

## CITY OF DOVER TRAINING, CONFERENCE & TRAVEL POLICY

### A. INTRODUCTION

#### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines under which City of Dover employees, public officials, and appointees will be reimbursed for authorized travel expenses incurred in the conduct of business for the City of Dover, hereinafter referred to as "City." In addition to the guidelines, specific procedures with regard to incurring and reporting related expenses are provided.

#### 2. Scope

This policy shall apply to employees of the City of Dover, elected officials, boards, commissions and others, who are engaged in authorized travel and who expend City funds for travel purposes. The Mayor and Members of City Council are not required to submit a Travel Authorization and Completion Form, but are required to follow the financial and budget requirements of this policy.

While this policy does not cover every possible situation, it establishes adequate guidelines for employees and officials to make appropriate and consistent judgments regarding the expenditure of City funds for reimbursable expenses. **Please note The City of Dover will provide flexibility to meet the special needs and requirements of their employees during travel.**

It remains the responsibility of city management to control and approve travel-related expenditures. The City Manager and Controller/Treasurer may impose more stringent rules when deemed appropriate or necessary.

The City Manager and Controller/Treasurer will review every three years the implementation of this Policy and will provide policy interpretations and assistance to ensure effective and efficient implementation. Any exceptions will be subject to approval by the City Manager and Controller/Treasurer. The City Manager and Controller/Treasurer may also, on a case-by case basis, approve reimbursements exceeding the guideline amounts referenced in this policy. In any such instance, a detailed explanation and substantiation (a receipt) is required. Enforcement of this policy will be the responsibility of the Controller/Treasurer.

#### 3. Responsibility

- a. Employee, Public Official, or Appointee
  - Comply with all provisions of this policy.
  - Obtain the necessary approvals in advance for overnight travel and out-of-state use of City vehicles. Provide a copy of the approval with the travel prepayment made by direct voucher.
  - All expenses incurred in the course of City business are to be in accordance with the City's Administrative Policies and Rules of Ethics and must be paid solely from appropriated funds.
  - Comply with the ten (10) working-day rule.

- b. Department Director/City Manager/Council Designee
  - Ensure compliance with this policy.
  - Review and approve each of their employees/official's travel approval requests and reimbursable expenses.
  - Ensure sufficient funds are available for all anticipated expenses.
- c. Signatures on the Travel Expense Report (City of Dover Form 030 Exhibit A) certify that the expenses were incurred by the employee/official requesting reimbursement for official City business, are reimbursable in accordance with this policy, and have not been reimbursed except as indicated on this form.

Required signatures for expenses are:

- Employee
- Supervisor
- Department Director or Council Designee

## **B. TRAINING AND CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES**

1. Request for payment of registration fees shall be accompanied by the registration form.
2. City Council, Planning Commission and the Mayor are offered opportunities to attend courses designed for governmental officials. Any member of Council wanting to take advantage of these courses offered by the following organizations will submit to the City Clerk's office their request for registration.

- Delaware League of Local Governments
- National League of Cities
- US Conference of Mayors
- International City Managers Association
- Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)
- American Public Power Association (APPA)
- American Public Works Association (APWA)
- American Planning Association
- Organizations that provide Continuing Education credits for professional license renewals of applicable staff.

Any courses not offered by these organizations will be submitted to the City Manager and Controller/Treasurer for concurrence.

## **C. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION**

All out-of-state travel that extends beyond one day shall be approved by the City Manager or Council Designee. All requests shall be made on the "Travel Authorization and Completion

Form" (City of Dover - Form 047 Exhibit B). A copy of the conference or meeting program must be attached to the form. The authorization form must be submitted to the City Manager or Council Designee in a reasonable amount of time prior to the traveling day.

The Department Director, City Manager, or Council designee may impose specific requirements as to the time the authorization form must be submitted prior to travel.

Employees and Officials traveling on official City business should be aware that the approval is for travel only, and is not a blanket approval of the expenses incurred.

A travel packet including the authorization form, the meeting program/itinerary, and the purchase orders for advanced costs must be submitted to the Accounts Payable Department. The Purchase Orders for the advanced costs should include the necessary supporting documentation. It does not require the submission of duplicate information. Please note Purchase Orders for registration costs must include the Registration form unless previously submitted; submission for hotel and airfare costs must include documentation of the individual costs unless previously submitted.

## **D. TRANSPORTATION: COMMON CARRIER**

### **1. General**

All trips requiring the use of common carrier must be pre-approved by the appropriate approval authority.

The mode of travel must be justified on the basis of the most economical use of time of the personnel involved, the cost of optional travel modes, and the requirements of the trip.

All common carrier reservations must be consistent with reasonable business travel planning, common carrier will be booked at the lowest available fare. If the lowest available fare is turned down by the traveler, the traveler's explanation for the denial is to be provided with the travel authorization request.

Travelers should be advised to make travel reservations as far in advance as possible to attain the lowest fares, including non-refundable tickets. Travelers may not specify particular airlines or other carriers to accumulate mileage on promotional plans such as frequent flyer programs.

In order to take advantage of special discount rates (supersaver fares, etc.), reimbursement to an employee may be made prior to a trip being taken under the following conditions:

- a. Documentation of the substantial savings that will accrue to the City (e.g., supersaver discounts).
- b. Employee's proof of payment on a statement from the airline, other than credit card receipts.

Most airlines will not give refunds or partial refunds for supersaver airfares.

It is encouraged to examine the advantage of fares requiring early trip departure or delayed return. However, it is important to consider the additional cost of meals and lodging for the required extra day(s) stay when comparing cost.

## **2. Air Travel**

- a. Accommodations - When commercial airlines are used as a mode of travel, accommodations shall be coach/economy class unless some other class accommodations are more economical.
- b. Routing of Travel - All travel will be by the most economical and direct routes.

In the event that a person travels by an indirect route for personal convenience, the extra expense shall be the responsibility of the individual. Reimbursement for expenses shall be based only on the cost of the most economical and direct route.

- c. Conference Airfare Arrangements

When attending a conference, always check conference materials to see if special airline discounts are offered. When a special airline discount rate is offered and conferees are instructed to go directly to an airline to obtain the discount fare, the employee should compare the conference rates through the internet with all other airline rates available before scheduling airline reservations. The employee should always book the lowest fare possible. (See Section E.3. for Conference Lodging Arrangements).

## **3. Rail Travel**

### **1. Accommodations**

When it has been determined that rail travel is the most appropriate mode of transportation, the most economical class accommodations shall be utilized.

## **E. TRANSPORTATION: PASSENGER VEHICLES**

### **1. City-Owned Vehicles**

City-owned vehicles should be utilized for both in-state and out-of-state travel when such use is the most practical and economical mode of transportation, including the cost of tolls, fuel and parking.

### **2. Use of Privately-Owned Vehicles**

- a. The use of privately owned vehicles for any City travel (both in state and out-of-state) should only be used when a City Vehicle is not available. The use of a privately owned vehicle for City travel shall require the prior approval of the City Manager and Department Director. Reimbursement of private vehicle expenses shall be at the Standard Mileage Rate as set by the federal government for actual and necessary miles traveled. Beginning and ending odometer readings are required for the reimbursement for mileage.
- b. In considering approval for use of personal vehicles, the approval authority shall take into consideration the cost of alternative modes of travel and the cost of meals and

lodging for the additional travel/transit days. Mileage reimbursements shall not exceed the cost of airfare plus travel to/from the airport.

- c. When two or more employees travel in a privately owned vehicle, only one mileage reimbursement will be allowed.

### 3. Rental Cars

- a. General

The use of a rental car when traveling out of state must be justified as an economical need and not as a matter of personal convenience. Prior approval by the City Manager is required before arranging for car rental. All rentals should be at the most economical rate per day including government rates or special rate agreements. When traveling in groups, sharing of cars, when practical, must be done to minimize costs. The city will not pay for the use of a rental car to accommodate family members or non-business associates traveling with the employee, public official, or appointee.

- b. Vehicle Size

Whenever possible, compact cars shall be rented or reserved. However, if a larger size vehicle is more economical or more than two city travelers are traveling together the larger vehicle may be appropriate. Any representative of the City requesting an upgrade of the size of a rented vehicle shall provide a written explanation of their reasons to the City Manager. **A receipt is always required.**

- c. Insurance

- (1) The optional insurance coverage offered by the car rental agency must be declined when the traveler charges the rental car. The traveler will automatically receive primary coverage under the City blanket insurance policy for travel. When insurance is declined, the policy covers collision damage, theft, fire and vandalism. Reimbursements for additional or optional insurance coverage will not be allowed.

- (2) Other. Travelers not covered under the blanket insurance policy may be covered by their personal automobile insurance policy or other personal credit cards. Travelers should check their automobile policy and credit card policy for business travel coverage and accept or decline additional coverage accordingly. Reimbursement for additional or optional insurance coverage will not be allowed.

- d. Refueling Before Return

To avoid a refueling surcharge, all rental cars shall be refueled before returning the vehicle to the rental company. Any surcharges billed to the employee, public official, appointee, or City shall be explained in the reimbursement request.

e. **Reservations**

Approved car rental reservations shall be made in advance whenever possible. The employee should compare car rental rates and always look to reserve the lowest rental.

**F. LODGING**

**1. General**

City travelers are expected to seek accommodations that are comfortable, convenient, meet business and personal needs and offer good value. Employees are expected to compare local lodging rates in the area prior to reserving lodging.

**2. Accommodation**

- a. Lodging accommodations for reasonably priced single occupancy rooms are reimbursable when the traveler is away from home overnight due to official travel.
- b. Accommodations shared with family members or others not on official City business are reimbursable at the single occupancy rate only.
- c. Accommodations shared with other City travelers should be billed and reimbursed to one traveler. When required, reimbursements to more than one traveler shall be based on a pro rata share as reported on each reimbursement request.

**3. Conference Lodging Arrangements**

When hotel rooms are blocked for a conference, seminar, etc., and a special discounted conference hotel rate provided, the employee/official should compare conference rates with the rates for other local hotels within **walking distance a three (3) block radius** of the conference. The employee is urged to reserve hotel accommodations that offer the best value to the City. This includes conference rate, government rate or lower rate, for the employee/official. If a lower rate is not available, the conferees should make their lodging arrangements directly utilizing the conference instructions. **Conference lodging will be considered to accommodate persons with special circumstances.**

**4. Occupancy Tax**

The City is exempt from the tax on occupancy of hotel, motel and tourist home rooms within Delaware only. When in-state overnight accommodations are necessary, the employee should be provided with a copy of the Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate (see Exhibit C) to be presented to the lodging facility. Tax on occupancy of hotels in other states must be paid.

**G. MEAL ALLOWANCES**

**1. General**

The City will pay for or reimburse an employee/official for the necessary and reasonable cost of meals and incidental expenses incurred during out of state travel requiring overnight lodging.

Additional meal costs incurred over and above those provided as part of a conference or registration fee are not reimbursable, unless justified as a special circumstance and approved by the City Manager and Controller/Treasurer (e.g. special meeting or diet restrictions).

Exceptions are to be pre-approved by the City Manager and Controller/Treasurer.

There will not be any reimbursement for meals when the meals are provided as part of the conference/training or by the host organization and when meals are provided as part of the airfare. **There are no exceptions to accommodate employee meal preference.**

Only per diem rates as prescribed by the Federal Government for official travel will be provided for M I& E Allowance (Exhibit D).

If an employee is traveling partial days on any calendar day, the City will prorate the applicable M&IE rate at 75 percent. This applies to both day of departure and day of return. Partial travel days begin when an employee leaves Dover after 12:00 noon on the day of departure and returns to Dover by 5:00 PM on the day of arrival.

When meals are provided at the conference or by the host, the meal allowance will be reduced by 25% for each meal provided. Continental Breakfast provided by the hotel or at the conference is counted as a meal, **unless justified as a special circumstance and approved by the City Manager and Controller/Treasurer (e.g. special meeting or diet restrictions).**

## **2. Day Trips, In-state Travel and Before or After Hours**

The meal allowance for day trips out of the City will be reimbursed at actual cost, as long as it does not exceed 25% of the normal per diem per the M&IE Allowance (Exhibit D). The meal allowance for working before or after hours as a general rule are not encouraged, but may be approved by the City Manager and/or Controller/Treasurer on a case-by-case basis. At no time can the amount exceed the allowances established.

## **H. CASH ADVANCES**

General/Blanket travel advance checks will not be issued to employees, public officials, or appointees. Employees, public officials, and appointees will be reimbursed for specific travel related expenses after the trip or event has been completed.

The City will pay specific travel and lodging costs in advance as long as the request deadlines are met. Employees, public officials, and appointees shall use a City purchase order when requesting travel cost advances. Department Directors should use their City credit card for business travel. Directors may approve the use of their department travel credit card when arranging employee travel. Under urgent situations and with prior approval, employees and officials can also use a personal credit card and request reimbursement when they return.

**The City will pay in advance the following costs:**

Please note: A travel packet including the Travel authorization form, the meeting program/itinerary, and a purchase order for the advanced costs listed below must be submitted to the Accounts Payable Department no later than 12 days prior to the event.

- a. **Conference/Training registration fees.** Such payment will be made payable and mailed directly to the organization. This will be done through a purchase order submitted by the department upon receipt of the approved Travel Authorization Form. A copy of the registration form describing the specific event must be attached to the purchase order. The Employee Travel packet must be submitted to Accounts Payable prior to/along with the purchase order request for advance travel expenses.
- b. **Airfare.** Airfare is normally reserved on-line through the internet and paid with a City credit card after travel approval has been received. (See City Credit Card Policy)
- c. **Lodging.** Upon receipt of the approved Travel authorization form, the department may submit a purchase order for lodging. The check will be made payable to the hotel and will be given to the person for whom the lodging arrangements are made. The department must provide supporting documentation including the daily lodging rates and applicable taxes along with the purchase order. Lodging reservations can be held with the use of a City Credit Card. (See City Credit Card Policy)
- d. **Meal allowance.** An advance for the M&IE Allowance, which includes both meals and incidental expenses, will be permitted for meals not provided by the conference or training as indicated in Section G (1) above. Only per diem rates as prescribed by the Federal Government for official travel will be provided for M&IE Allowance (Exhibit D).

**I. TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT****1. General**

A Travel Expense Report (City of Dover Form 30) is due to Accounts Payable within **ten (10) working days** after travel or an expense is incurred. (**Ten working-day rule**)

- a. Timely reimbursement can be assured only if an accurate, properly substantiated Travel Expense Report is received in Accounts Payable **ten (10) working days** after completion of the trip.
- b. Failure to submit timely Travel Expense Reports after the completion of a trip will result in administrative action, such as notification to the Department Director and denial of future travel requests.

Travel Expense Reports for local travel and related expenses are to be submitted monthly. **In no case shall a reimbursement be made to an employee for travel/conference/training related expenses incurred in excess of 90 days.**

**Note:** This section pertains to only those travel expenses paid by the traveler; not to travel expenses directly billed to/paid by the City.

## **2. Receipt Requirements and Other Reimbursement Criteria**

- a. Tickets booked on common carriers (airline, rail or bus) require original copy of the paid invoice or email confirmation containing total travel costs for arrangements booked on-line.
- b. Hotel/motel bills shall be the original copy of hotel/motel billing marked paid.
- c. Ground transportation, including airport shuttle, taxi or public transit requires a receipt.
- d. Car rental reimbursements require paid invoice from the rental company.
- e. Meals do not require receipts and are not reimbursable above the maximum daily/partial day per meal allowance.

Tips are included in the M&IE Allowance and will not be reimbursed separately.

When more than one City employee, public official, or appointee's meals are being reimbursed, each employee must submit a separate Travel Expense Reimbursement, including a receipt from the dining facility attached.

- f. Hotel/motel related expenses should be documented identifying the date and the cost for each category with the following requirements:
  - (1) Out-of-pocket costs for incidental items such as tips, baggage handling and maid service are not individually reimbursable by the City of Dover. Costs included under this category are included in the M&IE per diem rate. Only per diem rates as prescribed by the Federal Government for official travel will be provided for M&IE allowance. (Exhibit D)
  - (2) City-business related telephone calls are reimbursable as incurred and require a receipt from the telephone service provider or included on the hotel/motel billing invoice.
- g. Lodging at campgrounds using traveler's camper or recreational vehicle is reimbursable at the actual cost, not to exceed the equivalent cost of hotel/motel lodging. Receipt is required.
- h. Other Categories

Reimbursement for the following categories should be submitted on a schedule identifying the date, the cost and the category. All supporting receipts must be attached:

- 1) The City will reimburse employees for hotel and airport self-parking. The City encourages all employees to seek 'economy and budget parking'.
- 2) The City will not reimburse employees for Valet parking, **unless prior approval has been granted by the City Manager and Controller.**
- 3) The City will reimburse employees the cost of tolls for interstates, turnpike, bridges and/or ferries. All travel expenses require a receipt.
  - i. Gasoline and/or Other Supplies
 

Need for emergency repairs incidental to using a City-owned vehicle shall require a Vendor receipt.
  - j. Reimbursements for travel expenses incurred without required receipts, as outlined, is strictly prohibited. A "no receipt - no reimbursement" policy applies.
  - k. Prior Department Director approval is required to receive reimbursement for Internet Access Costs for city business. These costs must be substantiated with receipts and validation by the Information Technology Department.
  - l. While traveling overnight out-of-state, the City will reimburse employees for the cost of up to two (2) personal telephone calls not to exceed \$8 per trip. A receipt is required for reimbursement.

### 3. Non- Reimbursable Expenses

The City shall not reimburse expenses for the following:

- a. Alcoholic beverages.
- b. In-room movies or pay television.
- c. Theater tickets or nightclub entertainment.
- d. Laundry.
- e. Babysitting.
- f. Related expenses of spouse, children and other persons accompanying the authorized employee/official.
- g. Pleasure, historic or other tour related expenses. Expenses for business related tours would be reimbursed.
- h. Donations and gifts made while at training, conference, or meeting.
- i. Loss or damage of personal items.
- j. Meals for other conference attendees.
- k. Purchase of personal items.
- l. Any parking or moving violation fines.
- m. Any personal or pleasure travel while on City business.
- ~~n. Valet parking, unless required for medical reasons.~~

### J. CHARTER AND CODE OF CONDUCT

All City of Dover policies are subject to the City of Dover Charter Part 1, Subpart A, Article II, Section 12 "Compensation and expenses - Mayor and Council and other elected or appointed

officials”, whereas, “Members of the council, mayor and other elected or appointed officials shall receive reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred when on official business as prescribed by city ordinance or policy” and; Part II Code of Ordinances Chapter 2, Article 1, Division 4 “Code of Conduct”, which is “applicable to all elected and appointed officials and to all employees of the City of Dover.”

#### **K. INTERNAL REVENUE CODE - DEFINITION OF PUBLIC OFFICIAL**

Generally, if there is any provision in a public law which authorizes the employment of the individual, and the individual is hired or elected under this authority, the individual is considered an employee of the State or political subdivision to which the provision applies.

The following factors indicate that an office is a “public office.”

The office was created by the constitution or through legislation, or by a municipality or other body with authority conferred by the legislature.

The office was delegated a portion of the powers of the government body.

The powers conferred and the duties to be discharged are defined either directly or indirectly law or through legislative authority.

The duties are being performed independently and without control of a superior power other than the law.

The office has some permanency and continuity, and the officer takes an official oath.

Examples of public officers are: the president and vice president; a governor or mayor; the secretary of state; a member of a legislative body, such as a state legislature, county commission, city council, school board, a judge; a justice of the peace; and members of advisory boards and committees.

#### **L. REVIEW & REVISION**

The City of Dover Travel Policy will be reviewed every three years by the City Manager, Controller/Treasurer and City Clerk **to provide recommended changes to City Council for approval.**

#### **EXHIBITS**

Exhibit A - General Service Administration Regulations - Per Diem Rates Travel Rates for Continental United States

Exhibit B - COD Exemption Certificate Form

ADOPTED:

**CITY OF DOVER**  
**2009 TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS PRIORITIZATION**

1. **Intermodal Transportation Terminal (Bus Station)**
2. **West Dover Connector**
  - A. West Street Traffic Flow
3. **Garrison Tract Connector Road**
4. **Kenton Road Corridor Upgrades**
5. **Loockerman Street / Forrest Avenue Improvements**
6. **College Road Corridor Upgrades**
7. **Route 8 Corridor Study**

**Policy/Program Prioritization List**

1. **Sunday and Evening Hours Bus Service**
2. **Bike Path Connectivity**
3. **Airport Studies and Improvements to Accommodate Passenger and Aircraft Related Industries**
4. **Continued Exploration of Options for Relocating the Storage and Marshalling of Chemical Cars at the Norfolk Southern Yard on New Burton Road**
5. **Additional Studies of Next Phase to Implement Commuter Passenger Rail Service between Wilmington and Dover**

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