

## **Dothan City Board of Education**

### **Travel Policies and Procedures Manual**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the requirements to comply with federal regulations, state laws, and district policies and procedures for travel and business expenses. The purpose of this district travel policy is to (a) outline the authorization and reimbursement process for travel arrangements and expenses; (b) list the district-paid or reimbursed travel expenses; and (c) establish protocols that oversee the travel arrangement process. Travelers should plan to travel in the manner that will be the most economical to the District. This includes utilizing the most economical route and mode of transportation available and working to obtain the lowest possible rates and fares.

This policy applies to all travel incurred while conducting official duties for the Dothan City BOE. All allowable travel expenses must be incurred while in the performance of official duties for the Dothan City BOE. All out-of-state and in-state workshops and conferences must be relevant to the performance of job duties assigned by the Dothan City BOE. All travel claims should be submitted as soon as possible but must be submitted within 60 days of travel. All travel reimbursements for September must be submitted by September 20 in order to be reimbursed because September 30 is the last day of the fiscal year. If on a continuous trip on the last day of a fiscal year end and October 1 forward, expenses must be submitted on a separate reimbursement claim for each fiscal year. If another agency/organization is reimbursing an employee for travel expenses, a duplicate claim may not also be submitted to the Dothan City BOE for reimbursement. Details on the amount of allowable reimbursement, the forms, and the procedure will follow.

A Temporary Detached Duty (TDD) leave request is required for all travel that is to a site other than a DCS facility. The TDD leave request shall be submitted and approved by the Supervisor or higher-level management, as appropriate prior to the onset of travel. Failure to adhere to this requirement can result in a disallowance of travel reimbursement. A leave request form is to be completed EVEN IF no substitute is required. The TDD leave request shall encompass all travel dates, not just the dates of the conference, meeting or activity being attended. An agenda of the conference, meeting, or activity shall be attached for support. The name of the conference, meeting, or activity and location should be detailed in the "purpose of request" section.

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

Employees are encouraged to car pool. The employee driving their personal vehicle will be reimbursed for mileage at the currently approved rate that is subject to change without notice. Travel to a meeting within a 110 mile radius of Dothan will be done on the same day in which the meeting is held. Employees will not be reimbursed for any such travel if it is done the day before the meeting transpires. The only exception will be in the case of a meeting that is more than one day in duration. In that case the employee can be reimbursed for an overnight stay for a night in between. For example, a two day meeting on Monday and Tuesday in Montgomery will be handled as follows: the employee travels on Monday to Montgomery to the meeting and

may spend Monday night there but must return to Dothan on Tuesday after the conclusion of the meeting. This applies regardless of the funding source for the travel. In the situation above the employee may elect not to spend the night in between and travel back and forth to Dothan. This is an acceptable activity. Any charges for a rental car or rental van must be approved in advance by the Chief School Financial Officer. Failure to do so will result in reimbursement being denied. In many cases it is cheaper to rent a car than to reimburse employees for mileage. The system has a contract with Enterprise Rent a Car, please contact the CSFO if you are interested in renting a car while on official business travel outside the school system.

Any conferences that require the individual to fly should be planned in advance to obtain the lowest possible airfare. The employee must turn in documentation showing the cost of the airfare to obtain reimbursement. When an employee is attending a conference or meeting that requires them to fly, they will be reimbursed for one bag going to conference or meeting and one bag returning from conference or meeting, up to \$60.00 total. If an employee is attending a conference in which they would normally fly to attend but instead decide to drive to the destination, then they will be reimbursed for mileage up to the cost of the lowest possible airfare to that destination.

## **SUBSTINENCE**

Employees traveling on official business on day trips will not be reimbursed for any meals. Reimbursement for meals for these day trips are considered taxable income by the IRS and, therefore, will not be reimbursed to the employee. Reimbursement for meals, when applicable, shall be at the current CONUS rates based on the city you are travelling. The link to the current CONUS rate information may be found in the forms and quick links section of the Financial Services department on the DCS website. If the registration fee includes meals then the employee may not also claim a meal allowance. This applies even if the employee does not take advantage of the meals provided.

Out of system travel should be planned well in advance to obtain the best possible pricing for hotels as well as airfare, which ever applies to the reason for the travel. Reimbursement for hotel charges shall be for a single room charge and applicable local taxes. No meals or incidental charges on the hotel bill shall be reimbursed. The only exception is parking and then only the self park rate. Valet parking rates will not be reimbursed, unless it is the only option. If so, attach this information from the hotel website for support. All charges such as additional parking, taxi fees, etc. will only be reimbursed with a receipt showing the amount paid. Charges for internet will not be reimbursed. Charges for movies, room service, or items used from a room bar will not be reimbursed.

## **HOTEL**

Reservations for hotel rooms are the responsibility of the employee. The rental of houses, AirBNBs, VRBO, casinos, etc. are not approved lodging locations. Reimbursement will only be given with receipt of an itemized hotel bill. If two DCS employees share one room then only one of the individuals shall pay the hotel and request reimbursement. Any agreement between the employees to share hotel charges is between the individuals and not DCS. All hotel bills turned into the DCS Accounting Department for reimbursement shall

reflect a zero balance. Employees should obtain this zero balance hotel bill prior to leaving, failure to do so will slow down and prevent their reimbursement from being processed.

#### **OUT-OF-SYSTEM AND TDD TRAVEL VOUCHER**

After travel is complete, an Out-of-System “brown form” should be completed and signed by the employee and principal/supervisor/director. Travel reimbursement forms should be coded and handled according to regular procedures above with correct coding, before being sent to the Financial Services Department. Any vouchers submitted without all necessary signatures and documentation will be returned to the employee delaying reimbursement.

## **SPECIFIC Federal Programs Travel Procedures for Professional Development Reimbursement**

### **1. TEMPORARY DETACHED DUTY (TDD)/PROFESSIONAL LEAVE REQUEST**

- Whenever using federal funds, it must be approved by the Director of that department before funds will be issued. Due to this special use a TDD/Professional Leave request must be completed and approved in Talent Ed and Kelly Services PRIOR to travel.
- A TDD/Professional Leave Request form is to be completed EVEN IF no substitute is required. In order to receive travel reimbursement, an approved TDD/Professional Leave Request form is necessary documentation.
- In Talent ED under Available Forms there are three options, Professional Leave Perkins (CTE), Professional Leave Federal Programs (Title I, II, III, IV and ESSER) and Professional Leave Special Education (IDEA). Click on the correct form that applies to your travel. Then complete the following steps.
  - Enter your employee number (Certified Only)
  - Select your School or Department
  - Date Submitted
  - Will a Substitute be required Yes or No
  - Enter the Substitutes name in you know it.
  - Purpose of this request and location. Please be specific. Include the name of the conference/event and location.
  - Number of day(s)/hours of request. **The number of days requested needs to include travel days, not just dates of the conference/event.** For example, if you will be leaving/returning on a Sunday, that date needs to be included in the count for number of days.
  - Dates of requested leave
  - Attach any documentation (this a required field) regarding the event (agenda, registration, email etc.).
  - Click Save Final and then you will be prompted to electronically sign the form and submit it.
- Once the form is submitted it will be sent to the direct supervisor and then to the Director of the department funding the request. Once all parties have approved the request the individual will receive an email notification alerting them of the status. Please make sure you look at the form and open the work flow to view any comments.

- **In Kelly Services:** Create an absence and select dates for the absence. Please note in this program only enter the number of working days. Don't include travel days that don't cause an absence at work. Kelly Services is used for payroll and Talent Ed is used for reimbursement purposes. Then select the type of leave which would be Professional Leave and if it's a full or half day. In the notes section please type the reason and location of conference/event.

## 2. CONFERENCE/EVENT REGISTRATION (if applicable)

- If registration fee payment is needed, the requisition should be entered at the school level.
- If needed, please add a **line item** (not a note) on the P.O. to include "change code" so we can adjust fund source to the appropriate code.
- **If a code adjustment is needed, send email to Carron with requisition number** so she can make sure coding is updated before the requisition moves through the approval process to a P.O.

## 3. TRAVEL RESERVATIONS (HOTEL, ETC)

- DCS does **NOT** prepay for hotel rooms or travel expenses.
- Reservations for hotel rooms are the responsibility of the employee. **The rental of houses, AirBNBs, and VRBO, etc. and are not approved lodging locations.**
- Double up in rooms when possible.
- Carpool when possible.

## 4. REIMBURSEMENT – after travel is complete

- An Out-Of-System Travel Voucher for Federal Programs must be filled out in Talent Ed for reimbursement.
- In Talent ED under Available Forms there are three options, Out-Of-System Travel Perkins (CTE), Out-Of-System Travel Federal Programs (Title I, II, III, IV and ESSER) and Out-Of-System Travel Special Education (IDEA). Click on the correct form that applies to your travel. Then complete the following steps.
  - Enter your address
  - Enter the destination
  - Enter the Purpose of Travel
  - Date and time, you left Dothan (Please indicate AM or PM)
  - Date and time, you returned to Dothan (please indicate AM or PM)
  - Total Hotel Expenses. Hotel receipt showing a **ZERO** balance must be attached to travel reimbursement form. Any room service, internet or miscellaneous charges will be deducted from the reimbursement.

- Enter the Subsistence (Meals) Total (ex. 1 Breakfast x \$15.00, 1 Lunch x \$15.00, 1 Dinner x \$30.00 Total \$60.00). Meals will be reimbursed using the CONUS rate for the area in which you travel. The rate can be checked at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates> and search for the city/state or county/state. If no rate is listed for that specific area (city or county), the standard rate is \$55 per day. Reimbursement is made with the following rates: 25% breakfast, 25% lunch, and 50% dinner.  
**Please note: if the conference/event includes meals you are not able to claim those meals for reimbursement. (Agenda will be verified). Also, if the hotel offers free breakfast, we do not reimburse if you choose to buy breakfast somewhere else. Travel must begin before 6:00am and extend beyond 8:00am to claim breakfast (25% of CONUS rate). Travel must begin before 12:00 NOON and extend beyond 2:00pm to claim lunch (25% of CONUS rate). Travel must begin before 6:00pm and extend beyond 8:00pm to claim dinner (50% of CONUS rate).**
- Enter the Transportation Total. If using your personal vehicle, you will be reimbursed for your mileage round trip. In the box provided enter the number of miles times the current mileage rate (ex. 150 miles X .56 Total \$84.00). Mileage rate as of January 1, 2021 is **.56/per mile**
- Enter any Miscellaneous expenses (ex. Registration fees, Tolls, Taxi, and Parking fees). You will only be reimbursed for registration if you paid for the registration. A receipt showing a **ZERO** balance must be attached. Keep all taxi, toll, Uber, parking receipts. You will need to attach copies to the travel form. Without a receipt for verification, we are not able to reimburse. **If self-parking is available at the hotel, we DO NOT reimburse the valet rate.** You will only be reimbursed the self-parking rate. \*If valet is the only option the hotel offers, we will reimburse the full amount, after verifying with the hotel that no other option was available
- If travel involves flights, we will reimburse for 1 bag (**up to \$60**). If more than 1 bag is checked with the airline, there will be no reimbursement for the additional fees. Receipt will need to be attached to the form in order to receive reimbursement for baggage fees.
- The following items must be attached to the Out-Of-System Travel Voucher.
  - Hotel Receipt showing a **ZERO** balance
  - Miscellaneous Expenses (Registration receipt with a **ZERO** balance if you paid for it, Parking Receipts, Toll receipts, Taxi Receipts)
  - Agenda
  - Approved TDD/Professional Leave Form (Printed from Talent ED)
- Enter the total amount of Reimbursement. This will be the combined total of your hotel expenses, Subsistence (Meals) Total, Transportation Total, and Miscellaneous Expenses.
- The Funding Source will be completed by your Principal/Secretary.
- Click Save Final and then you will be prompted to electronically sign the form and submit it