

CITY OF CHICAGO TRAVEL GUIDELINES

1. City of Chicago Travel Policy

The City of Chicago Travel Guidelines are issued by:

City of Chicago
Office of Budget and Management
City Hall, Room 604
121 North LaSalle
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Effective April 2008

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

This policy:

- Is not intended to cover routine local travel related to the performance of an employee's regular job duties. Rather, this policy is intended for out of town travel or travel to Chicago from another city.
- Applies to all City departments, employees and contractors regardless of funding sources (i.e. grants).
- Requires that all employees secure the most economical means of travel, including cost, travel time and work requirements.
- Will be strictly enforced. Any deviation from these guidelines must be justified in writing and approved by the Budget Director prior to travel.

The City is not obligated to reimburse any employee, contractor or representative of the City for travel expenses which were not previously approved by OBM.

When an individual is required to travel on behalf and for the benefit of the City, the employee is expected to exercise good judgment in managing travel costs and make every effort to secure the most economical travel arrangements available at that time.

For purposes of this policy, the Chicago metropolitan area is defined as Cook, DuPage, Will, Lake and McHenry counties

2. General Approval

a. General Requirements

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
 - the topic is related to an employee's professional development.

Before planning out-of-town travel, every effort should be made to identify local options for comparable conferences, meetings, seminars or training sessions.

b. Limits on Participants

Attendance at conferences, meetings, seminars or training sessions held outside the Chicago metropolitan area is limited to two employees from any one department unless otherwise approved by OBM. City of Chicago

c. Travel Approval Procedure

- All travel arrangements are to be secured through the City's designated travel management agency—Corporate Travel Management Group (CTMG).
- All travel outside the Chicago metropolitan area requires approval from OBM.
- Complete original Travel Request Form and support documentation must be approved by the appropriate department head and submitted to OBM no later than seven (7) business days prior to the date of travel.
- In emergency situations in which there are fewer than seven (7) business days prior to a proposed trip, the Travel Request Form may be faxed to the requesting department's budget analyst at (312) 744-3618.
- The City is not obligated to reimburse employees for travel expenses which were not previously approved by OBM.
- A Travel Expense Report must be accurately and clearly completed and submitted with all receipts in order to obtain reimbursement for travel expenses.
- If there is a disputed reimbursement, a representative from the Comptroller's Office 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 to resolve the outstanding amount.
- All expenses incurred while traveling will be charged to Account 0245.
- No petty cash reimbursements are allowed.
- No cash advances will be provided.

d. Travel Outside the Continental United States

- All requests for City travel outside the continental U.S. must be submitted to OBM fourteen (14) business days prior to travel. OBM will seek approval from the Mayor's Chief of Staff and will notify the department of approval or denial.
- 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 (i.e. bank receipt) must accompany all original receipts.

3. Reimbursable Travel Expenses

a. Business Related Expenses

- Business-related expenses incurred while on City business may be reimbursed at the discretion of the department head. Following are examples of acceptable reimbursable business expenses:
 - Photocopying
 - Sending or receiving faxes
 - Express mail services
 - Internet connections
- Original receipts must be provided for reimbursement.

b. Transportation

- **City-owned Vehicles**
 - Employees traveling on City business in a City-owned vehicle are entitled to reimbursement for gas, parking and toll expenses but not the standard "per mile" reimbursement.
 - Original receipts must be provided for all expenses.
 - Travel in a City-owned vehicle outside the Chicago metropolitan area (see p. 7) requires prior approval from OBM.
 - Employees are responsible for all fines related to parking or moving violations issued while traveling on City business.

- Refer to the City of Chicago vehicle policy for other rules and regulations regarding the use of City-owned vehicles.
- **Personal Vehicles**
 - Employees may use personal vehicles for business travel within a 300-mile radius of Chicago.
 - Employees will be reimbursed at the rate stated in the Annual Appropriation Ordinance or applicable collective bargaining agreement, but in no event will the reimbursement exceed the cost of coach airfare.
 - “Per mile” reimbursement includes the cost of gas, oil and general maintenance.
 - Parking and toll expenses will be reimbursed separately with original receipts.
 - Employee must carry liability and property damage insurance for business use of his or her vehicle and submit a copy of these insurance policies to the appropriate personnel within his or her department.
 - 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 a reimbursable expense only when there is no other transportation available or the distance between lodging and/or meeting site(s) makes public transportation, taxi or other mode of transportation impractical.
 - Car rental will not be approved for travel within the Chicago metropolitan area. City pool cars or I-Go cars should be reserved for such travel.
 - The compact car rental rate will be reimbursed unless the need for a larger car can be justified.
 - Daily rental rates, taxes, surcharges, gas, car rental insurance and oil expenses are considered reimbursable items.
 - Only one car rental will be allowed per trip.
 - Employees are responsible for all fines related to parking or moving violations issued while traveling on City business. Absolutely no exceptions will be made.
 - Original receipts are required for reimbursement.
- **Common Carrier (Air, Train, Bus)**
 - To take advantage of any available discount fares, all reservations and ticket purchases should be made as far in advance as possible.
 - First-class travel is prohibited.
 - Electronic tickets are the only acceptable delivery method of tickets unless this option is not available. The City’s travel agency will advise.
 - Any charges incurred as a result of changes to an original airline reservation made prior to or during travel are subject to OBM approval.
 - The lowest priced airfare often requires a Saturday night stay. The City of Chicago Travel Policy does not require or suggest that an employee include a Saturday stay in their itinerary in order to take advantage of these lower fares. However, an employee may choose to stay over a Saturday night if the difference between the airfares exceeds the cost of lodging for each extra day added together. For example, if the difference between airfares is \$500 and lodging for that Saturday and Sunday totals \$300, employees have the option of the Saturday night stay. The following applies when a traveler has opted for a Saturday night stay, but is not conducting City businesses on Saturday or Sunday:
 - Supporting documentation comparing airfares is needed to approve Saturday night stay options.
 - Cost of lodging and ground transportation to and from the airport/hotel are reimbursable expenses.
 - Meals (per diem) are reimbursable at the appropriate rate.
- **Ground Transportation (Taxis, Public Transportation, Limousine Service)**
 - Transportation to and from the airport is included in the ground transportation amount in the reimbursement rate.
 - Public transportation is encouraged.
 - Ground transportation expense guidelines are provided on the Transportation Reimbursement

Rate form

- Ground transportation expenses are reimbursable with original receipts at the discretion of the department head.
- Limousine service 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.
- Original receipts are required for reimbursement.

c. 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.
- Original receipts are required for reimbursement.

d. Lodging

- The cost of a standard hotel room is reimbursable up to the maximum daily rate for the city group as listed in the "Rates" (page 14) section of this policy, exclusive of applicable taxes.
- The maximum daily rate may be exceeded only if a lower priced room is not available within a reasonable distance, and only if approved by OBM.
- Employees may stay at higher priced hotels, but they will only receive reimbursement up to the maximum daily rate for the applicable city group in the "Rates" section, 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.
- Original receipts are required for reimbursement.

e. Meals

- Employees are entitled to a daily per diem allowance, as outlined in the "Rates" section of this policy, as reimbursement for all meals inclusive of tax and gratuity.
- If meals are included in registration fees, per diem will not be reimbursed for pre-paid meals
- If travel is conducted within the Chicago metropolitan area, meals will be reimbursed at the discretion of the department head and with prior approval from OBM
- Meals on travel days can begin when arriving at the airport or departing the Chicago metropolitan area.

f. Telephone Calls

- If the employee has a City-issued cell phone, that phone should be used for all telephone calls (unless there is no service).
- Employees are allowed up to twenty (20) minutes (no more than \$5.00) for reimbursable personal phone calls per day while traveling on City business.
- Business calls may be reimbursed at the discretion of the department head with a maximum reimbursement of \$10 per day.
- When possible, employees should avoid hotel surcharges by using cell phones or phones outside the hotel room for personal and business calls.
- Original receipts are required for reimbursement.

g. Additional Expenses

- Original receipts are required to claim reimbursement for incidental expenses not listed above.
- Reimbursement for incidental expenses will be approved at the discretion of the department head.
- Employees are entitled to a daily per diem allowance, as outlined in the "Rates" (see p. 14) section of this policy, as reimbursement for all meals inclusive of tax and gratuity.
- If meals are included in registration fees, per diem will not be reimbursed for pre-paid meals.
- If travel is conducted within the Chicago metropolitan area (page 7), meals will be reimbursed at the discretion of the department head and with prior approval from OBM.

- Meals on travel days can begin when arriving at the airport or departing the Chicago metropolitan area (page 7).
- h. Travel Expense Advances
- Cash advances are not allowed.
- i. Conference Registration Fees -
- Registration fees may be charged to the department's education and professional development accounts (Account 0169) at the discretion of the department head.
 - Meals included in conference registration fees will be charged to Account 0169.
 - Every effort should be made to take advantage of early registration discounts.
- j. Travel by City of Chicago Consultants or Contractors
- 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.
 - Travel by non-employees at the invitation of the City (i.e. candidates for employment, speakers) must be approved by the Mayor's Chief of Staff and adhere to the City of Chicago Travel Policy.
 - Reimbursement for non-employees will be for actual expenses incurred, not any flat per diem.
 - Travel by City employees to consultant's location prior to approved contract is prohibited.
- k. Non-Reimbursable Travel Expenses
- Non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Additional charges for room upgrades or special "club" floors.
 - Alcoholic beverages
 - Coat check services
 - Entertainment, including but not limited to in-room movies
 - Late check-out and guarantee charges
 - Parking or moving violation tickets
 - Personal services (i.e. barber, shoe shine, health club, massage)
 - Spousal expenses
 - Toiletries
 - Travel accident insurance
 - Other expenses of a purely personal nature and not listed as reimbursable in these guidelines.

4. Travel Reimbursement Rates

Reimbursement rates are categorized by relative travel costs associated with certain cities. Group II, III and IV are not all inclusive. For cities not listed, please consult with the Office of Budget and Management for appropriate reimbursement rates.

Travel Reimbursement Rates

	Group I Cities	Group II Cities	Group III Cities	Group IV Cities
	Boston, MA New York City and metro areas Los Angeles, CA Miami, FL San Francisco, CA Washington, DC and metro areas	Atlanta, GA Chicago, IL Houston, TX Philadelphia, PA San Jose, CA	Baltimore, MD Cleveland, OH Cincinnati, OH Columbus, OH Dallas, TX Denver, CO Detroit, MI Indianapolis, IN Las Vegas, NV Memphis, TN Milwaukee, WI Minneapolis/St Paul, MN Nashville, TN New Orleans, LA Orlando, FL Phoenix, AZ Portland, OR San Diego, CA Seattle, WA Tampa, FL	Kansas City, MO Louisville, KY Madison, WI Pittsburgh, PA St Louis, MO Springfield, IL**
GROUND TRANSPORTATION Including parking at point of departure	\$55	\$50	\$40	\$30
TRANSPORTATION				
<i>AIR:</i>	Coach	Coach	Coach	Coach
<i>BUS:</i>	Economy	Economy	Economy	Economy
<i>RAIL:</i>	Economy	Economy	Economy	Economy
<i>PERSONAL CAR*:</i>	\$.0505/mile	\$.0505/mile	\$.0505/mile	\$.0505/mile
LODGING Maximum daily rate is exclusive of applicable taxes. Taxes will be included in the reimbursement.	\$250.00	\$225.00	\$150.00	\$125.00
PER DIEM Including tax and gratuity	\$64	\$59	\$54	\$49

* Mileage reimbursement follows the rate as determined by the Internal Revenue Service.
2008 rate is listed.

** When the Illinois legislature is in session, the Springfield, IL maximum is increased to Group III.

TRAVEL REQUEST FORM

Name: _____	Department: _____
Purpose of Travel: _____	Bureau/Division: _____
_____	Destination: _____
Funding Code: _____	Departure Date: _____
If more than one funding code is to be used specify amount charge to each.	Return Date: _____

TRAVEL EXPENSE ESTIMATE

TO BE COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED 7 BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR TO TRAVEL TO THE OFFICE OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT ALONG WITH PROPER DOCUMENTATION

Estimated Expense:	Transportation \$ _____
	Meals: _____ Days @ _____ per day \$ _____
	Lodging: _____ Days @ _____ per day \$ _____
	Registration (Acct. 0169) \$ _____
Other Expenses (please list):	
	\$ _____
	\$ _____
	\$ _____
	TOTAL ESTIMATE \$ _____

I have reviewed this Travel Request, and find:

- The purpose of this trip fulfills an important public objective;
- This trip adheres to the City of Chicago Travel Policy;
- The purpose of the trip cannot be fulfilled locally.

	Date: _____
Traveler: _____	Date: _____
Department Head: _____	Date: _____
OBM Analyst: _____	Date: _____
OBM Director: _____	Date: _____
Chief of Staff*: _____	Date: _____
* when applicable	

Please attach approved Request Form to Expense Statement when submitting for reimbursement.

TRAVEL EXPENSE STATEMENT

Department Submit to Comptroller's Audit Section

Employee:	Phone:	Employee Title:
Contact:	Phone:	Travel Dates: From _____ To _____
Dept: _____	Purpose of Trip: _____	

Funding Code:										
Date	Transportation Personal Auto Common Carrier	Rental Vehicles	Ground Transp.	Common Carrier (Air, Train)	Parking & Tolls	Room & Taxes	Meals	Telephone	Misc.*	Total Expenses
							Subtotal (0245)			
							Registration Fee (0169)			

* Explanation of Miscellaneous Expenses	Total Expenses Less Advance Less Prepaid Expenses Balance Due City Balance Due Employee
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I hereby certify that this Travel Expense Statement is in accordance with the policies and procedures of the City of Chicago. All receipts included are original.	
_____ Employee Signature	_____ Date
_____ Approving Finance Director or Designee	_____ Date