



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 16-1231, **Version:** 1

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Chief Administrative Office recommending the Board approve revisions to Board of Supervisors Policy D-1 - Travel.

**FUNDING:** N/A

**DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION**

Approve revisions to Board of Supervisors Policy D - 1.

**DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND**

Board of Supervisors Policy D-1 - Travel was originally adopted on December 22, 1987, and was last revised on October 20, 2009. The purpose of the policy is to set forth guidelines for payment and reimbursement of expenses for actual and necessary costs incurred by county employees, volunteers, and contractors when traveling on official county business. The policy is in need of revision for several reasons:

1. Meal and lodging cost limits have not kept pace with inflation.
2. The policy does not address several issues that arise repeatedly, such as gratuities, purchase of additional insurance when renting vehicles, special circumstances related to search and rescue missions and extraditions, airline baggage and change fees, and several others.
3. The policy requires CAO approval for all out-of-county overnight travel, regardless of the cost.

The current policy includes fixed monetary limits for meals and lodging that apply, regardless of the travel destination. This doesn't recognize inflation or the fact that some travel destinations are much more costly than others. The revised policy refers to the federal General Services Administration (GSA) rate for meal and lodging reimbursement. This rate varies by region of the country and is adjusted annually to account for inflation.

In working with departments and the Auditor-Controller's Office, we have identified several issues that the existing policy either does not address, or provides unclear or outdated direction. The revised policy has been reviewed by departments and the Auditor-Controller's staff that processes travel payments, and should address the majority of those issues.

The current policy requires CAO approval for all out-of-county overnight travel, regardless of the cost. Not only does this increase the processing time for travel requests, it is out of step with other county financial policies. Department heads have authority to approve most, if not all, other budgeted expenses for their departments without additional review; however, travel has been treated differently. We recommend giving authority to department heads to approve travel for their employees, volunteers, and contractors in most instances. With the recommended policy, CAO approval would still be required for travel outside the states of California and Nevada.

Human Resources has distributed the policy to the employee associations for their review. If any significant concerns are identified that require modifications to the policy, those will be brought back

to the Board for approval.

**ALTERNATIVES**

The Board could choose to maintain the current policy or direct further revision.

**OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

County Counsel, Auditor-Controller. Additionally, the draft policy has been circulated to all departments for review and comment.

**CAO RECOMMENDATION**

Approve as recommended.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is no direct fiscal impact related to the action of revising the policy. While reimbursement rates for meals and lodging may be increasing in some cases, it is not expected to negatively affect departments' budgets. In most cases, the CAO has approved payment in excess of the current limits for lodging because it can be extremely challenging to find safe lodging within the limit.

**CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

The Clerk will post the revised policy to the County Website.

**STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT**

Good Governance.

**CONTACT**

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