

Overnight/Non-Overnight Travel Guidelines

August 2022

To help guide you through your travel experience and help provide you with the best travel experience possible, the following guidelines have been put into place.

The district recognizes the importance of professional development and understands employees may need to travel out of the area for professional development opportunities. Pasco School District is committed to, and takes great pride in, being an excellent steward of public funds by promoting and employing efficient and effective travel management practices. To help meet this goal, we continually assess and optimize the district's travel guidelines. Unnecessary or unjustified expenses, excess costs, circuitous routes, delays, or luxury accommodations during official district business travel are not allowed. Employees traveling on district business will exercise the same care in incurring expenses and accomplishing the purposes of the travel that a prudent person would exercise if traveling for personal reasons.

Please consider webinars as an alternative to travel when possible. If travel is necessary, please limit the number of employees that attend a scheduled event to those who need to attend. If travel is required, **select the travel alternative most economical to the district.** Typically, with thoughtful and intentional planning, employees can attend trainings offered relatively close to the Pasco School District and reduce district travel costs.

Travel authorizations must be obtained prior to expenditures and should be entered in the district's accounting software program at least three weeks prior to departure.

Registration

Please take advantage of Early Bird registration discounts.

Days of Travel

When on-time arrival to a same-day event would require travel before 6:00 a.m. or after 9:00 p.m., travel is allowed one day preceding a scheduled event and/or one day following a scheduled event.

Transportation

Select the transportation alternative most economical to the district. The district will reimburse for the most economical mode of travel regardless of travel mode used. Exceptions will be made during severe weather conditions to ensure the safety of travelers.

If personal time is combined with district business, clearly note personal days on both the travel authorization and travel reimbursement. Provide the actual cost of airfare purchased (when applicable) with the travel authorization as well as a webpage "screenshot" of what airfare cost would be if the employee traveled directly to and from the scheduled event. Employees will pay any cost difference associated with combining personal time with district business.

Personal Vehicle Usage

Traveler's will be paid mileage to drive a personal vehicle to an out-of-town event for the shortest driving distance from Pasco to your destination city regardless of the route driven.

Miles driven while at the traveler's destination will be at the traveler's personal expense. The mileage reimbursement rate is the IRS rate which is adjusted January 1st as needed. The mileage used for reimbursement will be taken from an online mileage calculator (Google Maps is the district standard).

Two or more employees traveling on district business will carpool, the goal being to minimize the number of travelers requiring mileage reimbursement. Frequently, employees from several buildings attend the same event creating additional carpool opportunities. If employees do not want to participate in a carpool, they may drive their personal vehicles at their own expense (no reimbursement for mileage or parking).

Transportation Network Companies (Uber, Lyft, taxi)

The use of Uber, Lyft, or taxi while at the traveler's destination will be at the traveler's personal expense. Exceptions are for transportation to/from airport and lodging or to/from conference location if lodging is not near the conference.

Consider using a transportation network company (i.e. Uber, Lyft), or taxis as possible cost-effective alternatives to renting a vehicle. **Select the transportation alternative most economical to the district.**

Car Rental

We have a corporate account with Enterprise. Enterprise will bill the district if you provide a purchase order #; no personal credit card or purchasing card is needed upon car rental return. This is very helpful for travelers with no purchasing card. Enterprise also provides the district with discounted rates, but please comparison shop.

Do not purchase car rental insurance/protection. Travelers are covered under the district's insurance policy. Policies purchased will be at the traveler's expense.

Airfare

Book well in advance and comparison shop. Be aware of fees associated with travel booking sites. Check other airports near your destination for cheaper flights i.e. Oakland vs. San Francisco. **Select the flight option most economical to the district.** Purchasing a ticket which allows for standard seat choice and ticket changes is acceptable. The purchase of seats for extra legroom, economy plus, premium economy, business class, first class, etc., or fully refundable tickets will be at the traveler's expense.

Do not purchase flight insurance/protection. Travelers are covered under the district's insurance policy. Policies purchased will be at the traveler's expense.

Do not purchase flight cancellation policies. Policies purchased will be at the traveler's expense.

The district will pay for one checked bag per traveler. Overweight bags or additional checked bags will be at the traveler's expense

Airfare purchased on an employee's personal credit card will not be reimbursed until after travel has occurred.

Lodging

Reimbursement for lodging is limited to reasonable, actual costs. A reasonable rate for a hotel room is the General Services Administration (GSA) rate (www.gsa.gov) or the event's negotiated conference rate at conference hotel or nearby hotels. If hotels offering the conference rate are full, stay in a hotel with a rate not exceeding the conference rate. Hotels near scheduled events fill up quickly. Please make hotel reservations early to increase the likelihood of securing the best lodging rate.

If travel involves flying, find out which hotels offer a complimentary shuttle to/from airport. Inquire about complimentary shuttles within a set radius of the hotel. Consider using a transportation network company (i.e. Uber, Lyft), or taxis as possible cost-effective alternatives to renting a vehicle. **Select the transportation alternative most economical to the district.**

When appropriate, sharing hotel rooms may be considered to maximize travel dollars. Sharing a hotel room is not mandatory.

Some hotels offer better lodging rates with full payment in advance. Please review the hotel's cancellation policy before securing this type of reservation.

Early check-in will be at the traveler's expense.

Parking

Ask hotels about parking fees. If both self-parking (with in/out privileges) and valet parking are available, the district will only pay for the less expensive option. If the more expensive option is used instead, the cost difference between the two rates will be at the traveler's expense.

100-Mile Rule

Overnight lodging is allowed when the travel destination is located more than one hundred (100) miles via most direct route from the closer of either the traveler's official residence or official workplace. An exception is made when a district employee is acting in a custodial or supervisory role for students who are lodging overnight, and it is part of the employee's official duties.

Under one of the following conditions, lodging is allowed within fifty (50) miles via most direct route from the closer of either the traveler's official residence or official workplace:

1. An overnight stay in a commercial lodging facility to avoid having a traveler drive back and forth for back-to-back late night/early morning official district business.
2. When the health and safety of travelers is of concern.
3. When an employee can demonstrate that staying overnight is more economical to the district.

Meals – Overnight Travel

No meals should be purchased using a purchasing card. Meals are covered with meal per diem.

The meal per diem rate is determined by the location of work activities and not accommodations. See www.gsa.gov for rates.

First and last day of travel: The meal per diem paid on the first and last day of travel equals 75% of daily meal per diem allowance for the destination.

Meals provided at a scheduled event, including breakfast provided by a hotel, are not eligible for meal per diem allowance. Continental breakfast does not qualify as breakfast.

Meals – Non-Overnight Travel

Travelers are not eligible for meal reimbursement during non-overnight travel except as stated below: If a meal is an integral part of a meeting, i.e. Chamber of Commerce or Rotary Club lunch meeting, it is reimbursable. Receipt is required. Meal reimbursement may exceed GSA rate.

Cancellation or Change of Travel Plans

Before you cancel travel, please consider sending another employee in your place. Sending an alternate employee can save the district money for airfare, registration, and lodging.

The cost of cancellation or change to travel plans will be the responsibility of the employee unless:

1. The cancellation is due to a verifiable personal emergency; or
2. The cancellation is at the request of the supervisor.

Costs deemed the responsibility of the employee will be deducted first from any remaining travel reimbursement and then from the employee's paycheck in the next applicable payroll period.

Other Reimbursements

Local Area Mileage

For reimbursement of local area mileage, please complete and sign an In-District Mileage Claim form. The reimbursement request must be approved by a supervisor with direct knowledge of your work/or the person with budgetary authority. Daily commute between the traveler's official residence and official work site is a personal obligation and is not reimbursable by the district. Please use district approved mileage chart.

Submit local area mileage claims monthly. An exception is granted when the amount of the claim is less than \$10, in which case, the claim should be submitted when the claim reaches \$10. Claims less than \$10 will be processed at the end of the fiscal year.

Non-Travel Related Expenses

For reimbursement of non-travel related expenses, please complete and sign a District Claim form. The reimbursement request must be approved by a supervisor with direct knowledge of your work/or the person with budgetary authority.

Unavailable or Lost Receipts

A traveler or claimant who, after all reasonable efforts have been exhausted, is unable to acquire or locate a receipt, may complete a Statement for Incomplete or Missing Receipts for reimbursement consideration for expenses less than \$100.