

College Station ISD Employee Travel Guidelines

Effective 2021-22 School Year

In general, “employee travel” is defined as travel outside the District boundaries where an employee is acting as a representative of College Station Independent School District. CSISD will reimburse employees for qualified travel expenses. Approval for travel must be obtained prior to taking a trip.

Employee Travel Request/ Reimbursement Form

The Employee Travel Request/Reimbursement form is the official District form for approval of employee travel, travel advances, and settlement of travel expenses, including reimbursement requests. The District form should be completed with as much information as possible and include all attachments in order for the reimbursement to be processed by the Business Office. See specific discussion in the following sections of these guidelines that indicate required information and attachments.

The following information should assist you with correct completion of the Employee Travel Request/Reimbursement form. If the professional development activity is being paid for through a federal grant (funds 2XXX), there are specific requirements for funding and reimbursements. Travel requests/reimbursements funded through federal grant monies (2XXX) should be submitted to the campus principal, then to the respective grant director at the Administration Building for approval.

Travel costs must have proper documentation, as described below, in order to be charged to TEA/federal grants. No advances are allowed when using federal funds (2XXX).

Important Items to Remember:

- The Employee Travel Request/Reimbursement form **must be completed for all travel** in order for any reimbursements to be made. This form should be kept by the secretary at the campus or department until the trip is complete. If the employee is requesting a mileage advance, forward copy to the Business Office for processing at least two weeks prior to travel.
- Reminder: the weekly check run cut-off date is every Friday at 4:00 PM to get a **check on the following Friday morning**. **All signatures** (employee and director/principal) must be present and necessary attachments to be considered complete and ready for processing by the Business Office. Principals from all schools except elementary need to obtain the Superintendent signature. Principals from elementary schools need to obtain the Chief Academic Officer signature.
- Verify all fields are complete.
 - Mark blank fields not applicable for a specific trip as N/A or zero.
- Provide description of event, training, or conference.
 - attach required backup documentation including

College Station ISD Employee Travel Guidelines

- registration
 - If the professional development activity is being paid for with federal funds (2XXX) documentation must also include **how it was necessary** to accomplish the objectives of the grant project in the notes section of the request or on a separate sheet.
- State date & **time** of departure as well as return date & **time**.
- Clearly write budget code(s) to be charged.
- Advances and reimbursements requested are payable only to the employee listed on the request.
 - No advance given:
 - For meals
 - If paying with federal grant monies (2XXX)
 - For mileage unless staying a minimum of two nights/three days
- CSISD is exempt from Texas state sales tax charged for lodging and hotel parking.
 - The department and/or employee are responsible for verifying the receipts do not include State Tax at the time of check out.
 - ******Important****** Be sure to check out at the front desk. Most often the Hotel receipts that are put under the door are not correct and include State Tax when charged to the credit card.
 - The department and/or employee are responsible for following up on any discrepancies, including taxes charged, and/or pending credits.
- Changes to travelers, budget codes, etc. require a “corrected copy” with proper approvals to be submitted to the Business Office.
- The department and/or employee are responsible for making any hotel reservations and cancellations.
- Send the **original Travel Request/Reimbursement** form along with attachments to the Business Office for reimbursement processing.

Funding

The director/principal approving the Employee Travel Request/Reimbursement should assign the appropriate budget code and ensure adequate funds prior to approval.

- In cases where shared expenses will be charged to several budget codes involving multiple departments or campuses, a director or principal should be designated to be responsible for preparing a listing of the appropriate amounts to be charged to each budget code and obtaining proper approval signatures.

Travel paid from **federal funds (2XXX)** should adhere to the limits required by travel guidelines specific to the grant. Travel expenses exceeding these grant limitations must be paid from District local funds.

College Station ISD Employee Travel Guidelines

Registration

Conference/Event Registration will be paid with a district credit card or purchase order only. The Employee Request/Reimbursement form should state the event name and location of the event and note on the form if registration was paid with a purchase order or district credit card. Attachments should include:

- One copy of the registration form
- Documentation to support the purpose of the trip, such as a **brochure**, registration or entry form. Documentation should show the location, dates and times of the event.
 - If the professional development activity is being paid for with federal funds (2XXX) documentation must also include **how it was necessary** to accomplish the objectives of the grant project in the notes section of the request.

Lodging

The cost of a hotel room for District employees must be paid with a district credit card.

Submit a credit card request form to travel@csisd.org to pay with a district credit card. Within 7 business days after the trip, complete the Employee Travel Request/Reimbursement Form to include all travel expenses such as Lodging, Mileage and Meals and to be reimbursed for expenses paid personally.

The original hotel receipt is required and must be sent to the Business Office within 2 days upon returning from travel along with the credit card. A copy of the receipt should be given to the campus or department secretary. The hotel bill should clearly indicate the name and address of the hotel, the name of the employee, and daily itemization of lodging charges. The District is **exempt from Texas State Sales Tax** on lodging and hotel parking. An exemption form is provided for each trip in your travel packet and is also available on the CSISD website. This form should be provided to the hotel at time of check in. **The traveling employee is responsible for requesting and obtaining credit for any Texas State Sales Tax charges or any other errors.** Room rate, city and other taxes should be the only charges showing. If the room was shared, indicate with whom the room was shared somewhere on the receipt. Incidentals should be paid with personal credit cards.

Even if a \$0 balance is showing when a bill is slipped under the room door the morning of departure, the traveler should check out at the hotel desk and get a finalized bill reflecting a \$0 balance and verify the bill does not include state tax or charges employee did not make.

College Station ISD Employee Travel Guidelines

Maximum lodging rates may be accessed through the U.S. General Services Administration at www.gsa.gov Follow these steps:

1. Click the “Per Diem Rates” to the left of the screen under “most requested links”
2. Locate the traveler’s destination by clicking the appropriate state on the US map
Or
3. Find reimbursement rates as follows:
 - Type in the city and state to which you are traveling, and use the rate given for that city.
 - If the city to which you are traveling is not listed, check the county list. If the county to which you are traveling is listed, use the rate given for that county.
 - If neither the city nor county to which you are traveling is listed, use the current maximum rate of \$96 for lodging.

Employees traveling on official CSISD business may participate in the Texas State Comptroller’s contract for travel services. A directory of contracted hotels and rates is available @ <https://fmx.cpa.state.tx.us/fmx/travel/texttravel/meallodg/lodging/contract.php>

A copy of the current Lodging Rates page must be attached to the Travel form. If neither the city nor county are listed, note so on the Travel Request form and use the standard rate listed.

Transportation

Transportation is the cost of traveling to and from a destination while on CSISD business. See below for specific guidelines related to modes of travel:

By vehicle:

School District Vehicle

The use of school district vehicles are handled by the CSISD Transportation Department in accordance with their guidelines.

Personal Vehicle

Travelers should arrange to have four people per car when multiple people are attending the same event. The driver will complete the mileage information on his/her Employee Travel Request form and include the names of the other riders.

Mileage

Mileage incurred in an employee’s personal vehicle may be reimbursed by completing the Miles to be traveled under the Transportation portion of the Employee Travel Request/Reimbursement form. Mileage may be requested in advance by completing the Advance portion of the Employee Travel Request if the employee is staying two nights/three days. Mileage will be advanced or reimbursed at the rate

College Station ISD Employee Travel Guidelines

adopted by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. This rate is subject to change by the State. No advance when using federal grant monies (2XXX).

- To calculate mileage use any free online mapping services such as <https://www.google.com/maps> www.mapquest.com
 - Check “round trip”
 - Attach a printout from the free online mapping services to the Employee Travel Request/Reimbursement form.
 - Some rates have already been calculated and can be found using the Employee Travel Request/Reimbursement spreadsheet located @ www.csisd.org under Business Services [Commonly Used Forms](#)

Rental Car

The District has a state contract with Enterprise and Hertz. Our state contract includes a set rate. Insurance is included in the rate given. Under the state contract the District is covered for liability and a damage waiver is included.

Rental cars are paid with a purchase order.

- When preparing the requisition for a rental car include in the Notes or description:
 - The **date of the event**
 - The **place of event**
 - **Number of attendees and their names**
 - **Name of event or Reason** for rental (in the notes or description)
- Each line should represent each vehicle being rented
 - **If renting 2 vehicles with one PO there should be 2 line items**
 - The quantity should equal the number of days being rented
 - The unit price should equal the daily rental rate

If the professional development activity is being paid for with federal funds (2XXX) documentation must also *include written justification for why a rental car was necessary and how it was more cost effective than alternate transportation*. This should be noted in the notes section of the P.O. and Employee Travel Request Reimbursement Form.

Rental cars may also be reimbursed to the employee if paid by the employee by completing the Transportation portion of the Employee Travel Request Reimbursement Form. The original rental car receipt must be attached to the request. The receipt should clearly indicate the name and address of the rental car company, the name of the employee, and a detailed itemization of charges.

College Station ISD Employee Travel Guidelines

Employees traveling on official CSISD business may participate in the Texas State Comptroller's contract for travel services. A directory of contracted rental car companies and rates is available at:

<http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/stmp/stmp-rental-car-contract/>.

NOTE: If an employee uses the District Contract through Enterprise or Hertz, insurance is included in the rental price. The rental also includes roadside assistance. No additional insurance should be needed.

Gas Cards:

The District will provide gas cards (Exxon & Shell) if an employee is traveling with a rental car paid by the District or using a District vehicle. A Gas Card Request must be completed and signed by the director/principal. Cards will not be issued without a complete, signed form.

- An Exxon or Shell card will be provided to each employee for convenience.
- These are limited and are provided on a first come first serve basis, during heavy travel months.

Airfare:

Airfare may be paid using a district credit card prior to travel by completing the Credit Card request. Airfare may also be reimbursed to the employee if paid by the employee and included on the Transportation portion of the Travel form.

Attach:

- Airfare invoice/receipt
 - The original airline ticket receipt, or an "e-ticket" passenger itinerary or receipt.
 - The ticket/receipt must include the name of the employee, name of airline, ticket number, class of travel, travel dates, amount of airfare, and origin/destination of each flight.

Public Transportation:

Employees may use a district credit card to pay for public transportation. Actual amounts expended paid by the employee will be reimbursed with an original receipt. Any charges made to the credit card must be accompanied by a receipt and turned into the Business Office within 2 days of returning from trip. All original receipts for expenses paid by the employee must be attached to the Employee Travel Request Reimbursement form.

College Station ISD Employee Travel Guidelines

Meals

The Meals and Incidentals Breakdown can be found using the meals tab on the Travel Forms 2021-2022 at www.csisd.org under Business Services Commonly Used Forms or by viewing the <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates/mie-breakdown>

The meal rates listed are per person per day. The Pre-Travel Allowable/Estimate should be filled out and provided to the traveler before the trip to ensure awareness of the allowable meal expenses. The entire trip allowance total is considered when reimbursing the employee. Business Services will reimburse all valid receipts, up the total amount allowable for the trip without going over.

The current Meal Rates page must be attached to the Travel Request/Reimbursement form. If neither city nor county are listed, note so on the Travel form and use the standard/lowest rate.

Meal expenses are not a per diem. An employee must claim the actual expenses incurred for meals not to exceed the maximum allowable rates for the trip. The maximum should not be claimed unless the actual amount spent was equal to or exceed the maximum allowable rate.

Employees will be reimbursed after travel, only for what was actually spent on meals, up to the maximum allowable rate according to the M&IE Breakdown. Receipts are required if max allowed is requested for reimbursement. It is recommended that all meal receipts be submitted to the Business Office with the travel reimbursement form. Employees will be reimbursed for meals by completing the meal portion of the Travel Request/Reimbursement form. Itemized original receipts are required when using Federal Funds (2XXX). All required detailed meal receipts should be taped on white paper in date and meal order. **NOTE: Do not tape or highlight over information on cash register receipts because it causes the ink to fade away.**

Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

Gratuities are included in the per diem rate.

Tips may be paid using general funds or activity funds up to a maximum of 20%.

No tips/gratuities may be paid using federal funds or state funds (program intent codes 21-35).

No meals will be advanced.

The traveler may apply funds available for meal reimbursement (up to the rate specified on <https://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101518>) or the lowest rate, depending on whether the

College Station ISD Employee Travel Guidelines

destination is specified in the Rate Schedule) toward lodging. For instance, if the traveler chooses for the sake of convenience to stay in a hotel that costs \$10 more a night than the allowable maximum for lodging, the traveler can apply \$10 of the maximum available for meal reimbursement to the lodging rate. If the traveler chooses to apply meal reimbursement to lodging, the maximum meal reimbursement rate is reduced by the same amount (applying \$10 of the meal reimbursement to lodging would reduce the meal reimbursement by \$10). **NOTE:** The opposite case does not apply; that is, a traveler may not reduce the amount spent on lodging and increase the amount spent on meals.

Day Trip

Effective February 15, 2016, when an overnight stay is not required, the employee will not be reimbursed for meals. *(The IRS requires that meal reimbursement for non-overnight trips be reported as taxable income and reported on the employee's W-2 accordingly. Therefore, we will no longer be providing meal reimbursement for non-overnight trips as of 02/15/2016.)*

College Station ISD Employee Travel Guidelines

Helpful Links

Meal Breakdown <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101518>

Per Diem Rates
for Texas <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120>

National Association
of Counties <http://explorer.naco.org/index.html?zipSearch#>

Policies

Code of Federal
Regulations The following federal and TEA guidance relates to allowable costs:
<http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=ca1ebff314cf6facd3b03d31c3440607&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5#sp2.1.200.e>

TEA Policy If the above link does not work go to
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/grants/gmresources/> and scroll down to New
EDGAR 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E—Cost Principles.

Board Policy DEE (Local) <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/224?filter=DEE>

TX Comptroller Policy <https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/travel/texttravel/rates/current.php>