REPORT TO COUNCIL
City of Sacramento

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915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2604
www. CityofSacramento.org

Consent
May 22, 2007

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Title: Travel Request and Reimbursement Policy

Location/Council District: Citywide

Recommendation: Adopt a **Resolution** approving the revised Travel Request and Reimbursement Policy for members of the City's legislative bodies.

Contact: Dennis Kauffman, Accounting Division Manager, 808-5843

Presenters: Not Applicable

Department: Finance

Division: Accounting

Organization No: 1131

Description/Analysis

Issue: In January 2006, the Mayor and City Council adopted a resolution implementing Assembly Bill 1234 (AB 1234), a State law that requires the adoption of a travel request and reimbursement policy for members of all legislative bodies. At that time, staff was in the process of revising the City's existing travel request and reimbursement policy, which was approved and implemented in 1999. The Mayor and City Council adopted an interim policy that incorporated the requirements of AB 1234 into the existing policy and directed staff to report back upon completion of the permanent policy that would be applicable to legislative body members.

Policy Considerations: The revised Travel Request and Reimbursement Policy is consistent with the Mayor and City Council's sustainable budget concept of continuous evaluation for efficiencies and effectiveness. In addition to incorporating present business practices, the revised policy helps to ensure fiscal accountability for lodging, transportation, meals and other expenses related to travel for City business.

Environmental Considerations: Not applicable

Commission/Committee Action: The process for reviewing and updating the Travel Request and Reimbursement Policy was a collaborative effort between all City departments.

Rationale for Recommendation: The revised Travel Request and Reimbursement Policy meets the requirements of AB 1234.

Financial Considerations: The adoption of this policy includes the use of the Federal per diem rate schedule for meals and incidental expenses. The Federal rates are determined annually and vary by the destination city. This may result in a slight increase in the per diem rates set in the City's travel request and reimbursement policy of 1999.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): No goods or services are being purchased under this report.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Dennis Kauffman
Accounting Manager

Approved by: _____
for Russell Fehr
Director of Finance

Recommendation Approved:

for _____
Ray Kerridge
City Manager

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Background Information

In 1999, the City Manager approved a travel request and reimbursement policy for all City employees. The Mayor and City Council, as well as members of other legislative bodies of the City, complied with this policy when traveling on City business. Over time, the policy adopted in 1999 did not reflect changes in City business practices, such as internet travel arrangements. Following months of collaborative meetings with all City departments and subsequent reviews, the policy was revised. Among its features, the revised Travel Request and Reimbursement Policy includes:

- A format that is easier to read
- Requirements of AB 1234, (a State law that requires the adoption of a travel request and reimbursement policy for members of legislative bodies)
- A reminder that travel documents are a matter of public record and are to be retained for five years
- Expanded travel options such as internet travel arrangements, emergency travel and same-day travel
- Consequences for non-compliance with the policy
- A change from per diem rates established in 1999 to use of the Federal per diem rates (which are updated annually)
- Better coordination with the City's other administrative policies, such as the transportation policy
- Sections specifying international travel and reasonable accommodations
- "Contacts" and "Documentation Required" tables

Additionally, a travel page will be available on the City's Intranet that will include the policy, procedures, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's), guidelines and links to other sites, such as the Internal Revenue Service's mileage rate.

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

TRAVEL REQUEST AND REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

BACKGROUND

A. In January 2006, City Council adopted a resolution implementing Assembly Bill 1234 (AB 1234), a State law requiring, among its provisions, the adoption of a travel request and reimbursement policy for members of all legislative bodies. At that time, staff was in the process of revising the City's existing travel request and reimbursement policy, which was implemented in 1999.

B. City Council adopted an interim policy that incorporated the requirements of AB 1234 into the existing travel request and reimbursement policy, and directed staff to report back upon completion of the permanent policy.

C. The Travel Request and Reimbursement Policy has been revised to better reflect the City's business practices; to help ensure fiscal accountability for lodging, transportation, meals and other expenses related to travel for City business; and to meet the requirements of AB 1234.

BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City Council hereby adopts the Travel Request and Reimbursement Policy for City legislative body members, attached as Exhibit A.

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Exhibit A Travel Request and Reimbursement Policy

CITY OF SACRAMENTO

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY INSTRUCTIONS

Topic: Travel Request and Reimbursement Policy **Effective Date:**

From: City Manager's Office **Supersedes:** API #7 dated 9/1/99

To: Department Directors/Division Managers **Section:** API #7

Approved:

RAY KERRIDGE
City Manager

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1. Scope and Purpose

1.1 Scope

This Administrative Policy Instruction (API) applies to all City of Sacramento (City) employees and legislative members (hereafter referred to as "Travelers") who travel on official business for the City of Sacramento. All travel arrangements, reconciliations and reimbursements shall be performed within the scope of delegated authority and in compliance with all applicable Federal statutes, State and City codes, and policies.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish business travel guidelines for Travelers that are fair, accountable and transparent.

2. Policy

2.1 Responsibilities

A. Finance Department: Administers and monitors compliance of the travel policy and processes department requests for travel prepayments, advances, and reimbursements.

B. Department Director: Approves travel requests, reconciliations and reimbursements. The Department Director may delegate this authority, but he or she is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all approved travel requests comply with the travel policy and that funds are available within the department's budget for the approved travel.

C. Travel Coordinator: Facilitates the travel process by making travel arrangements, submitting travel requests, travel reimbursements and reconciliations. The department Travel Coordinator serves as the resource and liaison between his or her department and the Finance Department. The Travel Coordinator has no authority to override, bypass or otherwise change this policy.

B. Traveler: Represents the City of Sacramento at an approved event (meeting, training, conference, etc.) and verifies the accuracy of bills and other travel documents before accepting or paying said bills, reports all expenses promptly and accurately with the required documentation, and requests reimbursement for necessary and reasonable expenses.

2.2 General Provisions

A. Travelers are responsible for understanding and complying with this travel policy and are expected to exercise good judgment with respect to travel expenses.

B. It is the policy of the City of Sacramento that no Traveler shall experience personal financial loss for reasonable and necessary costs as a result of representing the City of Sacramento, as long as the expenses are within the guidelines set forth in this policy.

C. Business travel commences when the traveler leaves his/her designated place of employment for official City business for a destination at least 25 miles outside the City. Business travel may also begin from the Traveler's residence if such travel

occurs during weekends, holidays, or outside the Traveler's normal business hours. Generally, business travel ends when the Traveler returns to his or her designated place of employment, residence or other authorized location after completing City business.

Same Day Travel: Trips of less than 25 miles one way from Sacramento are considered local travel and do not qualify for an overnight stay or per diem rates.

D. Members of a legislative body shall provide brief reports at the next regular meeting of the legislative body on their business travel and meetings attended at the expense of the City.

E. If a trip includes both business and personal travel, Travelers are personally responsible for any personal travel expenses.

F. Reimbursement of travel expenses is limited to travel by the most direct and common route and by the most economical means of transport. That portion of any travel, which is unnecessarily done by indirect route, is not in the interest of the City, or is for personal business, will not be reimbursed.

G. Expenses which are not approved or which are not in compliance with this policy, such as delinquent submission of travel documents or outstanding balances owed to the City, will become the Traveler's personal responsibility and may result in any one or more of the following consequences:

1. Notification to the Traveler's Department Director regarding violations of this policy.
2. Reporting travel advances or expense reimbursements as taxable income to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and State of California taxing authority.
3. Suspension of travel privileges at the discretion of the Department Director.
4. Formal disciplinary procedures at the discretion of the Department Director.
5. Require the Traveler to return any travel funds that were advanced.

2.3 Authorization for Travel

A. A Travel Request Form is required for a Traveler who plans a trip beyond the established mileage for local travel (25 miles one way).

Note: All Travelers must complete a Travel Request Form for any business travel in connection with official duties as defined in this policy whether or not the Traveler is authorized to receive a reimbursement from the City.

B. Travelers must obtain Department Director or authorized designee approval prior to making travel arrangements.

C. Travelers are responsible for notifying the department Travel Coordinator of any changes or travel cancellations. Travelers are personally responsible for any changes or upgrades in transportation and/or accommodations that are not approved by the Department Director or designee.

2.4 Examples of types of travel which are covered by this policy are as follows:

A. Attendance at City events, a department approved conference, convention, hearing, training, seminar, or other meeting.

B. Department approved interviews; inspections of facilities, vehicles, equipment, or institutions; information gathering for surveys, exchanging of professional information.

C. Transporting equipment for repair, modifications, etc.

D. Communicating with representatives of regional, state and national government on City adopted policy positions.

E. Attending educational seminars designed to improve Traveler's skills and knowledge levels.

F. Participating in regional, state and national organizations whose activities affect the City's interests.

G. Implementing a City-approved strategy for attracting or retaining businesses.

H. Transporting prisoners.

I. Other such activities requiring travel which is clearly necessary and in the best interest of the City.

2.5 Travel Funded by Another Entity

A Travel Request Form must be completed and processed in advance for travel that is reimbursed by an entity other than the City of Sacramento. Traveler should disclose the entity providing funding on the Travel Request Form. In advance of travel, the department must determine if the Traveler is to be reimbursed at either the City's or the other entity's per diem rate. If the travel costs are borne by the City, reimbursement from the other entity shall be paid to the City. If another entity's funds are used, no City advance shall be made unless approved by the Department Director or his or her authorized designee.

2.6 Public Records Requirement

All documents related to reimbursable City travel expenditures are public records and may be subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act (Government Code §6250-6270).

The City's Records Retention Schedule requires that travel documents be retained for five (5) years.

3. Travel Arrangements

3.1 **All initial travel arrangements must be coordinated with the department Travel Coordinator.**

3.2 The City's travel agency(ies) may be used for airline reservations, car rentals and hotel reservations.

3.3 Internet-based travel resources may be used for travel arrangements. However, Travelers and Travel Coordinators are advised that changes, reimbursements for unused tickets, and other post-booking transactions are complex, may include additional fees and may not be completed in time to accommodate the Traveler's needs.

3.4 Advances for estimated out-of-pocket expenses will not be issued for less than $100.

3.5 In order to assure timely arrangements, advances, prepayments, reconciliations, and reimbursements, Travelers should consider the following timelines:

A. **Ten (10) working days minimum prior to the trip:** Requests for advances and prepayments (such as those for hotel reservation and course/conference registration) are to be submitted to the Accounting Division. These requests should be coordinated through the department Travel Coordinator.

B. **Within twenty (20) working days following the trip:** The reconciled Travel Request Form and required receipts are to be submitted to the Accounting Division upon return from the approved trip. The following table highlights acceptable types of travel documentation:

Item	Documentation Required
Meals and Incidentals	None unless Traveler claims actual costs if he or she exceeds the daily per diem.
Lodging	1. Hotel receipts must be itemized. 2. Meals charged to the room should be listed separately from hotel charges. 3. Credit card receipts may not be substituted for itemized hotel receipts.
Transportation (Air, Ground, Rail or Bus)	Itinerary or confirmation document. Itemized receipt unless not available.
Registration Fees	Receipt and copy of conference agenda.
City Vehicle	Gas receipts – unless Traveler was issued a City gas card.
Private Vehicle	1. Authorization by Department Director or authorized designee. 2. Documentation that demonstrates mileage calculation (e.g., Internet-based map with mileage). 3. Gas is not reimbursed as it is part of the mileage rate.

3.6 Emergency Travel

Emergency travel is applicable only when time constraints between completion of a Travel Request Form and the date of the actual event do not allow for standard procedures to be followed. In this occasion, the Department Director or his or her authorized designee must approve the travel request.

Such events may include but are not limited to:

A. Prisoner transport and/or extraditions conducted by the Police Department, and

B. Requests for emergency services outside the established local travel area.

Generally, conferences and meetings do not constitute emergency travel. City policy regarding transportation, lodging, meals, registration and mileage are still applicable.

3.7 Reasonable Accommodations and Special Needs

Travel Coordinators should inform the City's travel agency(ies) and/or conference/seminar hosts of any request for Reasonable Accommodations, special needs or dietary requirements at the time reservations are made.

4. Lodging

4.1 Lodging Reimbursement

Reimbursement of lodging is limited to the actual cost of a single room. When making arrangements for lodging, the government, group, conference, or promotional rates shall be requested. The City will not reimburse the Traveler for luxury upgrades (e.g., ocean views, king-size beds, suites, etc.).

When lodging at a conference facility is full, lodging at a comparable hotel shall be acceptable.

An original, dated and itemized hotel receipt must accompany completed claims for lodging.

4.2 Cancellations

Hotel cancellations are the responsibility of the Traveler. Hotels generally require a 48-hour advance notice for cancellations. Any cancellation charges incurred will be billed to the Traveler unless reasonable justification is provided and approved by the Department Director or authorized designee.

4.3 Companion Travel

When a spouse, domestic partner or other companion travels with a City Traveler on official business, reimbursement for the Traveler's lodging will be at the single occupancy rate for the accommodations. If the Traveler arranges for the lodging it is the responsibility of the Traveler to obtain the lodging rate for both single and double occupancy and inform the Travel Coordinator.

4.4 Lodging in a Private Residence

Travelers who stay in a private residence with relatives or friends while traveling on business are not eligible for reimbursement of lodging costs.

5. Meals

5.1 Reimbursement Rates

Reimbursement for meals shall be made only when travel extends for a minimum of six (6) hours except when specifically approved otherwise by the Department Director or authorized designee. Reimbursement shall be at the current per diem rate established by the U.S. Government General Services Administration (GSA).

If the meal expense exceeds the per diem maximum, a memorandum or e-mail justifying the additional expenses must be approved by the Department Director or authorized designee. Itemized receipts are required for all meal reimbursement claims that exceed the per diem amount.

5.2 Reimbursement Schedule

In order to be reimbursed for the cost of meals, travel must begin or end as shown in the following schedule:

Meals	Departure on Initial Day of Travel		Return on Final Day of Travel
Breakfast	Before 7:00 am		After 10:00 am
Lunch	Before 11:00 am		After 2:00 pm
Dinner	Before 4:00 pm		After 7:00 pm

To determine eligibility for reimbursement, travel shall be considered to begin when the Traveler departs his or her residence if the trip begins before or after normal work hours. If the trip begins during normal work hours, travel shall be considered to begin when the Traveler departs his or her office.

5.3 Meals Included with Transportation, Hotel or Registration Fees

Meals provided by common carriers (e.g., airline, train, bus) or included in registration fees or hotel rates (i.e., if a Traveler attends a conference where lunch is provided, no reimbursement will be provided for the lunch meal) are not eligible for per diem reimbursements. A continental breakfast does not constitute a meal.

5.4 Meals of Multiple Travelers

When traveling with other City employees or legislative members, Travelers may decide that one or more meals will be paid by one Traveler. If this option is chosen, it must be so stated and cross-referenced in the reconciliation section of the Travel Request Forms of the Traveler who paid for the meal and the travelers for whom the meal was paid.

5.5 Tips

Gratuities for meals are included in the per diem rates and are not reimbursed separately.

6. Transportation

Travel will be by the most economical means available, taking into consideration requirements for meal reimbursement, lodging, and Traveler time. If a location is not served by an airline, reimbursement will be provided for travel by the most direct route. When a private vehicle is used as the means of transportation, reimbursement will be in an amount not to exceed the lowest available airfare.

6.1 Air Travel

A. Arrangements

1. Air travel arrangements for City Travelers are to be made by the department Travel Coordinator through the City's travel agency(ies), -through the Internet, or directly through the common carrier.

2. The department Travel Coordinator will arrange for reservations and tickets for approved travel requests. The lowest available fare will be used for air travel.

As a general rule, Travelers will be expected to accept flights departing within two (2) hours of the desired departure time.

B. Changes, Cancellations and Unused Tickets

Generally, tickets are non-refundable and non-transferable and fees will be incurred for any changes made once the reservations are booked.

Flights with cancellation penalties should be carefully monitored by the department Travel Coordinator. If cancellation occurs due to a City-related change or circumstances beyond the traveler's control, the department will pay for the penalty cost. However, if the cancellation occurs due to a Traveler's personal request, the Traveler will be required to pay the penalty.

Unused tickets or portions of unused tickets must be returned to the department Travel Coordinator. For tickets purchased through the Internet, the Traveler should work with the Travel Coordinator to ensure credit is received for unused tickets or portions of unused tickets.

C. Privately-owned Aircraft

City Travelers are prohibited from piloting or traveling in privately-owned aircraft (i.e., non-commercial airlines), while conducting City business without written approval of the City Manager. This does not apply to employees who use City-owned aircraft that transport City employees in the performance of their duties.

D. Frequent Flyer Mileage

Travelers may participate in frequent flyer programs however the City will not incur extra expenses in order to accommodate the Traveler's preferred frequent flyer program.

6.2 Car Rental

A. Travelers should use public transportation (taxis, airport shuttles, buses, etc.) whenever it is more economical than a rental car. Department Directors have discretion to approve car rentals. Generally, a rental car should be requested when:

1. Multiple business meetings require travel between locations and public transportation is impractical.

2. Three or more City employees are attending the same meeting and one rental car for the group would be more economical.

3. It is less expensive to rent a car overall compared to alternative forms of transportation.

Travelers who receive a monthly automobile allowance may not receive a reimbursement for vehicle rentals unless the rental occurs in connection with a trip involving an airline flight or other common carrier.

B. Arrangements

1. Travelers should request car rental arrangements through the department Travel Coordinator. Travel Coordinators are encouraged to compare current market rates with those from contracts that have been established for use by the State of California, whose rates have been made available to the City.

2. The following guidelines for car rentals apply:

A. One or two people, compact or subcompact.

B. Three or four people, mid-size.

C. Insurance

Because the City of Sacramento assumes risk for a Traveler conducting official City business, it is not necessary for the Traveler to purchase extra insurance coverage when renting a car for City business use. Additionally, Travelers are encouraged to use rental agencies that have contracts with the State of California because those rates generally include the Collision Damage Waiver and Liability Coverage. Travelers may choose to purchase additional insurance, but it will not be reimbursed by the City.

D. Fuel

Travelers must fill the gas tank before returning a rental car to avoid fuel surcharges. Receipts are necessary for reimbursement of fuel costs unless the Traveler uses a City-issued gasoline credit card. Travelers may contact Fleet Management to obtain a gasoline credit card.

6.3 Travel by City Vehicle

A. Travelers who use City vehicles must follow the provisions of the City's Transportation Policy. Fleet Management has a wide variety of vehicles available to City Travelers; however, advance reservations should be made. A Vehicle Assignment Request Form must be completed and submitted to Fleet Management.

B. If more than one Traveler is traveling on the same trip, all reasonable efforts will be made to minimize transportation costs by use of a single vehicle.

C. Only City employees may ride in City vehicles unless the business involves another public agency employee who is approved, by the Department Director, to be transported in a City vehicle. The Travel Request Form must indicate if an employee from another agency will be traveling with City staff and that request should be approved by the Department Director.

6.4 Travel by Private Vehicle

A. Authorization

Department Director or designee approval is required when the traveler requests to use a private vehicle. Travelers who request to use their personal vehicles must follow the provisions of the City's Transportation Policy which provides information on safety and insurance standards for operating a private vehicle on City business.

B. Reimbursement

The City will reimburse for mileage at the current IRS standard rate per mile which includes gas, maintenance and vehicle related costs. Gas costs will not be reimbursed separately.

Travelers who receive a monthly automobile allowance must deduct 25 miles from the total miles traveled.

The City's maximum mileage reimbursement will not exceed the cost of the lowest available airfare.

C. Carpooling Travelers

Mileage reimbursement will be payable only to the owner of the vehicle in which the Travelers are carpooling.

6.5 Collisions/Accidents

A. City Owned Vehicles and Privately Owned Vehicles

Travelers who are involved in vehicle collisions or accidents while driving a City owned vehicle or privately owned vehicle while on City business are required to file an accident report with Risk Management within 24 hours (48 hours if the accident occurs on a weekend). Please see the City's Transportation Policy for accident reporting procedures.

B. Rental Cars

Travelers who are involved in vehicle collisions while driving a rental car must report the accident to Risk Management within 24 hours (48 hours if the accident occurs on a weekend). The Traveler should keep a copy of all pertinent information and provide copies to Risk Management to assist in settling claims.

6.6 Other

Trains, buses, ferries or other means of ground transportation may be used. Reimbursement will not exceed the cost of the lowest available airfare.

7. Additional Reimbursements

7.1 Incidental per diem.

For each day of travel, the employee will receive a reimbursement at the current GSA daily rate for incidental travel expenses. Personal telephone calls, baggage handling, and bellhop tips are examples of incidental costs covered by this per diem.

7.2 Other Reimbursable Expenses

A. The following expenses are reimbursable at actual cost with receipts:

1. Necessary taxicab, airport transportation, bus fare, bridge tolls, etc.

2. Conference materials such as tapes, reports, etc.

3. Parking fees

4. Reasonable telephone/fax/internet connectivity charges associated with official City business

5. Visa and passport expenses, when directly related to City travel

B. Without receipt at actual cost:

1. BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) and other rapid transit system fares (must include fee schedule with reimbursement request).

C. Other justifiable expenses will be approved based on review of special circumstances.

7.3 Non-reimbursable Expenses

A. Airline-related: Airline club membership dues, air-phone usage, in-flight headsets
B. Alcoholic beverages
C. Auto-related: Rental upgrades, personal auto repairs, accident insurance, parking tickets, traffic violations, personal auto expenses other than mileage
D. Claims submitted for reimbursement more than twenty (20) working days following the Traveler's return from the approved trip
E. Expenses associated with a non-employee who accompanies the Traveler on official City business (e.g., spouse or domestic partner's transportation, lodging, and/or meals)
F. Hotel-related: Health club fees, room upgrades, movie rentals, mini-bar usage
G. Loss or theft of personal funds, property or luggage
H. Non-essential program activities associated with a conference/seminar unless approved by a Department Director, such as sports tournaments, social activities, tours, etc., that are not included with the conference registration
I. Per diem for meals included in the program/conference/seminar and covered by the registration fee
J. Personal expenses: Personal credit card annual fees, babysitting or dependent care, pet care (including kennel and pet sitting fees), computer rental for personal use, barber, hairdresser, laundry, spa services (saunas, massages, facials, etc.), toiletries, shoe shine, etc.

7.4 Extended Personal Travel

Travelers who combine personal travel with business travel must identify and pay for the personal segment of the trip.

The City will not reimburse a Traveler for expenses incurred when the Traveler chooses to extend his/her time at the destination for personal reasons (i.e., the traveler takes vacation or stays through the weekend). Reimbursable expenses will cease to accrue as of the expected return date and time. Reimbursement for car rental and airport parking must be prorated to allow reimbursement for only those costs associated with City business.

8. **International Travel**

The most economical and practical accommodations available considering the purpose of the meeting, transportation costs, time and other relevant factors will be reimbursed. Receipts for international travel must be itemized and accompanied by an exchange rate calculation.

9. **Contacts**

Subject	Contact	Phone
Travel Payment Processing, Training and Policy	Accounting Division / Accounts Payable	916-808-5495
Vehicles: Insurance Requirements, Accidents, etc.	Risk Management	916-808-5278
Vehicles: City Vehicles, Gas Cards, etc.	Fleet Management	916-808-1888
Debit Cards	Procurement Services Division	916-808-6240