

**CITY OF BURLINGTON, IOWA
TRAVEL AND TRAINING POLICIES
APRIL 2019**

A. General Purpose

Whenever an employee travels on behalf of the City, whether it is for business or training, the policies and procedures stated herein shall apply. It is the expressed purpose of these policies and procedures to provide the employee with reasonable travel accommodations and related expenses, while maintaining prudent spending policy. It is each employee's responsibility to learn and abide by these rules. The policies and procedures found in this manual supersede all previous policies, directives and rules governing City travel and training.

B. General Policies

Budget appropriations for travel and training should be reviewed by the Department Head prior to requesting travel approval. Travel and training requests that exceed budget balances will not be automatically approved.

Employees are expected to seek the most reasonable prices available for lodging and fares, considering location and services. Before training and/or conference travel occurs, the appropriate approvals must be obtained. Forms for acquiring the approvals are described below.

Expenses submitted for reimbursement must be accompanied by the **itemized receipt or a copy of the itemized receipt** for the expense (i.e.: receipts should be the detailed/itemized receipt, not the credit card copy showing only the total spent). Without a proper receipt, the reimbursement will not be approved unless extraordinary circumstances prevail.

Expenses for entertainment, alcohol, non-City employees, including spouses, and for any expense deemed wasteful or extravagant will not be reimbursed.

When traveling in a group, payment and accounting of registration fees, transportation and lodging can be consolidated and reimbursed to one person in the group.

Requests for reimbursements shall be made on the proper forms and include all documentation as required. The forms must be fully completed including the brief narrative report on the purpose for the training or travel.

C. Procedures

1. Approvals

To attend any training seminar or conference requiring travel expense, an employee must first obtain approvals from his/her Department Head. Either the Finance Director or the City Treasurer must also review and approve the request. A **Training & Conference Request Form** must be completed and submitted for signatures. **An employee must attach conference or training registration forms and supporting materials to itemize the travel costs.**

2. Meal Expenses

For employees on out-of-town and overnight training, a daily meal per diem totaling per diem rates allowed by the most current IRS Revenue Procedure would be reimbursed. See www.gsa.gov for the current per diem rates for major metro areas.

- Please subtract \$5 from the M&IE (meals and incidental expenses) rate listed for metro areas on the website www.gsa.gov to remove incidentals and get to the meal expense.
- When claiming per diem reimbursement receipts are not necessary.
- Per diems are not to be claimed if meals are provided at no cost to the employee.
- When there is an overnight stay, the breakfast allowance will be reimbursed when travel is started before 6:00 a.m. The lunch allowance will be paid when an employee is out of town during the lunch period. For the day of return from overnight travel, dinner will be allowed if the return is after 7:00 p.m.

3. Reimbursements

A report/reimbursement of actual travel expenses must be submitted on a **Travel Expense Report & Reimbursement Request Form** within 30 working days of the end of the trip. To receive reimbursement for an eligible expense, the corresponding itemized receipt (original or copy) must be attached. **Also attach the original signed Pre-travel request that is sent back after the request has been approved.** Travel and training expenses eligible for reimbursement include registration, lodging, mileage, public transportation, and reasonable incidental expenses such as tips, parking fees, business telephone/internet use, and business supplies.

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to, the following: entertainment, alcoholic beverages, gifts, personal phone/internet use, laundry, any expense for spouse, dependents or guests, transportation costs or mileage for travel unrelated to City Business and any incidental expense not pre-approved.

D. Multiple Employees Traveling Together

When two employees are attending a training seminar or a conference at the same location and on the same dates, the employees must share and coordinate transportation and lodging in order to minimize the expense to the City. Employees should travel in the same vehicle unless there are extenuating circumstances. Employees should also share a hotel room whenever possible. This requirement is waived for employees of different sexes.

E. Registrations

Conference registration may be done by the employee attending the conference or training or it may be done by the Finance Department. Indicate on the **Travel and Conference Request Form** how the registration is to be paid. Early registration discounts should be utilized if they are available. Travel request forms must be

submitted prior to the cut-off date for the City Council meeting that precedes the registration date.

F. Transportation

Airfare: All air travel will be by coach class. First class fares will not be reimbursed by the City. Preferably, requests for airline tickets should be made well in advance of the travel date, but under no circumstances less than ten working days from the travel date. Air travel will be approved, in lieu of the car, in those instances where it is deemed absolutely necessary.

Car: Unless another mode of transportation is specifically approved by the City Manager, all in-state travel will be by either City vehicle or private car. Unless time is a critical factor, all out of state travel within five hours driving time will be by car. The standard mileage rate is \$.39 per mile when using a personal vehicle. The City encourages the use of a City vehicle when one is available. The most direct route must always be used. The City has gas cards that can be checked out from the Finance Department for the purchase of gasoline for the City vehicles only.

Train or bus: Travel arrangements by rail or bus are allowed. All travel by these methods will be by coach class. First class fares will not be reimbursed by the City.

G. Lodging

Government discounts and conference discounts should be utilized whenever possible. Arrangements for lodging will be made through the employee's personal credit card and request reimbursement when the travel is completed. If a governmental discount is applied, the City issued Government I.D. should be carried by the employee.

The **employee must submit a hotel/motel bill upon completion of the trip**. A credit card receipt alone is not sufficient documentation.

H. Routine Travel

Routine travel for meetings and work within the City limits does not require the completion of the Travel & Conference Request form or the Travel Expense & Reimbursement form. Eligible expenses, such as mileage and parking, may be filed for reimbursement on **Routine Travel Reimbursement Form** with receipts attached. Routine reimbursements that only involve mileage should be made at least monthly.

H. Forms Routing

Training and Conference Request form - forwarded to: Department Head, Finance Department or City Treasurer for signature; **copies** returned to: Department Head for notification to the employee.

Travel Expense Report and Routine Travel Reimbursement forms forwarded to: Department Head and then to Finance Department for processing.

All Forms and Travel Check List are located on Intranet through our website at www.burlingtoniowa.org. Click on Intranet on the left side list.