

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES: 6213P

The superintendent and designees for approving travel and the related reimbursements are responsible for:

- Ensuring all travel costs incurred are:
 - Directly work related,
 - Obtained at the most economical price, and
 - Both critical and necessary for district business.
- Exercising prudent judgement in approving travel-related costs.

Employees on official district business are responsible for:

- Being familiar with district travel policy and procedures before embarking on travel.
- Exercising the same care in incurring expenses and accomplishing the purposes of the travel that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business. Excess costs, circuitous routes, delays, or luxury accommodations unnecessary or unjustified in the performance of official district business are not acceptable.
- Paying any excess costs and any additional expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience.
- Securing prior authorization for travel when required.
- Preparing the claim for travel expenses and providing appropriate receipts and documentation as required.
- Promptly paying fines to the appropriate jurisdiction for all parking tickets, citations or infractions received while operating a vehicle on district business and incurred due to the fault of the employee. Payment of fines and citations under these circumstances is the sole obligation and responsibility of the traveler and are not to be reimbursed or paid by the district.

Overnight and Out-of-State Travel Authorization

Employees must request and receive prior authorization before making any arrangements for overnight and/or Out-of-State travel (Out-of-State travel excludes Portland, OR). Please plan ahead so that you give the superintendent's office 30 days at a minimum for processing and approving your completed authorization request. (Travel arrangements include meals, lodging, registration, substitutes, and other expenses.) Approval is requested by completing the Overnight and/or Out-of-State Travel Authorization Request form (5341-A).

One 5341-A is required for each trip, listing all attendees, the name, location and dates of the conference, total estimated cost for all travelers and the budget number to be charged for the trip. The 5341-A also identifies how the trip supports FWPS Strategic Goals. Approval signatures from the supervisor, individual with budget authority and superintendent, or designee, are required.

Out-of-country travel, excluding British Columbia, Canada, also requires prior board approval.

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Reimbursement of Expenses

It is preferred that travel expenses (other than meals) be paid for with a District Procurement Card or Purchase Order whenever possible. However, in extenuating circumstances the employee may arrange for his/her own travel and request reimbursement from the district provided prior approval has been secured.

To be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred by the employee, the Travel Expense Reimbursement Claim Form (5341-B) must be completed after travel is complete. Claims should be submitted to Business Services within two weeks of return from travel. The person exercising budget approval is required to verify that the travel expenses being submitted by the employee are reasonable, and sign the 5341-B as verification of the accuracy of the claim. The 5341-A and any required receipts must be attached to the 5341-B. The documents are then forwarded to Business Services for processing.

Reimbursable Travel Expenses

Transportation

- o Private vehicle mileage will be reimbursed at the Federal rate as listed on the GSA.gov website, in effect at the time of travel. If an employee leaves from home, mileage is calculated based on the employee's home or workplace, whichever is less. When two or more employees are traveling to the same destination, plans should be made to use the minimum number of cars necessary to transport everyone.
- o Commercial travel: Commercial travel (i.e. airlines, train, or bus) should be obtained at the most economical price. Detailed receipts are required. Employees attending a conference may choose to drive their personal vehicle in lieu of flying and can be reimbursed for the actual mileage, not to exceed the cost of an airline ticket plus projected ground transportation. Copies of the airline ticket documentation showing what would have been paid are required to be submitted with the 5341-A and listed as an estimated cost.
- o Rental Car: Employees may rent a car when it would be less costly and/or other commercial means of transportation is not reasonable. The rental car must be listed as an estimated cost on form 5341-A. An economy or compact car is recommended, and should depend on the number of travelers. The district will not reimburse for any optional insurance coverage on rental cars.
- o Miscellaneous: Receipts are required for parking, tolls, or transportation services (e.g. taxi, Uber).

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Overnight Lodging

- Reimbursement for overnight lodging is allowed when the conference or travel destination is located more than fifty (50) miles (most direct route) from the closer of either the traveler's official residence or official workplace.
 - Exceptions to the 50 mile rule:
 - If the staff member is acting in a custodial or supervisory role for students who are lodging overnight and it is part of their official duties.
 - If there are extenuating circumstances, a request describing the special circumstances can be submitted to the Chief Finance and Operations Officer for approval prior to travel and must be included with the lodging receipts.
- Reimbursement for lodging is limited to standard room rates. An itemized receipt is required. Please inquire with the hotel if they offer government or special conference rates.

Registration

- Registration for conferences and workshops should be prepaid by District Procurement Card or Purchase Order if the travel has been approved. In extenuating circumstances the employee may pay for his/her own registration and request reimbursement from the district provided prior approval has been secured. Detailed receipts are required.

Meals (other than those included at the meeting/conference)

- Meals, while in pre-approved travel status, shall be reimbursed per the federal per diem allowance, as listed on the GSA.gov website, in effect at the time of travel. To find out the per diem rate for your destination, go to gsa.gov, select Travel, Plan & Book, and then Per Diem Rates. Select the appropriate fiscal year for your travel, the state you are going to, and type in the city. Receipts are not required. Per-diem allowance includes tax, gratuity, and incidental expenses. A copy of the conference agenda is required to be submitted with the 5341-B. When meals are provided, the employee should not request per diem for that meal. If extenuating circumstances apply, such as medical or religious dietary restrictions, the employee may request per diem for that meal. Per GSA guidelines, the reimbursement for the first and last day of travel is calculated at 75 percent of the per diem allowance. This amount may be adjusted depending on whether a meal is provided. Note: Please remember that P-Cards cannot be used for meals while traveling.

Miscellaneous Travel Expenses

- Purchase of Supplies and Materials: Itemized receipts are required for all supplies and materials being purchased for district use and the items will be considered district property if reimbursed. The purpose of these items must be described. The

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supervisor should verify that all supplies and materials claimed are being used for district purposes and located on district property.

- o Incidental Expenses: Incidental expenses are included in the per diem allowance and include fees and tips given for meals, baggage handling, and overnight lodging staff.

Non-Reimbursable Travel Expenditures

- o Alcoholic beverages (including non-alcoholic beer and wine).
- o Expenses for significant others, personal items, and entertainment.
- o Items not supported by itemized receipts, if required.
- o Meals included with the conference/meeting. Continental breakfast does not qualify as an included meal and per diem may be claimed.
- o Lodging expenses for pre-departure night at the airport will not be reimbursed.