



TRAVEL POLICY FOR BOARD MEMBERS

Policy Type: Board Authority:
Board of Directors
Adopted: Resolution No. 2019-57
September 18, 2019

I. GENERAL

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for travel related to Board Members' attendance at seminars, conferences and other meetings associated with the performance of District business. "Travel" shall mean attendance at meetings, conferences, events or other functions on District business other than at District's offices or facilities. Travel may or may not include overnight stays.

Authorization of attendance and expenses incurred is predicated on the understanding that each attendee is returning with knowledge that will be of benefit to the District.

This policy is intended to comply with all Internal Revenue Service requirements for an accountable plan so that reimbursements are not treated as part of wages for tax purposes.

Board members are expected to exercise good judgement and a proper regard for economy when incurring expenses.

II. AUTHORIZATION FOR TRAVEL AND EXPENSES

A. Pre-Authorized Travel

Directors may travel or attend without any additional authorization the following:

- Any conference or training sponsored by the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) or California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA).
- Travel to Alameda, Colusa, Contra Costa, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Sacramento, Solano, Sonoma, and Yolo counties on District business.
- Local functions sponsored by local associations in which the District maintains a membership.
- Other meeting/events as listed under the Days of Service Resolution.

B. Travel Requiring Board of Directors (Board) Approval

Any conference, seminar or meeting not held in one (1) of the pre-authorized travel areas as stated in Section II(A) of this Policy or as listed in the Days of Service Resolution will require an action of authorization by a vote of the Board of Directors.

C. Out of State/Country Travel

Any out of state or country travel will require an action of authorization by a vote of the Board of Directors. The Board may only approve out of state travel if one (1) of following conditions apply:

- A finding that such opportunities are not available within California.
- There is documented linkage to the District's Strategic Plan or Goals.
- The subject matter is geared to policy makers not technical experts.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cesar Zepeda, President
Cheryl Sudduth, Vice President

David Alvarado, Director
Sherry Stanley, Director
Harry Wiener, Director

GENERAL MANAGER

Lisa K. Malek-Zadeh

GENERAL COUNSEL

Claire H. Collins

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III. CONFERENCE REPORTING

Board Members are required to provide the Board with a written report using the conference report form for attendance at all seminars, conferences and meetings in excess of one (1) day. The conference report will be included in the next published regular agenda packet.

IV. EXPENSE REPORTING AND RECONCILIATION

Board Members should turn in receipts for all District related conference and travel expenses charged on the District's credit card and all eligible out-of-pocket expenses paid by Board Members to the Administrative staff as soon as possible after the charge is incurred. No reimbursements for travel and other related expenses will be processed until the District is able to reconcile all expenditures.

V. TRAVEL EXPENSES

A. Registration Fees

The cost of registration, including special events described in the agenda that contribute to educational or professional development, is an eligible travel expense. Whenever possible, registration expenses are to be pre-paid by the District in the form of a District credit card or check, if a credit card is not allowed.

Administrative Staff will register Board Members for eligible conferences. Board Members should notify the Administrative Staff of their desire to attend events requiring pre-registration or Board approval well in advance of the event.

B. Lodging

Board Members are encouraged to schedule and book their travel and hotel registration to assure bookings reflect the desired schedules and promote efficiencies. Administrative Staff will assist Board Members when necessary. Whenever possible, lodging should be arranged at the facility where the event is being held at the event rate. If lodging at the event facility is not available, or if a different facility is needed, the cost should be as close to possible as the cost to stay in the event facility. Lodging shall be limited to the minimum number of nights required for attendance at the event. An additional night before or after the event may be authorized if there are no flights available within a reasonable time of the start or conclusion of the event.

C. Meals

1. Overnight Travel

Meals while traveling are covered under a per diem allowance. Meals and incidental expenses incurred for overnight business travel will be based on the Internal Revenue Service using the Specific Locality Method for Meals and Incidental Expenses only. These can be found at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates/per-diem-rates-lookup>.

Receipts are not required to receive per diem. No amounts in excess of the GSA limits below will be reimbursed.

If a meal is provided as part of a conference, reimbursement will not be provided for an attendee choosing to skip that meal unless a meal exception is requested.

Snacks or refreshments outside of regular meal times are not eligible for reimbursement.

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2. Non-Overnight Travel

Reimbursements for meals not provided as part of a conference will be made, including beverages and tips, up to the Federal General Services Administration rates.

3. Meals with Others

If entertaining others while traveling for business away from home, the Board Member must provide the Administrative staff with the receipt for the meal(s) along with information as to the business relationship and individual name(s) of the person(s) entertained.

4. Meal Exceptions

Exceptions to the per diem allowances for meals include the following:

- If dietary, physical ability, or other health or religious restriction make it infeasible to consume the conference provided meal. This includes vegetarians when no vegetarian option is available.
- If a meal is provided as part of a conference, but is not hosted, the amount reimbursed will be the actual cost of the meal.
- If the conference hotel is located more than half a mile from a non fast food meal that can be purchased within GSA limits.

The amount reimbursed will be the actual cost of the meal and not subject to the GSA limits.

D. Transportation

1. Air Travel

Air travel shall be limited to economy or coach fares. Travel shall be by the most direct, cost-effective route. If an indirect route is used, any additional costs shall be at the Board Member's personal expense. Travel arrangements should be made with sufficient lead time to take advantage of the lowest possible rates.

Costs for reasonable expenses necessitated by canceled or delayed flights, if such is not provided by the airline, will be paid. This will include lodging, meals, and transportation such that one not be required to remain overnight at an airport. If a flight is canceled that was paid by a District credit card or otherwise with District funds, that credit must be made available for District use.

When taking into consideration all travel-related expenses, if it is more cost-effective to fly to or from the destination on an earlier or later date, this may be allowed.

If an attendee chooses to arrive earlier or stay later for personal convenience, the additional lodging and other related expenses will not be paid for by the District.

2. Rental Cars

Rental car expenses will be reimbursed if the expense is less than other surface methods of transportation (shuttles, cabs, etc.) and absent unusual circumstances, the vehicle size shall be no larger than mid-size (intermediate). The District will pay for the cost of, and the attendee should accept, the standard liability insurance coverage on the rental vehicle. The District will not pay for or any additional costs not necessary to the rental of the vehicle.

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Attendees are required to use a District credit card when renting automobiles if he/she has been issued a District credit card.

3. District Vehicle

Travel in District vehicles may be approved when circumstances warrant it. When traveling in a District vehicle, the District credit card should be used for the purchase of gas, oil and other supplies necessary en-route. If emergency repairs are necessary, they shall be paid for by the person to whom the car is assigned.

4. Use of Personal Vehicle

Reimbursement for the use of personal vehicles shall be at the rate established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-issues-standard-mileage-rates-for-mileage-reimbursement> shall not exceed the lowest available fare for air travel.

Board Members who utilize personal vehicles for business purposes are required to have a valid driver's license and at least the minimum insurance coverage required by law. Primary insurance for use of a personal vehicle for business purposes shall be through the Board Member's personal automobile insurance policy and the Board Member will be responsible for any damage to the vehicle, as well as for liability. Mileage, gasoline and other related expenses, are addressed in the WCWD Driving on District Business Policy (401). The owner/driver of the vehicle is responsible for all parking fines and moving violation tickets.

5. Parking/Bridge Tolls

Any parking charges or bridges tolls necessary for the business purpose of the trip will be reimbursed.

VI. RESTRICTIONS

- A. A Board Member may be accompanied by a companion who is not a District employee. The District will not reimburse any expenses attributable to any companion.
- B. The consumption of alcohol is guided by applicable District policies. Reimbursement will not be provided for the purchase of alcoholic beverages or any other intoxicant.
- C. No reimbursement will be made for personal expenses such as newspapers, laundry and dry cleaning, magazines, haircuts, shoeshines, spa services, excess personal telephone calls, in room movies, snacks, clothing, travel insurance and other personal expenses.
- D. No Board Member may travel beyond the regions specified in Section II(A) of this Policy at District expense between the election filing date for his/her seat and the certification of the election results favorable to the retention of the seat, unless he/she is unopposed.
- E. Personal or unauthorized expenses should not be charged on the District credit card. When more than one (1) employee or Board member attends the same function, one (1) person may pay the bill for the group, provided a receipt and list of names are included. Any personal or unauthorized expenses charged on the District credit card shall be paid by the Board Member incurring the charge.

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VII. EXCEPTIONS

- A. When necessary the expense may be pre-paid by a District-issued check. All pre-payment requests, including advances of per diem, must allow sufficient time for normal processing and approval prior to payment, a minimum of (ten) 10 business days following obtaining any required approvals.
- B. In situations where extraordinary travel expenses are expected to be incurred, or where this Policy does not adequately cover the situation or would cause an undue hardship, exceptions may be made with prior approval by the Board.
- C. The Board may approve additional exceptions as appropriate.