						
30						
31						
TOTALS						

Finance Department Use Only:	Taxable Meals \$ _____ FICA Amount \$ _____ Payroll Date _____
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City of Toppenish TRAVEL REQUEST

For travel advance, submit completed YELLOW copy to the Finance Director ten (10) days prior to departure.

NAME:	DEPT:	DATE:
LOCATION OF MEETING:	CITY:	STATE:
PURPOSE & BENEFIT TO CITY:		
PLACE OF LODGING/PHONE NUMBER:	DEPARTURE DATE & TIME:	RETURN DATE & TIME:

TRAVEL EXPENSE TYPE	EXPENSE ESTIMATE	ADVANCE TRAVEL REQUEST
AIR:		TO BE PAID VIA ACCOUNTS PAYABLE OR CITY CREDIT CARD
PRIVATE VEHICLE: MILES @ \$.405		
CITY VEHICLE: GAS		TO BE PAID VIA CITY GAS CARD
OTHER VEHICLE EXPENSES: SPECIFY: _____		
LODGING NIGHT(S) AT: \$ _____ / PER NIGHT		TO BE PAID VIA ACCOUNTS PAYABLE OR CITY CREDIT CARD
BREAKFAST: # OF MEALS: _____		TO BE PAID VIA CITY CREDIT CARD
LUNCH: # OF MEALS: _____		TO BE PAID VIA CITY CREDIT CARD
DINNER: # OF MEALS: _____		TO BE PAID VIA CITY CREDIT CARD
REGISTRATION/TUITION:		TO BE PAID VIA ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES: SPECIFY: _____		
TOTALS:		

FOR FINANCE DEPARTMENT USE ONLY:		
ADVANCE CHECK # _____	RECEIVED BY: _____	DATE: _____
AMOUNT \$ _____		

BARS CODE:	
DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR APPROVAL:	DATE:
FINANCE DIRECTOR REVIEW:	DATE:
CITY MANAGER REVIEW (if applicable):	DATE:

I understand that an approved Claim for Expenses must be submitted to the Finance Director for actual expenses with itemized receipts attached within five (5) working days after traveling. I understand that the City reserves the right, pursuant to RCW 42.24.150, to withhold the entire amount or portion of any advance plus interest at an annual rate of ten (10) percent from the next regularly scheduled paycheck for failure to file this report with the required receipts.

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

WHITE - Employee retains until trip completed - then submits to Finance Director with Claim for Expenses form with actual expenses.

YELLOW - Submit to Finance Director ten (10) days prior to departure in order to receive advance.

PINK - Department file copy.