



The City of College Park Department of Finance & Accounting

Travel and Training Relocation Expenses Policies and Procedures

Prepared by the Finance Department

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PROCEDURES FOR TRAVEL AND TRAINING EXPENSES

Travel Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidelines to City employees for payment of travel expenses in an efficient, cost effective manner, and to enable City travelers to successfully execute their travel requirements at the lowest reasonable costs, resulting in the best value for the City.

Travel and training expenses procedures described in this section pertains to the standardization of procedures, which involves all elected officials and City employees who attend conventions and training conferences representing the City of College Park.

There are two types of travel. Overnight travel is defined as being away from the general area of the employee's tax home for more than 12 hours (as defined by GSA Regulation 301-11.1). Same day travel is within the local area and does not require an overnight stay. Travel and training includes attending meetings, training or seminars, etc. Travel can be by personal vehicle or common carrier.

Authorization for Travel and Training

Authorization for travel and training begins with the budgetary process. Resources to meet travel needs must be planned and approved in the budget each year.

Approval of Authorization for Advance of Business, Training or Convention Expense request for travel advances and expense reimbursements must be approved as follows:

	Level I	Level II	Level III
Requesting Party	Authorizing Party for Travel Within the State	Additional Authorization Needed for Travel Outside the State	Additional Authorization Needed for Travel Outside the United States
Mayor & Council Members	Self	Self	Mayor & Council Members
City Manager	Mayor & Council Members	Mayor & Council Members	Mayor & Council Members
Department Directors	City Manager	City Manager	Mayor & Council Members
+All Other Employees	City Manager	City Manager	Mayor & Council Members
Board Members	Mayor & Council Members	Mayor & Council Members	Mayor & Council Members

Responsibilities of the Authorizing Party

The authorizing party should ensure that factual and sufficient travel justification is provided and sufficient funds are available. Approved travel forms should be forwarded to the Department of Finance.

The following form(s) are required for authorization of training and travel:

- The City of College Park Travel Request Form
- The City of College Park Expense Reimbursement Request Form
- The City of College Park Training Benefits Form

Travel Advance Request Forms

A travel advance is any payment given to an employee prior to the actual scheduled date of an official business trip covering certain expenses resulting from that travel

Travel Advance and reimbursement requests should be submitted using the “City of College Park Travel Request” form when an overnight stay is required. Before filling out the form, please carefully read over the guidelines for what qualifies for a travel advance. “Travel Cash Advance Authorization” form can be obtained from the Department of Finance, Accounts Payable Division.

Submitting Travel and Training Expenses

City employees may choose one of the following options for payment of their business travel and training related expenses or reimbursement when and overnight stay is required:

Travel Advance – An advance of City funds prior to departure for estimated authorized travel expenses.

Travel Reimbursement – Reimbursement upon return from travel of funds used by the employee for authorized business expenses.

The “City of College Park Travel Request” form with authorizing signatures should be submitted to Accounts Payable at least seven calendar days prior to travel date. All travel advance requests are time and date stamped by the Accounts Payable Division.

Issuance of Checks

Advances for registration, airfare and a one night hotel deposit may be issued within 60 days of the travel date.

Mileage allowance, per diem, hotel cost less hotel deposit will be issued within seven days of the travel date.

In order to obtain reimbursement for personal funds used for authorized expenses, the employee must submit a revised “Expense Reimbursement Request” form with required receipts attached within seven days of returning from authorized travel

Cancellation of Travel Advance Request

Employees who receive a Travel Advance and the event is cancelled, are required to return the “City of College Park Travel Request” form along with the unexpended funds to Accounts Payable immediately upon cancellation.

Same Day Travel Expenses

City employees should submit a “Expense Reimbursement Request” form with supporting documentation for reimbursements when traveling in the local area on official business. This should include attending meetings, seminars or training classes, etc. Travel may be by personal vehicle or local common carrier (e.g. train, bus, etc.)

Reporting Travel Expenses

Employees are required to file an itemized expense account within seven (7) days of returning from authorized travel.

Statement of actual travel expenditures should be submitted using the following form:

City of College Park’s Expense Reimbursement Request form. Travel expenses must be itemized with the required receipts attached. Forms that are not itemized will be returned.

Employees that have not cleared Travel Advances that are thirty (30) days past due will be contacted by Accounts Payable and advised of the delinquency and requested to file the form with required receipts.

In the Event that a reconciliation is outstanding more than 30 days and is outstanding at December 31st of any year, the full amount of the Travel Advance will be included as taxable wages on the W-2 for that year for that employee.

- Reconciling Advance versus Actual Expense Differences.

If the employee’s expenses are less than the travel advance received, a reimbursement to the City must be submitted with the Expense Reimbursement form. A check or money order should be made payable to the City of College Park.

If the employee’s allowable expenses are greater than the travel advance received, reimbursement of the additional expenses requires the authorization of the authorizing party. The Accounts Payable Division will make payment within seven (7) days after receipt of the authorized Expense Reimbursement Request form.

- Any outstanding advance over thirty 30 days of returning from trip will be treated as income and will result in additional taxes.

TRAVEL COSTS

Registration Fees

Employees may request prepayment of registration fees directly to the organization by submitting a "Check Request" form with supporting documentation to the Accounts Payable Division. Registration fees for authorized training or conferences are reimbursable when supported by receipts.

Lodging

Hotel accommodations are limited to the federal lodging or convention rate, plus taxes. The current federal lodging rate for the city you are traveling to can be located at <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem>. The government rate must be requested when making hotel reservations.

Reimbursement for lodging is authorized for Overnight Travel only.

Hotel expenses are not allowable within the Atlanta Metropolitan area. Receipts are required for all lodging costs.

When two employees share a room, one employee will pay and receive reimbursement for the full lodging charge. The second will not be entitled to any reimbursement since he/she did not incur any expenses.

Meals, telephone charges, beverages, laundry cost, movies, etc. shall not be considered lodging or hotel cost.

Transportation

Employees may choose the following travel options below:

Common Carrier

Air, rail or bus receipts are required for reimbursement of common carrier transportation costs. Transportation tickets shall be obtained at the most economical rate available.

City Vehicle

City vehicles may be driven only by City employees or elected officials exclusively for City purposes and subject to appropriate code provisions.

The use of a City vehicle may be authorized, where practical, and is the preferred transportation mode for destinations within the state. The operation of a City vehicle outside the Atlanta Metropolitan area requires the prior approval of the department director.

Use outside the state of Georgia requires prior approval of the City Manager.

Receipts must be obtained for all reimbursable vehicle expenses.

Personal Vehicles

The reimbursement **mileage** rate for personal vehicle shall be consistent with the Internal Revenue Service current mileage rate. The current mileage rate can be located at www.irs.gov (keyword search Standard Mileage Rate). Request for mileage reimbursement shall be supported by odometer reading.

Use of a personal vehicle may be authorized when the use of the vehicle results in a total cost to the city equal to or less than the cost of the trip taken by the most economical conventional means. In calculating the cost of the trip taken by the most economical conventional means, both the costs of mileage and increase in costs due to an increase in the duration of the trip must be considered.

Calculating mileage

Mileage should be calculated using the mileage distance from the actual departure point to destinations, or the distance from the normal work place to the destination whichever is less.

Rental Vehicles

A rental car may be used for transportation at a travel destination when it is determined that no other mode of transportation is as economical or practical. The use of a rental car must be authorized in writing by the Department Director before the trip.

Employees shall rent full size or smaller vehicles based upon the number of employees needing transportation. Expenses associated with exceeding this car class will be the responsibility of the traveler, unless reasonable explanation is provided. Receipts are required for reimbursement of rental car costs including gasoline and oil.

Notification of mileage rate change

Normally, the Internal Revenue Service announces a mileage rate change effective January 1st of each year.

Per Diem

Per Diem is the allowance for meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) in conjunction with an overnight trip. Each Council member, employee and board member will receive an \$85.00 per diem which is intended to include all expenses other than conference registration, travel expense to and from the point of lodging, business travel within the destination area and lodging expense.

Per Diem rate begins when the employee is in a travel status. The per diem for the first and last day of authorized travel will be pro-rated on the basis of being away from the City during customary meal times at the following rates:

Incidentals	-18%	(\$15.30)
Breakfast	- 17%	(\$14.45)
Lunch	- 23%	(\$19.55)
Dinner	- 42%	(\$35.70)
	100%	(\$85.00)

Examples:

If first day of travel starts at 10:00 a.m., 83% of the per diem would be allowed (eliminate breakfast).

If first day of travel starts at 2:00 p.m., 60% of the per diem would be allowed (eliminate breakfast and lunch).

If last day of travel is completed at 11:30 a.m., 35% of the per diem would be allowed (eliminate lunch and dinner).

If last day of travel is completed at 6:00 p.m., 58% of the per diem would be allowed (eliminate dinner).

Receipts are required for reimbursable expenses such as, taxi, ground transportation, airport parking, laundry, business telephone calls, etc.

The total number of days submitted for reimbursement shall not exceed the total number of days the employee is away from home on official City business, but should be less if personal travel is interspersed.

Unallowable Expenses:

The following is a list of common expenses that are not reimbursable. It is not all-inclusive:

1. Alcoholic beverages.
2. Expenses for family members.
3. Excessive meal and lodging charges.
4. Personal items.
5. Movies charged to hotel/motel bills

Receipts

Receipts are required for all expenses except meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) reimbursed on a per diem basis.

Contact

For information pertaining to the "Travel and Training Expenses Policies and Procedures" contact the Department of Finance & Accounting.

Travel and Training Expenses for hotel and per diem are not allowable for counties within the Metropolitan Atlanta area.

Listed below are counties within the Metropolitan Atlanta area:

Bartow County
Butts County
Carroll County
Cherokee County
Clayton County
Cobb County
Coweta County
Dawson County
DeKalb County
Douglas County
Fayette County
Forsyth County
Fulton County

Gwinnett County
Haralson County
Heard County
Henry County
Jasper County
Lamar County
Meriwether County
Newton County
Paulding County
Pike County
Rockdale County
Spalding County
Walton County