

## EMPLOYEE TRAVEL - PAYMENT OF EMPLOYEE TRAVEL EXPENSES

The Board of Trustees authorizes employees and the Trustees to participate in off-campus conferences, meetings and similar activities that will be beneficial to the enhancement of the South Orange County Community College District's programs and services. Conference attendance and travel expenses must be approved by the Chancellor or designee. Employee travel outside of the United States must also be approved by the college president and the vice chancellor of business services at least 30 days before the travel dates. Conference attendance for board members must be approved by the Board of Trustees. A spend authorization must be completed prior to any trip(s), excluding mileage only travel. There are two primary reasons for this requirement. First, all employees and the Trustees are covered by district paid Workers' Compensation and Life Insurance. Coverage could be in jeopardy if any injury or accident occurs while an employee is away from the immediate area unless an approved travel request is on file. Second, funds for district paid travel must be available in the appropriate budget account for such travel to be approved.

The travel procedures that follow pertain to all funds and programs of the district regardless of funding source. All original detailed itemized receipts reference below must be scanned / attached to the appropriate spend authorization / expense report for submittal. Original receipts must be maintained until verification of payment issued is confirmed.

This regulation does not apply to employees that are traveling with students for approved student activities (BP -6125 and AR-6125).

### 1. SPEND AUTHORIZATION

A spend authorization for each employee must be completed for each trip if there are expenses associated with the trip. It should be approved before the trip starts. When preparing the spend authorization, estimated expenses should include all anticipated costs including taxes and miscellaneous expenses. A copy of the detailed conference agenda or other communication from the meeting organizer detailing the dates and location of the meeting (e.g. save the date) must also be attached to the spend authorization.

### 2. MILEAGE

Local business mileage shall be reimbursed to the employee and trustees at the prevailing IRS standard rate. Mileage will be reimbursed from the employees regular work location.

Travelers who drive must carry their current auto insurance. Administrators and classified managers who received a mileage stipend cannot claim mileage for travel within Orange County. For travel outside of Orange County, mileage will be reimbursed from the employees regular work location.

Mileage claims for local travel not associated with a spend authorization are processed monthly by completing an expense report at the end of each month and attaching proof of miles travelled (e.g. Mapquest or Google Maps directions) for each unique trip

3. MILEAGE STIPENDS FOR ADMINISTRATORS/CLASSIFIED MANAGERS

The Chancellor has final approval of mileage stipend levels. The Chancellor’s Executive Council will be the designated entity to revise and recommend to the Chancellor the mileage stipend allowance levels. The mileage stipend allowance level will be approved by the Chancellor. The Board of Trustees will approve mileage stipend for employees similar to other personnel actions approved by the Board.

4. TRANSPORTATION

Reimbursable transportation expenses include all necessary official travel on airplanes, railroads, buses, private vehicles, and other usual means of conveyance. Rental cars will be reimbursed at the most economical and/or appropriate rate for the number of passengers. Claims for reimbursement must be supported by attaching/scanning original ticket stub or receipt provided by the commercial carrier to the spend authorization/expense report

- a. All employees will use the most economical mode of transportation. Costs for premium/preferred seating will not be reimbursed.
- b. Reimbursement for travel by private vehicle shall not exceed the lowest commercial airfare determined by researching flights departing and arriving on the same days that would have been used for the conference attended at least two weeks away from date of research.
- c. Other allowable transportation related expenses are: parking fees (excluding valet parking unless self-parking is not reasonably available), highway tolls, shuttles, rideshares, and taxi cabs. These expenses shall be authenticated by attached/scanned original receipts. Tips must be detailed on the itemized receipt and cannot exceed 20% of the original fare.
- d. For rental cars, the additional insurance and GPS devices should be included and will be reimbursed through the expense report.
- e. Normal miscellaneous expenses under \$10 do not require receipts (e.g. tolls).

5. REGISTRATION

Registration fees charged in connection with approved attendance at conferences, conventions, committee meetings, in-service training seminars, and so forth, are allowable at actual cost. Actual charges must be verified by registration receipt or bona fide registration application form.

6. LODGING

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Lodging is not permitted if travel is less than 50 miles from the work location unless approved in advance by the college President or Vice President for Administrative Services or the Vice Chancellor of Business Services. Actual lodging cost, not to exceed charges at the single occupancy rate, shall be allowed. An itemized receipt for lodging expenses must be submitted with the expense report for the expenses to be allowable. Lodging will be reimbursed starting, at the earliest, the night prior to conference commencement and ending on the day the conference ends, unless conference timing prevents reasonable travel home.

7. MEALS

Meal allowances are applicable when travel requires absence from home or the district overnight during a usual and customary meal period. Meal allowances will not be provided for conferences or meetings where no overnight stay occurs.

Meal allowances shall not exceed the annual IRS published Special Per Diem Rates. Meal receipts are not required. When the cost of meals are included in the registration fee of a conference, workshop, or meeting, allowance will not be reimbursed unless reasonably justified (e.g. dietary restrictions), and approved by the supervisor.

On the day of departure, for flights departing at 10 a.m. or later, no breakfast allowance will be provided. For flights departing at 1 p.m. or later, no breakfast or lunch will be provided. For flights departing at 8 p.m. or later, no meal allowances will be provided.

On the day of return, for flights arriving by 12 p.m. or earlier, no lunch will be provided. For flights arriving by 5 p.m. or earlier, no dinner will be provided.

8. MISCELLANEOUS

- a. Reimbursement for telephone calls, internet access, and business center expenses will be allowed if incurred in conducting District business.
- b. Individual membership dues are not reimbursable by the District unless it is required in the cost of the conference registration.
- c. No reimbursement will be made for alcoholic beverages under any circumstance.
- d. It is not a requirement to use the travel agent contracted with the district.
- e. For travel that begins prior to or extends after the end of a conference where an employee’s stay exceeds the days required for the conference or meeting, the appropriate type of absence must be charged against the employees leave balance and approved by their supervisor.
- f. Tips for incidentals (e.g. baggage handlers, bellhop, etc.) will not be reimbursed.

9. PREPAYMENTS OR EMPLOYEE TRAVEL ADVANCE

Prepaid travel expenses are authorized for trustees and employees on official business of the district under the following conditions:

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- a. Prepayment will be allowed for travel, lodging, and registration fees, to be paid directly to vendor.
- b. Persons requesting prepayments shall complete a spend authorization for prepaid expenses not less than 15 business days prior to the need of prepayment using the prepaid expense items.
- c. A District credit card may be used for prepayments if paid directly to the vendor. An expense report must be completed against the spend authorization for District credit card payments.
- d. In lieu of prepaid travel expenses, an employee may request an advance of registration, hotel, airfare, and train expenses by completing a spend authorization and checking the cash advance box. This request must be completed no less than 15 business days before the travel occurs. All receipts & documents must be attached to the expense report or funds will be owed back to the District.
- e. If a prepayment is made for travel, lodging and/or registration fees and the prepayment results in an overpayment or the attendee cancels their attendance, District Accounting must be notified that a refund is to be issued.

10. SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

The District recognizes that a sponsoring organization may offer to pay for an employee’s travel expenses from time to time. While not strictly prohibited, caution must be exercised on the part of the employee, their supervisor and the District in order to protect the employee and the District from liability. Thus, in situations where a sponsoring organization offers to pay for expenses on behalf of a District employee, the following procedure must be followed:

- a. A spend authorization must be completed and approved by the Vice Chancellor of Business Services (or designee) and the employee’s supervisor using the appropriate worktag even if no reimbursement is being requested.
- b. A copy of the conference agenda or detailed explanation of the purpose of the trip including benefit to the District/college must be attached to the spend authorization detailing the dates of travel.
- c. The name of the sponsoring organization and the estimated amount of expenses to be paid by the sponsoring organization must be included in the spend authorization header justification.
- d. The employee must either submit an expense report for any incidental reimbursements or close the spend authorization after returning to work.
- e. The employee is barred from making any recommendations related to contracting with or purchasing from the sponsored organization for at least one year from the date of travel.

11. REIMBURSEMENTS

Claims must be submitted for reimbursement within 30 days after travel has occurred, but not later than June 15 of each fiscal year by completing an expense report. Travel during the month of June shall follow the year-end closing deadlines to ensure it is properly booked. All receipts must be scanned and attached to the expense report. In addition, a detailed conference agenda must be attached to the expense report.

Any exceptions to the above provisions must be requested in writing with justification noted and individually approved by the Vice Chancellor of Business Services or designee.

*References:*

*Board Policy 4052*

*California Education Code, Sections 87032 and 72423*

*IRC Section 162 (a)(2); RR-75-170; RR 75-432*