

CITY OF CHICAGO TRAVEL POLICY

The City of Chicago Travel Policy ("Policy") consists of procedures and guidelines for current and prospective City employees and contractors who travel on behalf of and for the benefit of the City. This Policy is administered by the Office of Budget and Management (OBM).

Applicability

This Policy:

- Applies to all travelers representing the City of Chicago, including but not limited to employees and contractors, regardless of the department (including financial, legal, and public safety departments), purpose for travel, or destination (for out-of-town domestic and international travel or travel to Chicago from another city).
- It is not intended to cover routine local travel within the metropolitan area (see map in appendices), or local travel related to the performance of an employee's regular job duties.
- Applies to all funding sources, including grants, delegate agency and second/third party payments. This policy does not override any procedures set forth by grant requirements, which may be more restrictive or require more information than set forth in this policy.
 - Employees and departments must follow whichever restriction or requirements are more restrictive on any topic, whether the restriction or requirement be set by the grant or this policy.

The City is not obligated to reimburse any employee, contractor, or representative of the City for travel expenses which were not preapproved by the Department Head and/or by the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) prior to departure. Travel taken without following the required approval process set forth in this Policy could result in disciplinary action for all parties involved.

Before planning out-of-town travel, every effort should be made to identify local or virtual options for comparable conferences, meetings, seminars, or training sessions. If out-of-town travel is required, employees must manage travel costs and make every effort to secure the most economical arrangements available.

Allowable Travel

Purposes

The City recognizes the following activities as appropriate for travel purposes:

- Delivery of legislative testimony
- As a stipulation or condition of grant funding or otherwise required for state or federal certification
- Presentation on behalf of the City at a conference or seminar
- Financial or tax audit
- Site visits or operational evaluations related to departmental improvement efforts
- Court proceedings or case preparation
- Attendance at conferences, meetings, seminars, or training sessions for which the topic is of critical interest to the City, representation at the event is in the best interest of the City, and/or the topic is related to an employee's professional development

Limits on Participation

Attendance at conferences, meetings, trainings, or seminars held outside the Chicago metropolitan area is limited to a maximum of four attendees on behalf of the City, unless otherwise approved by OBM.

All domestic and international travel outside the Chicago metropolitan area requires approval from the relevant Department Head. Additional approval by OBM is required under the following circumstances, regardless of funding source:

- Air transportation costs exceed \$400
- Lodging costs exceed the most recent GSA rates for the travel city not including taxes and fees
- International travel and travel to Washington, D.C.
- Number of traveling staff exceeds number allowed under this policy (4)
- The Department has exceeded its travel budget or does not have a travel budget
- Any other travel with requirements not covered by this policy
- Department Head travel

Costs exceeding those set forth in this policy and thus requiring OBM approval will be reviewed to ensure the proposed costs are the lowest and most reasonable available.

Any travel to Washington D.C. requires approval from your Department Head or their designee, OBM, and the Office of the Mayor.

All requests for travel must be submitted to your department's travel liaison, through the Travel SharePoint site, and OBM if required per this policy, for approval as far in advance as possible, but no later than:

- Sixteen (16) days prior to the date of departure for domestic travel.
- Twenty-one (21) days prior to the date of departure for all requests for international travel or to Washington D.C.

Allowable Costs and Booking Procedures

Reasonable costs for transportation, lodging, and meals are eligible for reimbursement. All expenses incurred while traveling will be charged to Account 0245.

Under this updated policy, the City is setting reimbursement rates for per diem and lodging costs to the most recent rates for the relevant city as set forth by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). Those rates are adjusted by GSA annually and can be found here: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-and-book>. Departments will need to ensure that travel is planned for using the most updated rates. NOTE: The GSA sets specific reimbursement rates for lodging and per diem by city, and by month to reflect seasonality of demand for travel to certain cities and regions. Reimbursement rates under this policy are determined by the city of the primary conference site or destination and by the date of departure.

Air Travel

Reservations for air transportation are required to be secured through the City's designated travel management agency, Corporate Travel Management Group (CorpTrav) via the CorpTrav online service at <http://wcp.getthere.net/corptravelonline>. Phone reservations (877-448-9868) are only allowed when travel arrangements require additional services not available in the online booking site, since an additional fee is charged when reservations are booked through the phone reservation system.

Reservations and ticket purchases should be made as far in advance as possible to take advantage of any available discounted fares. Tickets should not be booked, however, until the Department Head and, if required, OBM, the Office of the Mayor, or the Washington D.C. office, has approved the Travel Request via the Travel SharePoint site.

Tickets are to be booked at the most economical, direct fare available that meets the requirements of the traveler's agenda. If cost of the flight exceeds \$400, OBM approval is required, regardless of funding source. No traveler may select tickets on a specific carrier or airport for any reason while on City business unless it is the most economical fare. First class tickets are prohibited. Electronic tickets are the only acceptable delivery method of tickets unless this option is not available. CorpTrav will advise on an alternative if electronic tickets are not an option. Any charges incurred because of changes to an original airline reservation made prior to or during travel are subject to OBM approval.

Ground Transportation

Ground transportation cost is reimbursable up to the maximum rate as outlined in the Rates section of this Policy (see chart in appendices). The ground transportation rate covers the full trip costs (not daily) and only covers business-related travel in the destination city. Local ground transportation costs, such as parking at Chicago airports, are not covered. Ground transportation includes public transportation, rideshare, shuttles, and taxis. Shuttle service or public transportation is encouraged. For-hire vehicles may be used if the cost is less than the cost of a taxi service or other means of transportation. Gratuity for ground transportation is the sole responsibility of the traveler and is not reimbursable.

Lodging

The cost of a standard hotel room is reimbursable up to the maximum daily rate as set by [GSA](#). The maximum daily rate can only be exceeded with prior approval from OBM, such as if the "conference hotel" exceeds the GSA rate or a lower priced room within a reasonable distance is not available. Employees may stay at higher priced hotels but will only receive reimbursement up to the maximum daily GSA rate for the applicable city if a lower priced hotel is available within a reasonable distance. Hotel lodging within the Chicago metropolitan area is not a reimbursable expense. All personal expenses must be paid for separately or deducted from the lodging bill before it is submitted for reimbursement. Allowable rates do not include additional taxes and fees, but taxes and fees are reimbursable costs. When a third party is responsible for hotel accommodation, every effort should be made to have the third-party reserve and pay for the hotel expenses directly. Note that the GSA sets different rates for lodging and meals per diem based on time of year. The City will reimburse for lodging at the GSA rate as of the departure date of an approved trip.

Meals Per Diem

Travelers will be reimbursed for the cost of meals up to the maximum daily GSA rate for their destination location. The first and last day of travel are reimbursed at 75 percent of the destination maximum daily rate, per GSA policy. The GSA lists meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) broken out by meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The travel liaison and the employee need to deduct meals from their total reimbursable amount that the City has already paid for. For example, if the City is paying the registration fee for a conference and the conference includes breakfast and/or lunch, employees must deduct those costs from their per diem reimbursement total. If an employee decides to seek alternative options for meals that are already provided, those costs will not be eligible for reimbursement. *It is the responsibility of the traveling employee and their department's travel liaison to determine which meals may need to be deducted and by what amount.* Details on GSA rates for individual meals can be found [by utilizing the search tool here](#). Per diem includes taxes and

gratuity. Note that the GSA sets different rates for lodging and meals per diem based on time of year. The City will reimburse for M&IE at the GSA rate as of the departure date of an approved trip.

EXAMPLE

- Conference Monday through Thursday, with Monday being a registration day. Employee travels to destination city Monday morning and returns Thursday afternoon/evening.
- Base GSA daily per diem rate for City: \$67
- **Monday** – (travel day reimbursed at 75% of rate): \$50.25
- **Tuesday** – Lunch provided by conference (full day rate minus \$20 lunch rate): \$57
- **Wednesday** – Lunch provided by conference (full day rate minus \$20 lunch rate): \$57
- **Thursday** – (travel day reimbursed at 75% of rate): \$50.25
- **Total M&IE per diem reimbursed** – \$214.50

The new travel SharePoint site will calculate the total reimbursable amount, including making the 25% adjustment for travel days. It is the responsibility of departments to calculate and deduct provided meals from their eligible reimbursement rate prior to completing the travel expense statement and seeking reimbursement. Receipts for meals and incidental expenses are no longer required, provided that reimbursement is not being sought above the GSA rate. Exceptions above the GSA rate will be highly scrutinized and may not be approved.

City-issued Vehicles

Employees are not authorized to use City Vehicles outside the Chicago Metropolitan area, unless otherwise authorized under the Department of Assets, Information, and Services' Vehicle and Equipment Policy. Refer to the Department of Assets, Information and Services' Vehicle and Equipment Policy for more information. The document is posted on the AIS' intranet site. A copy of the policy is also available in the Travel Request Document Library.

Employees are responsible for all fines related to parking or moving violations issued while traveling on City business. Absolutely no exceptions will be made.

Personal Vehicles

While the use of City-issued vehicles is preferable for business travel, use of personal vehicles for business travel is also allowable, subject to Department Head and, when applicable, OBM approval.

Insurance Requirements - When using a personal vehicle, employees must meet all applicable insurance requirements of the City. In addition to appropriate levels of insurance coverage as determined by the State of Illinois, the employee must have coverage of at least \$500,000 against bodily injury per incident, and the naming of the City of Chicago as an 'Additional Insured' for business purposes. The employee must provide this documentation to the travel liaison within the department prior to the start of the trip. Employees must carry evidence of the insurance when traveling.

For mileage reimbursement and other requirements, refer to the Department of Finance's [Local Mileage Reimbursement & Other Local Transportation Policy](#) found on the City intranet. A copy of the policy is also available in the Travel Request Document Library. The current mileage reimbursement rate can be found in the Rates section of this Policy (see chart in appendices) or in the applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement. Mileage reimbursement should not exceed the cost of an economy class airfare or train. Parking and toll expenses will be reimbursed separately from mileage reimbursements with original receipts.

Employees are responsible for all fines related to parking or moving violations issued while traveling on City business. Absolutely no exceptions will be made.

Car Rental

Car rental is not allowed within the Chicago metropolitan area. City vehicles obtained through AIS should be reserved for such travel. Refer to AIS' Vehicle and Equipment Policy. The document is posted on the department's intranet site. A copy of the policy is also available in the [Travel Request Document Library](#). Car rental is a reimbursable expense only when there is no other transportation available or the distance between airports, lodging, and/or meeting site(s) makes public transportation, taxi, or other modes of transportation impractical.

Car rental will be reimbursed at the compact car rate unless the need for a larger car can be justified. Daily rental rates, taxes, surcharges, gas, and car rental insurance are all considered reimbursable items. Only one car rental will be allowed per trip. This includes trips with multiple travelers unless previously authorized by the Department Head.

Employees are responsible for all fines related to parking or moving violations issued while traveling on City business. Absolutely no exceptions will be made.

Conference and Registration Fees

Registration fees should be charged to the department's education and professional development accounts (0169) unless travel is required under a specific funding source. Every effort should be made to take advantage of early registration or group rate discounts.

Additional Expenses

Business-Related Expenses – Business-related expenses incurred while on City travel may be reimbursed at the discretion of the Department Head. The following are examples of allowable reimbursable business expenses, if such services are required to execute a City business requirement:

- Internet connections
- Photocopying
- Express mail services

Laundry – Employees traveling on City business for three or more consecutive days are entitled to reimbursement for laundry expenses up to a maximum of \$10 per three-day period beginning with the fourth day.

Airline baggage fees – The City will reimburse travelers for one (1) checked bag or, if the airline charges a fee for carry-on bags, one (1) carry on and one (1) checked bag. Baggage fees are reimbursable in addition to flight costs, and are not included in the \$400 threshold requiring additional travel approval.

Third-Party Travel

Travel paid by a third party or by the employee must adhere to any applicable sections of this Policy, including the requirements around the use of personal vehicles for City business, parameters that require additional OBM and Mayor's Office approval, and the City's Ethics Rules (see section below regarding Ethics Requirements). City-related travel paid by the employee need not be approved by the Board of Ethics in

advance or reported to the Board within 10 days of completion, but the traveler is still subject to the honorarium ban and the \$50 gift limit (note that some departments may have stricter gift limits or “no gift policies”).

No employee may receive direct reimbursement for third party travel. Registration, transportation and/or lodging can either be directly purchased by the grantor, with proof of purchase, replacing the CorpTrav quote in the required attachment section of the SharePoint Travel submittal, or paid directly to the City for reimbursement to the employee through the Department of Finance's voucher process (see Travel Expense Statement in appendices).

Travel for Consultants or Non-Employees

Travel by consultants or contractors engaged by the City should adhere to the City of Chicago Travel Policy. Travel expenses should be included in the contract price and billed as required by the contract, not submitted separately for reimbursement. Travel by non-employees at the invitation of the City must be approved in advance by the Mayor's Chief of Staff and adhere to the City of Chicago Travel Policy. Reimbursement will be for actual expenses within the per diem rate schedule (not a flat per diem).

Travel Extensions

Employees are only allowed an extended stay for personal travel with pre-approval by the Department Head. The cost of transportation cannot exceed the amount of the regular business travel and the employee must use vacation time for the entirety of the additional stay. All expenses related to the extended stay, including additional airfare, baggage fees, hotel accommodations, and per diem costs are the sole responsibility of the traveler. Business travel begins on the day of the first attended business event and ends on the final day of attended business events. If the conference, training, or other business event has a morning start time, travel on the day prior to the business event qualifies as business travel.

Non-Allowable Costs

The City is not obligated to reimburse employees for travel expenses that do not comply with the Policy or if not approved prior to the commencement of travel. The City is not obligated to approve the employee's travel time under official City business if the travel has not been approved prior to the commencement of travel. No payment or cash advances will be approved for airfare, lodging, or per diem costs.

Other non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Additional charges for hotel or room upgrades or special “club” floors
- Alcoholic beverage(s)
- Coat check services
- Costs associated with extended stays (including transportation)
- Costs associated with ticket changes not pre-approved by the Department Head
- Entertainment, including but not limited to in-room movies
- Late check-out and any guaranteed charges
- Other expenses of a purely personal nature and not listed as reimbursable in these guidelines
- Parking or moving violation tickets
- Personal services (e.g., health club, massage, personal maintenance)
- Spousal or other family expenses
- Toiletries
- Travel accident insurance

Approval Process

All domestic and international travel outside the Chicago metropolitan area requires approval from your Department Head. It is the responsibility of each department to establish their own internal process for documenting travel request reviews and approvals. Additional approval by OBM is required under the following circumstances:

- Transportation costs exceed \$400
- International travel
- Number of traveling staff exceeds number allowed under this policy (4)
- The Department has exceeded its travel budget or does not have a travel budget
- Any other travel with requirements not covered by this policy

Requests falling outside of the City of Chicago Travel Policy will be reviewed and approved by OBM.

All travel plans must be submitted via the Travel Request site available through the City's SharePoint Portal (<https://chicagogov.sharepoint.com/sites/travelrequest?CT=1675982574363&OR=OWA-NT&CID=8857e50a-cedb-a346-d22f-b6ad673a10da>). All employee and non-employee travel for work-related business under this policy must be logged in the Travel Request site for record keeping and auditing purposes, regardless of whether OBM and/or Mayor's Office approval is needed. The following supporting documentation must be attached:

- **Basic Travel Agenda:** The agenda should include the travel dates and start and end times, dates of each event, and include all destinations, conference, meeting and/or training descriptions, and any other pertinent information about the travel plans. If applicable, the invitation letter and/or details about third-party payments for travel should also be included.
- **Proof of Registration:** For events, conferences, trainings, etc. travelers must include documentation of registration.
- **Proof of Vehicle Insurance:** If using a personal vehicle for business travel. See the section under Allowable Costs and Booking Procedures for details.
- **Board of Ethics Approval:** For travel being covered in part or in full by a third party, travelers must include documentation of prior approval from the Board of Ethics.
- **Travel Certification Form:** Signed by employee, their supervisor, and their department head.
- **Transportation and Lodging Quote:** Air transportation cost quote must come from CorpTrav.
- **Proof of available funding from the department's Budget**

If OBM approval is required, a justification memo to the Budget Director must also be uploaded to the SharePoint Travel Request site.

Reimbursement

Upon return, the traveler must submit the following documentation to the Department of Finance for reimbursement:

- A completed payment voucher
- A Travel Expense Statement
- A Travel Request Final Approval Printout
 - Approval from Department Head, OBM, Office of the Mayor, and/or Washington D.C. office, as appropriate.
- Employees will be reimbursed at GSA per diem rates for meals and incidentals, and therefore receipts of these costs are not needed. Receipts for transportation, lodging, and car rentals are

still required.

Any costs not submitted within 30 days of the completion of travel will not be reimbursed.

No employee may receive direct reimbursement for third party travel. Third parties should pay directly to the City for reimbursement to employees.

For international travel, travelers should convert all foreign expenses to U.S. currency prior to submitting a Travel Expense Report. Official documentation of the exchange rate at the time of travel (e.g., bank receipt) must accompany all original itemized receipts.

If there is a disputed reimbursement, a representative from the Department of Finance will contact the department to resolve the outstanding matter. If it is not resolved in a timely manner, the undisputed portion will be reimbursed along with an explanation and instructions on how to resolve the outstanding amount.

Ethics Requirements

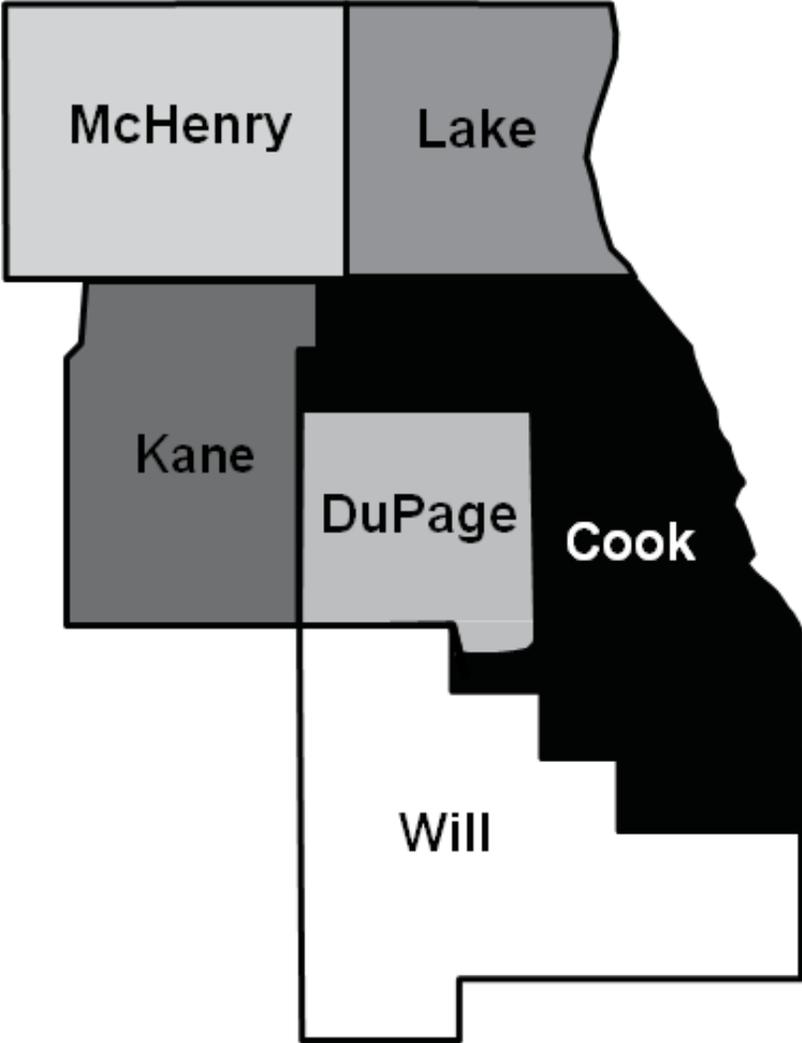
The relevant provisions of the City of Chicago Governmental Ethics Ordinance are §§ 2-156-142(a)(2), and (d)(10) and (12). They provide that City employees and officials cannot accept any anonymous gifts, cash gifts, gift cards or other cash equivalent, or any combination of non-cash gifts worth more than \$50 in a calendar year, with a few exceptions. Exceptions include travel and expenses paid by a third party:

(d)(10) Any material or travel expense for meetings related to a public or governmental educational purpose, provided that any such expense has been approved in advance by the Board [of Ethics], and further provided that such expense is reported to the Board [of Ethics] within 10 days of completion thereof.

(d)(12) Reasonable hosting, including travel and expenses, entertainment, meals or refreshments furnished in connection with meetings, appearances or public events or ceremonies related to official City business, if furnished by a sponsor of such meeting or public event or ceremony, and further provided that such travel and expenses, entertainment, meals or refreshments have been approved in advance by the Board [of Ethics] and are reported to the Board [of Ethics] within 10 days of acceptance thereof.

Note: The \$50 gift limitation applies to anything given or offered beyond reasonable business-related travel, for example, coffee mugs or little acrylic paperweights. **Honoraria, that is, or money offered for one's speech or participation in a meeting or conference, are strictly forbidden.**

It is the department travel liaison's responsibility to contact the Board of Ethics in advance of submitting a travel request and the traveler's responsibility to report any expenses related to official City business to the Board of Ethics within 10 days of completion of the travel.



Appendix B - TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT RATES

Lodging

Lodging rates are determined by City and, in certain cases, seasonally by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). Details can be found [at the GSA site](#).

Per Diem

Per diem meals and incidental expenses rates are determined by City and, in certain cases, seasonally by the GSA. Details can be found at the GSA site. GSA per diem includes tax and gratuity.

Transportation

Approved personal vehicle use is reimbursed at a rate of \$0.625 per mile*. Ground transportation is reimbursed at the following rates by groups of cities:

- Group 1 – \$55
- Group 2 – \$50
- Group 3 – \$45
- Groups 4 & 5 – \$40

Ground Transportation rate covers the full trip, including parking at point of departure.

GROUP 1 CITIES	GROUP 2 CITIES	GROUP 3 CITIES	GROUP 4 CITIES	GROUP 5 CITIES
Boston, MA	Atlanta, GA	Cleveland, OH	Columbus, OH	International Cities
Los Angeles, CA	Baltimore, MD	Denver, CO	Hartford, CT	All Other Cities
Miami, FL	Chicago, IL	Detroit, MI	Kansas City, MO	
New York, NY & Metro	Dallas, TX	Honolulu, HI	Louisville, KY	
San Francisco, CA	Philadelphia, PA	Indianapolis, IN	Milwaukee, WI	
Washington DC & Metro	San Jose, CA	Las Vegas, NV	Nashville, TN	
	White Plains, NY	Madison, WI	Pittsburgh, PA	
		Portland, OR		
		San Diego, CA		
		Springfield, IL		
		St. Louis, MO		
		Tampa, FL		

* 2022 Rate. Mileage reimbursement follows the rate determined by the Internal Revenue Service.

City of Chicago



Traveler Certification Form

With regard to my trip described in the attached Travel Request, I certify to the following:

- I have reviewed the City of Chicago Travel Policy.
- The purpose of this trip meets the general requirements for approved travel set forth in the City of Chicago Travel Policy.
- The purpose of this trip cannot be fulfilled locally.
- This trip is not routine local travel or local travel related to the performance of my regular job duties.
- I am taking this trip for the purposes identified in the Travel Request.
- I have made all applicable travel arrangements through the City's designated travel management agency. In the event of flight delays/cancellations, I will immediately notify my department liaison via email, and contact CorpTrav for assistance with booking a replacement flight. If my travel paid for and arranged by a third party, I certify approval by the Chicago Board of Ethics.
- I have made an appropriate effort to secure the most economical means of travel.

Traveler Name (Print)

Date

Traveler Signature

Supervisor Name (Print)

Date

Supervisor Signature

Department Head Name (Print)

Date

Department Head Signature