



COUNTY OF EL DORADO, CALIFORNIA

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

Subject: Travel Expense and Reimbursement	Policy Number: D - 1	Page Number: 1 of 8
	Date Adopted: 10/22/2019	Last Revised Date: 01/06/2026

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish authorized travel and business expenses as well as reimbursement policies, rules and claim procedures for persons authorized to conduct County business. This policy applies to all County officers and employees, members of legislative or advisory bodies established by the Board (salaried or not), volunteers, contractors, and consultants traveling on County business when authorized under the terms of this policy. For ease of reference, the Travel Policy is presented in the following sections:

- I. General Policy
- II. Authorization to Travel
- III. Transportation Expenses
- IV. Meal Expenses
- V. Lodging Expenses
- VI. Advance Payments
- VII. Compliance and Claim Processing



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I. GENERAL POLICY:

Pursuant to Board of Supervisors Policy B-1, "Budget Control and Responsibility," it is the primary responsibility of Department Heads to maintain their departments' expenditure levels within the Board-approved budget. In accordance with this responsibility, Department Heads shall have broad discretion and authority related to travel activities and expenses for their departmental employees, volunteers, contractors, and consultants subject to the provisions of this policy. The Department Head is responsible for ensuring all travel reimbursement requests comply with this policy.

1. County officers and employees should not suffer any undue loss when required to travel on official County business, nor should they gain any undue benefit.
2. Travel shall be authorized only when the Department Head or designee determines it is in the best interest of the County.
3. County officers or employees traveling in the performance of their duties shall be reimbursed for their actual expenses and shall be reimbursed within maximum rate limits established by the Board of Supervisors.
4. Contractors and consultants may be reimbursed in accordance with this policy when such reimbursement is authorized pursuant to an agreement for services.
5. Travel arrangements should be economical, practical, and reasonable considering the travel purpose, timeframe available to accomplish the travel mission, available transportation and facilities, and time away from other duties as determined solely by the Department Head or designee.
6. Department Heads are responsible for ensuring all travel requests comply with California Government Code Section 11139.8.
7. Prior to December 31st of each year, the Auditor-Controller shall publish each department's travel expenses for the prior fiscal year.

II. Authorization to Travel

A. General Conditions

1. Authorization by the Department Head or designee is required for travel.

III. Transportation Expenses

A. General Conditions



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1. Transportation expenses are the direct costs related to movement of the traveler from the authorized point of departure to the destination of travel and back to the authorized point of return. Transportation expenses may also include mileage from approved lodging to event and back.
2. All transportation expenses incurred shall be based upon the most efficient, direct, and economical mode of transportation available as determined and authorized by the Department Head or designee and taking into consideration the purpose of the travel.

B. Vehicle Transportation

Vehicle use (both County-owned and private) by authorized travelers during official County business is subject to Board of Supervisors Policy D-4: County Vehicle Use-Privately Owned and County Owned Vehicles.

1. Private Vehicle

The use of private vehicles is discouraged. The use of a County fleet vehicle is preferred; however, reimbursement for use of a private vehicle, when such use has been authorized by the Department Head or designee, may be reimbursed subject to the following:

- (a) Travel by private vehicle will be reimbursed at the IRS rate for business use of a personal vehicle in effect in the County at the time of travel. This mileage reimbursement rate shall be considered to be full reimbursement for all costs in use of the private vehicle, except for reasonable costs for snow chain installation and removal.
- (b) If air travel would be less costly but the County Traveler prefers to drive, the County will reimburse the traveler for transportation costs equal to what the cost of air travel would have been, including airfare, shuttle, car rental, mileage to the airport, and other costs determined to be reasonable by the Department Head or designee. Transportation costs over and above that amount, as well as any extra days of lodging, meals and incidentals incurred as a result of the decision to drive will be considered a personal (not reimbursable) cost of the traveler.
- (c) Authorized travelers may not claim mileage for business use of a private vehicle when the traveler is riding with someone who will be claiming reimbursement for the vehicle's use from the County or another source.



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(d) If an employee is required to travel to a temporary work location from their place of residence, or to travel from a temporary work location to their place of residence at the end of their shift, the employee is entitled to mileage reimbursement for the amount of miles to the temporary work location from either their primary work location or residence, depending on which distance is shorter.

2. County Vehicle Transportation

- (a) Travelers using a County vehicle for traveling should to the extent possible purchase fuel using the County Fleet fueling program.
- (b) Travelers required to fuel a County vehicle at their own expense due to the unavailability of a county-authorized fueling site, or for other reasons deemed justified by the Department Head or designee, may be reimbursed for the actual fuel costs subject to presentation of receipt(s).
- (c) If the County vehicle experiences mechanical failure, the traveler shall follow the rules set forth by Fleet Management.

3. Rental Vehicle Transportation

- (a) The traveler shall choose the least expensive size and mileage limits appropriate to the use required, as determined by the Department Head or designee. Rental cars shall be refueled prior to return to the rental agency except when the traveler is escorting a person who is under County supervision by an employee of the Sheriff's Office, the District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, the Probation Department, or Health and Human Services Agency or for any other purpose deemed reasonable by the Department Head or designee.
- (a) Unless otherwise approved, rental cars shall be returned to the renting location and at a time commensurate with the completion of County business.
- (b) Rental cars must be rented under the name of the authorized traveler and shall only be driven by a County employee.
- (c) The traveler shall waive additional vehicle insurance provided by the rental company.

4. Commercial Carrier Transportation

- (a) Travelers shall seek and attempt to use the lowest rates available for the type of commercial carrier service being utilized. Whenever possible, travelers should take advantage of flight



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arrangements that minimize County cost (for example, purchasing a round-trip ticket may be less expensive than two one-way tickets). No reimbursement will be provided for travel agent fees, unless the use of such services is a requirement to conduct County business.

5. Other Transportation Expenses

- (a) The following necessary transportation expenses may be claimed at actual cost when directly related to transporting the traveler to and from the business destination point:
 - (i) Taxi, rideshare services, shuttle, ferry, or public transit fares;
 - (ii) Parking fees: Long-term parking or the least expensive parking option at an airport is preferred, understanding the Department Head or designee may make an exception as needed. Valet parking is discouraged but the Department Head or designee may approve valet parking when needed;
 - (iii) Bridge or road tolls (actual cost, not including penalties or fees);
 - (iv) Reasonable costs for snow chain installation and removal; and
 - (v) Other actual transportation expenses determined to be reasonable and necessary by the Department Head or designee.
- (b) The following transportation expenses may not be claimed unless approved by the Department Head or designee:
 - (i) Traffic and parking violations, including fines for non-payment of bridge or road tolls;
 - (ii) Repairs on non-County vehicles;
 - (iii) Mileage for personal trips while on County business;
 - (iv) Purchase cost of snow chains;
 - (v) Gratuities for taxi or rideshare services; and
 - (vi) Other actual transportation expenses determined to be unreasonable or unnecessary by the Department Head or designee.

IV. Meal Expenses

A. Eligibility for Meal Expense Reimbursement

1. Meal expenses, within maximum allowable rates set forth herein, may be reimbursed for out-of-county travel, and for in-County overnight travel. In addition, when an employee from one slope of



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the County is required to spend all or part of the workday on the other slope, the employee is allowed to claim meal reimbursement subject to the provisions of section IV.A.2 of this policy.

2. Reimbursement for meals shall be made only when travel extends for a minimum of six (6) hours during the normal working day. The table below is a guide for Departments to assist in allowing meal per diem.

Meal	Travel Begins Before	Trip Ends After
Breakfast	6:00 am	7:00 am
Lunch	11:00 am	12:00 pm
Dinner	5:00 pm	6:00 pm

For purposes of determining eligibility for reimbursement, travel shall be considered to begin when the Traveler departs their residence if the trip begins before or after normal office hours. If the trip begins during normal office hours, travel shall be considered to begin when the Traveler departs his/her office. Reimbursement must include the travel or airfare itinerary required to substantiate two hour time before departure time and arrival time.

3. Reimbursement rates for individual meals shall be at the individual meal rate for that individual meal as established by the GSA.
4. Reimbursement may exceed the prescribed individual meal rate if the meal is being served as a part of the authorized event and the cost of the meal is itemized separately from the event's registration or attendance fees. For example, the registration fee for a multi-day conference includes lunches but an optional dinner is offered on one night at an additional cost.
5. Reimbursement may exceed the prescribed individual meal rate when a group meal is provided, and when approved by the Department Head or designee.
6. Unless specifically approved by the Department Head or designee, a traveler may not claim reimbursement for any meal which is provided, or otherwise available, to the traveler as part of the function, whether or not there is an actual charge for the meal. For example, if lunch is provided at the function, the traveler may not claim a per diem allowance or request reimbursement for eating elsewhere. Receipts will be required for reimbursement of alternate



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meals authorized by the Department Head or designee. For purposes of this section, continental breakfast and breakfast included in lodging rates and meals provided during airline or other commercial carrier travel do not constitute provided meals and shall not be deducted from the per diem allowance.

7. A traveler may not claim reimbursement for a meal that was paid for by someone else. As required by California Government Code 53232.2 Board of Supervisors members must provide receipts for all meals and will be reimbursed at the appropriate per diem amount or the actual expense, whichever is less.

V. Lodging Expenses

- A. Travelers are eligible to claim reimbursement for lodging upon approval of the Department Head or designee. Lodging expenses shall be claimed at either the actual cost of the lodging (limited to single occupancy rate for a single room) or the County's maximum lodging rate (Federal Per Diem Rate established by GSA), whichever is less. Taxes and resort fees are in addition to the Federal Per Diem Rate. Lodging costs may exceed the County's maximum lodging rate when necessary upon approval of the Department Head or designee.

VI. Advance Payments

Departments are encouraged to pre-pay expenses, to the extent feasible, using a County credit card, and to provide travelers with County credit cards (subject to credit card use policy) when traveling. However, when this option is not available or practical, an advance may be requested.

- A. Upon request of the Department Head or designee, the Auditor may provide advance funds for estimated "out of pocket" expenses up to 100% for meals, and 75% for all other expenses.
- B. A County credit card may not be used for expenses for which the traveler has received an advance.

VII. Compliance and Claim Processing

- A. It is the responsibility of the claimant to understand and follow all policies and procedures herein in order to receive reimbursement for mileage, travel, and expense claims. The failure to properly complete any form or follow any policy or procedure may result in the return of a claim without reimbursement.



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- B. Requests for travel reimbursement shall be processed using forms specified by the County Auditor-Controller and Chief Administrative Office.
- C. Department Heads are responsible for ensuring that claims for reimbursement are submitted to the Auditor-Controller's Office in a timely fashion, preferably within 30 days following completion of the travel.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

Chief Administrative Office

Auditor-Controller

DATES ISSUED AND REVISED; SUNSET DATE

Issue Date:	10/22/2019	Sunset Review Date:	01/06/2030
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