

City of Pacific Grove, California

City Council Policy

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Meeting and Travel Expense Reimbursement	000-2	January 2, 1986	1 of 3

BACKGROUND:

In the performance of City business, certain travel and attendance at meetings is required for the City Council, members of City boards, commissions, and committees, and City employees.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to:

This policy applies to all City of Pacific Grove Employees, Council Members and Committee/Commission Members (“Travelers”) and is intended to establish uniform procedures by which Travelers will report and be reimbursed for expenses incurred in connection with authorized travel on behalf of the City.

This policy allows for economical and efficient travel in order to derive the greatest benefit from the travel at the most effective cost. It does not allow Travelers to benefit financially as a result of the travel. Travelers are responsible for exercising good judgement in requesting, arranging and fulfilling a travel request to mitigate costs to the City.

POLICY:

1. Travel will be authorized when necessary and in the best interest of the City.
2. Department Directors are responsible for making the determination that the travel is necessary and that the benefit for which the travel is requested cannot be achieved through other means that could eliminate the necessity for travel, while still accomplishing the benefit to the City.
3. Official meetings and travel expenses are authorized for reimbursement, to the extent of funds appropriated in the annual budget, to council members, members of City boards, commissions and committees, and City employees for the following activities:
 - a. Attendance at conferences and meetings sponsored by organizations in which the City holds membership or affiliation.
 - b. Attendance at training sessions, professional workshops, and seminars as required for maintaining proficiency or meeting standards established by the City or required by other authority (i.e., POST).
 - c. Attendance at professional meetings related to City business and designed to provide information needed for the successful conduct of City operations.

- d. City business related travel as determined by the Council, the City Manager or a Department Manager.
 - e. City sponsored meetings at which registration or meal fees are charged.
 - f. Community activities or special events at which City representation is desirable as determined by the City Council or as authorized in the annual budget appropriation.
4. The City will pay for the cost incurred by Travelers, subject to review. Additional costs associated with companions are the responsibility of Travelers.
 5. In consideration of numerous expenses incidental to serving as a Mayor or Council Member, the City Council shall receive a monthly salary as authorized by the City Charter and City ordinances. This salary is intended to reimburse to the extent possible Council Member incurred expenses for telephone and meeting expenses from travel and meetings in the Monterey County area. No further reimbursement for these expenses shall be made by the City without specific Council authorization. Council member may claim mile reimbursement for all travel on City business.
 6. For travel and meetings outside of Monterey County, Council Members may be reimbursed for expenses as authorized by the City Council. Whenever, possible, Council policy is that lump sum payments based on a reasonable estimate of expenses as determined by the City Manager be made. The lump sum may be expended by the Council Member as appropriate for the travel or meeting without further submission of expense claims. Spouses are encouraged to attend as appropriate, but no differential in travel allowance will be given.
 7. All travel and meeting expenses will be included in the annual budget and approved by the City Council. All necessary travel and meetings not included in the budget will require prior Council approval. Once the budget is approved, travel and meetings included therein, will be considered as approved and no further Council action is necessary. Appropriations and controls will be made on a departmental basis.
 8. During the fiscal year, reimbursement for travel and meetings is authorized only when there is an existing unobligated balance in the appropriate account(s).
 9. When a Council Member, member of a board, commission, or committee, or City staff represents the City on a JPA or other board for which a stipend or allowance is paid, there shall be no City reimbursement for expenses. Stipends received by City employees in these situations will be paid to the City.
 10. A City employee who is required to travel for City business or training is eligible to claim for meals as follows:
 - a. If business travel requires an overnight stay away from home, employees are eligible to receive a \$51.00 per diem.
 - b. Total travel time (work time, plus the lunch period, plus round-trip travel time) must equal or exceed 12 hours.
 - c. For the first and last calendar day of travel, the per diem is calculated at 75%, or, \$38.25.
 - d. No receipts are required.
 - e. Snacks are a personal expense and are not reimbursable

- f. Claiming for alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
 - g. An employee may not claim a per diem allowance or reimbursement for any meal which is provided, or otherwise available, with lodging or the function being attended.
11. Lodging expenses will be reimbursed or paid on the basis of standard, non deluxe accommodation for the attendee only. Other charges, such as additional guests, room service, and personal telephone calls or television are not reimbursable unless such charges are standard inclusions in the one person rate.
 12. Transportation costs for air, train, or bus will be reimbursed or paid based upon the lowest fare available. City vehicles should be used whenever possible for transportation. City gasoline credit cards should be used for refueling city vehicles. The use of private vehicles is discouraged. Reimbursement for private automobile use will be at the rate currently accepted by the Internal Revenue Service for purposes of income tax deductions, not to exceed the lowest round trip air fare cost. When car pooling of private vehicles occurs, the vehicle owner only is to be reimbursed.
 13. Registration and other fees and charges for the meeting or training will be reimbursed or paid at cost.
 14. Incidental expenses such as parking tolls transportation between meeting sites, business telephone calls and other business expenses will be reimbursed at cost.
 15. The use of rental vehicles will be authorized and reimbursed only when other alternative transportation is not available at destination.

PROCEDURE

1. All requests for travel and meetings should be submitted in the annual budget request. After review, the City Manager will recommend travel and meeting expenditures for the fiscal year.
2. Following Council approval of the annual budget, travel and meetings may be taken as authorized.
3. Claims for travel reimbursements will be submitted using a Request for Travel Reimbursement form and approved by the department head (or their designee) and sent to the Finance Director for approval and payment.
4. All Request for Travel Reimbursement forms must be filled out correctly or it will be returned to the employee for corrections which may delay the payment.
5. All claims must be turned in to the Finance Department within 15 days of the Travelers return.
6. Claims should include:
 - a. Name and address of traveler
 - b. Name of conference, training, seminar (etc.) and location of travel
 - c. Dates of travel
 - d. GL account number to which expenses are to be charged
 - e. Expense identification such as registration, mileage, airfare, etc. and the amount of each expense.

7. Receipts for all expenses must be attached to the Request for Travel Reimbursement form. If receipts are missing a Lost Receipt form must be submitted with an explanation of the expense.

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Resolution No. 5681

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Resolution No. 5971

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