

Business and Non-Instructional OperationsTravel Expenses**REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES**

The following instructions must be followed when submitting claims for reimbursement for in-state and out-of-state travel and other incurred expenses:

1. All claims must be submitted on district approved forms with original signatures on all pages (Forms can be found on the LUSD.org website).
2. All claims must be by employee, have a valid budget account number, and have copies of the fully signed trip request and travel form attached. Only expenses incurred as representatives of the school district are payable. **AN EMPLOYEE CAN BE REIMBURSED ONLY FOR HIS/HER OWN EXPENSES.**
3. All out-of-state travel must be pre-approved by the Board of Trustees. The Superintendent must approve the initial request before travel arrangements can be made. Conference attendees must initiate this process by completing a Request for Travel form and submit it to their principal or director for preliminary approval.
4. State mode of transportation - railroad, bus, airplane or personal automobile. List amount of fare separately. Travel vouchers/receipts must be submitted in case of private carrier.

Mileage reimbursement – The district has purchased a number of vehicles for the purpose of district travel. These vehicles represent the most efficient option for travel. Use of personal vehicle for travel is discouraged.

Car mileage is reimbursed at the current Internal Revenue Service (IRS) standard mileage rate or as specified in personnel contracts. Travel is computed from and to the school district as starting and completion point. An exception to this rule occurs when an employee begins/completes travel from a point other than the district, and the mileage to/from this other point is less than the mileage to/from the district. In instances such as these, the mileage will be computed as the lesser of the district or the other starting/ending point. If a personal vehicle is used, the travel expense approved will be no greater than the expense that would have been incurred if it had been by airplane. Exceptions to this require prior approval of the immediate management supervisor.

5. Hotel - when traveling on school district business, with proper school district identification, hotels may grant a special government/state rate. Employees shall request the state government hotel rate or lowest rate available, whether it is the state government rate or any other available rate. Exceptions to the state rate or the lowest rate available must be pre-approved by the Superintendent.

## Business and Non-Instructional Operations

### Travel Expenses (continued)

When possible, two employees (gender permitting) shall share a room. The employee who incurs the expense for the District travel may submit to be reimbursed with detailed proof of payment. Reimbursement will be based on double occupancy (gender permitting). Employees cannot be required to share a room with their Supervisor/Manager. The district retains the discretion to approve a single occupancy request upon show of valid cause.

If a room is occupied by a district employee and guest/spouse, the reimbursement is linked to the full nightly rate. If the hotel charges for an additional adult/guest per night, the employee will absorb the extra nightly fees and charges.

### **TRAVEL ADVANCE**

The Superintendent or designee must approve all advances for travel expenses. An advance must not to exceed \$75/day for meals, tolls, and short-term parking of one hour or less in lieu of other procedures and limits established here within. Other per diem rates may be established by the Board in individual employment contracts. Only appropriate expenses below \$75 per diem are reimbursed.

### **CLAIM FORMS**

1. Claims shall be submitted within two weeks after completion of the trip. If claims are not submitted with in this timeline, the District may decline any and all of the employees reimbursement expenses. To be in compliance with General Acceptable Accounting Principles (GAAP) expenses are to be reported in the period expenses are incurred; therefore the district will decline late claims that are submitted after books are closed (July 31<sup>st</sup> ).
  - a. All Travel Reimbursement claims must include the following items:
    - Fully completed Request for Travel Form
    - Fully completed Trip Request Form
    - Detailed schedule/agenda of conference attended
    - Valid Budget Code
    - Meals at the per diem rate, in accordance to policy. Receipts for meals are not required.
    - Google Maps if claiming mileage
    - All required signatures

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2. **Meals** - Reasonable expenditures are allowed for meals. No public funds may be expended on the purchase of alcoholic beverages. Meals will be reimbursed up to the current board approved rates not to exceed (except as provided for in individual employee contracts):

\$17 Breakfast  
 \$18 Lunch  
\$34 Dinner  
 \$69 Maximum Full Day

With prior approval from the Superintendent and based on special circumstances and locality, meals may be reimbursed at a higher rate. The rates are based on the U.S. general Services Administration (GSA) for Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) for Santa Barbara County. Rates will be reviewed annually and based on GSA rates.

If any meals are included in the pre-paid conference registration fees and the employee chooses to eat elsewhere that meal cost will not be reimbursed.

Employees may claim meals (as noted above), based on the following timeframes:

Breakfast: Trip begins at or before 6:30 a.m. and ends at or after 9:00 a.m.  
 Lunch: Trip begins at or before 11:00 a.m. and ends at or after 2:00 p.m.  
 Dinner: Trip begins at or before 5:00 p.m. and ends at or after 7:00 p.m.

If expenses are to be paid for informal meetings, including but not limited to luncheon meetings between the Superintendent and an administrator, or a District board member or a member of the community, the Superintendent or designee is authorized to determine in advance whether or not such expenditures promotes District business and whether or not as a matter of policy such expenses can be incurred

3. Signed, itemized receipts by the LUSD claimant are required for all of the following expenses:
- a. Taxi - list separately and indicate points of travel
  - b. Registration, dues, or any other incurred expenses must be substantiated
  - c. Car rental – when a choice of rental service is available, the most economical car rental is required.
  - d. Hotel charges - list separately and support by hotel voucher/receipt. Hotel charges must be at State Rate or lowest available rate, unless pre-approved by the Superintendent or designee.

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- e. Parking - actual self-parking expenses are reimbursed; valet parking, while not usually approved, must be pre-approved and a written explanation is required for the extenuating circumstance.
- 4. Mileage reimbursement – The district has purchased a number of vehicles for the purpose of district travel. These vehicles represent the most efficient option for travel. Use of personal vehicle for travel is discouraged.
- 5. Gratuities - other than for normal tips for taxis, bellboys, maids (for extended stays), baggage handling, and meals, gratuities are not authorized. If gratuities of an unusual amount or nature are required for a major meeting, convention, etc., they must be approved in advance and detailed on the individual travel expense report.
- 6. Travel expenses for a guest/spouse are not reimbursable.
- 7. The Superintendent or designee shall in advance determine if any employee shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in attending local civic organization functions to the extent that such expenses are incurred in the course of performing services for the school district.
- 8. Group travel (e.g. groups of 3 or more) shall be managed by the administrator leading the trip. Travel pre-approval forms are required for each LUSD employee participating on the trip, and the administrator shall coordinate event registration, transportation, hotel accommodations and shall be accountable for the pre- approved expenses.