

CITY OF IDAHO FALLS

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND REPORTING OF TRAVEL EXPENSES

OPERATING PROCEDURES

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 13, 2007

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to set forth the minimum requirements for travel authorization and reporting of travel expenses.

2.0 SCOPE

This bulletin applies to all personnel of the City of Idaho Falls traveling on City business.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 For the purpose of this procedure, travel is defined as any trip away from the City of Idaho Falls which cannot be accomplished within the normal work day, or requires an employee to account for a travel advance.

3.2 Carrier Accommodations –

- a. City vehicle is defined as any City owned or leased vehicle.
- b. Air fare is defined and limited to lowest fare accommodations.

3.3 Travel Status –

- a. Travel status is defined as the minimum period of time required to complete a travel assignment beginning with the date and time of departure from Idaho Falls and ending with the date and time of return to Idaho Falls.
- b. Any non-exempt employee who is sent out of town for one day will be paid for all travel time.

When non-exempt City employees are on travel status they are to be paid up to 8 hours each day while engaged in City business. Employees on travel status on Saturday, Sunday, and holidays will be paid up to 8 hours each day while engaged in City business. In no instance is an employee on travel status to be compensated for more than 8 hours each day while engaged in City business, unless prior approval is obtained from the Division Director.

If the City employee requests to drive a personal or rental car instead of flying, the City will only count as hours worked, the time the City would have had to count, had the employee elected to fly.

- c. A mode of transportation shall be chosen which places the traveler at his/her destination with a minimum of time in route, and the most economical means

available. Exceptions must be specifically authorized on the "REQUEST FOR TRAVEL" form.

- d. Time spent in travel solely for the convenience of the traveler will not be recognized as "in travel status", and all costs incurred by the traveler by reason of excessive travel time will not be reimbursable to the traveler, and such excessive time shall be chargeable to the traveler's vacation if travel does occur during the employee's regularly scheduled work shifts.
- e. Circumstances may occur during travel, requiring modifications to reservations. It is the responsibility of the traveler to make such arrangements judiciously and to cancel promptly any previous arrangements. Documentation of such changes is necessary.
- f. The City intends to reimburse employees for reasonable and actual expenses incurred in business travel on behalf of the City as provided in this policy. In no case are travel reimbursements considered a fringe benefit.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

- 4.1 The Municipal Services Office shall be notified as far in advance of the departure date as possible.
- 4.2 The Municipal Services Office shall be responsible for arranging airline tickets, hotel reservations, conference registrations and travel advances based on the request for travel.
- 4.25 If the employee has specific travel needs, such as specific flight times and return flights, it is the responsibility of the employee to do the necessary travel research before turning in the travel request to Municipal Services Office. Municipal Services will make every attempt to make travel arrangements that the employee has previously researched as long as it is not an added cost to the City both in time and dollars. Any additional travel costs for the convenience of the traveler if approved by the Division Director will be the responsibility of the employee.
- 4.3 The Division shall be responsible for preparation of the "REQUEST FOR TRAVEL" form. The Division must approve and sign the travel request before any arrangements are made by Municipal Services.
- 4.4 The Division shall be responsible for clearing all travel requests with the Mayor. Copies of related literature should be attached; i.e. registration form filled out in its entirety, meeting schedules, programs, agenda, reservation documents, itineraries, etc.
- 4.5 If the itinerary is changed after the "REQUEST FOR TRAVEL" form has been approved, the Municipal Services Office should be notified as soon as possible.
- 4.6 If travel arrangements are required to be changed for the convenience of the traveler and not related to city business or emergency. All additional charges will be the responsibility of the traveler unless the Division Director or Mayor provides a written waiver.

5.0 APPROVAL OF AUTHORIZATION TO TRAVEL

- 5.1 All requests for travel must be approved by the Division Director and Mayor on "REQUEST FOR TRAVEL" form.
- 5.2 Following approval by the Mayor, the original copy of the "REQUEST FOR TRAVEL" form will serve as authorization for the Municipal Services Office to obtain tickets and issue travel advances (where applicable).

6.0 TRAVEL EXPENSE ADVANCE

- 6.1 As approved by the Division Director on the appropriate travel request form, the Municipal Services Office will prepare a travel expense advance, the amount of which will be dependent upon the purpose of the trip, distance and mode of travel, and duration of the trip. A check will be transmitted to the traveler prior to the departure date.

7.0 EXPENSE STATEMENT AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- 7.1 Each traveler will furnish to the Municipal Services Office support for the following travel expenses:
 - a. Air Travel will be supported by receipts or tickets stubs.
 - b. Reimbursement for use of a private vehicle is calculated at a rate determined by the City, times the actual miles traveled, but not to exceed the distance shown in the Rand McNally Road Atlas. Any other necessary business miles will be shown separately and reimbursed at the same rate. If using a private vehicle is for the convenience of the employee, reimbursement is limited to the lesser of the above calculation or the cost of a non-refundable airline ticket purchased twenty-one (21) days in advance of the trip or rental car cost. If such travel is for the convenience of the City, no limitations apply.
 - c. City vehicle and rental car expenses will be supported by receipts.
 - d. Reasonable lodging costs for the authorized traveler will be reimbursed when supported by itemized receipts. The traveler is expected to use commercial type lodging convenient to the place of business. Advance reservations made by the Municipal Services Office guarantees your room if you arrive late; therefore, it is the responsibility of the employee to avoid "no show" charges by canceling reservations when requirements change.

e. Meal expenses allowable:

1. Per Diem Reimbursement

A per diem reimbursement will be paid to the traveler in accordance with the federal allowance in locations published in IRS publications.

Per Diem is defined as the reimbursement for meals and meal gratuities.

2. Partial Day Reimbursement

For travel involving an overnight stay a partial day reimbursement for per diem will be paid to the traveler up to the maximum rate within the following limitations:

- a. Breakfast: If the actual departure time is 7:00 a.m. or before, or if the return time is 8:00 a.m. or after
- b. Lunch: If the actual departure time is 11:00 a.m. or before, or if the return time is 2:00 p.m. or after.
- c. Dinner: If the actual departure time is 5:00 p.m. or before, or if the return time is 7:00 p.m. or after.

Meals furnished as part of a conference registration fee will be deducted from the traveler's per diem at the partial day meal reimbursement rate.

The departure and return times must be recorded to account for meals that are being claimed.

Complimentary meals, including continental breakfast provided by a hotel and meals provided by common carriers will not be deducted from the per diem allowance to be paid.

Departure time: Arrival time at the airport which includes security check-in time not to exceed 90 minutes. If traveling by other means it is the actual departure time from home or work.

Arrival time: If travel by air it is the airline arrival time. If you are using a rental car, arrival time is the time that the rental is returned. Travel time to home is not included. If traveling by private or City vehicle it is the time that you arrive back at work or if after business hours that time that you arrive home.

3. Maximum Per Diem Rates

Partial day per diem reimbursement is equal to a maximum of twenty-three percent (23%) of the total per diem rate for breakfast,

twenty-nine percent (29%) of the total per diem rate for lunch, and forty-eight percent (48%) of the total per diem rate for dinner.

4. Requesting Meal Reimbursement

The traveler will indicate on the "REQUEST FOR TRAVEL" form the number and breakdown of meals needed.

The City will not require any receipts for meal expenses. The City will also pay for all qualifying meals eaten or not.

The traveler will also include agendas, etc. which will show meals included in the registration fee and those for which the traveler is responsible.

- f. Car rentals, taxi service, registration fees, auto expenses, fuel purchases, and other miscellaneous items of travel expenses will be supported by receipts.
- g. All telephone calls to the City of Idaho Falls should be made in the least expensive manner. Other business calls placed by the traveler while on City business are reimbursable and should be shown on the expense statement.
- h. If an employee elects to travel for his convenience by any other means than commercial airlines, such expenses as auto, lodging, and meals, will be reimbursed to the extent they would have been incurred in traveling to the destination in the quickest and most economical way.

7.2 The following expenses will not be reimbursed by the City:

- a. Long distance calls for personal reasons, except for one reasonable safe arrival call home.
- b. Insurance coverage for air travel while in travel status.
- c. Traveler's cheques purchased by the traveler.
- d. Expenses incurred by non City travelers.
- e. Parking fees not related to the trip.
- f. Insurance coverage for collision and personal liability.
- g. Expenses not related to the purpose of travel.

7.3 A City of Idaho Falls "EXPENSE STATEMENT" form, with the supporting documents, shall be filed with the Municipal Services Office as soon as possible after completion of the trip, but not later than ten (10) working days after the trip is completed.

8.0 TRIP REPORTING

- 8.1 Immediately following completion of a travel assignment, the traveler shall make a verbal report to his/her Division Director.