REIMBURSEMENT FOR WORK-RELATED EXPENSES

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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# Table of Contents

OVERVIEW ........................................................................................................................................... 3
TRAVEL POLICY .................................................................................................................................. 4
   GENERAL REQUIREMENTS ........................................................................................................... 4
   APPROPRIATE TRAVEL PURPOSES .......................................................................................... 4
TRAVEL APPROVAL PROCEDURE .................................................................................................... 5
REIMBURSABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES .............................................................................................. 5
   CONFERENCE FEES ........................................................................................................................ 5
TRANSPORTATION ............................................................................................................................ 5
   COMMON CARRIER (AIR, TRAIN, BUS) .......................................................................................... 5
   GROUND TRANSPORTATION (TAXI, PUBLIC TRANSPORT, LIMOUSINE SERVICES) ............ 6
   CARS, PERSONAL .......................................................................................................................... 6
   CARS, RENTAL ............................................................................................................................... 6
LODGING ............................................................................................................................................ 7
MEALS ................................................................................................................................................ 7
OTHER ................................................................................................................................................ 8
REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE ........................................................................................................ 8
INTRA-CITY TRAVEL POLICY .......................................................................................................... 8
   INTRA-CITY TRAVEL APPROVAL ............................................................................................. 8
   PERSONAL CAR USAGE ............................................................................................................... 9
   TAXI CABS ................................................................................................................................... 10
REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE ........................................................................................................ 10
FOOD and/or REFRESHMENTS at MEETINGS ................................................................................ 11
PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS .................................................................................................... 11
APPENDIX: SAMPLE FORMS .......................................................................................................... 12
   FORMS on PURCHASING WEBSITE ......................................................................................... 12
OVERVIEW

• This document details a new policy that brings together all categories of reimbursement for work-related expenses—travel, intra-city travel, food and/or refreshment at meetings, and professional memberships.

• This policy applies to all employees in the Central Office and Area Instruction Offices and all employees assigned to satellite central office sites or citywide service units. If reimbursement will come from a grant fund, employees are to follow the specific grant policy.

• The policy reflects Board Report 09-0722-P01 and rescinds previous policies related to reimbursements.
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- When an individual has occasion to travel on behalf of and for the benefit of the Board, the employee is expected to exercise good judgment in managing travel costs and make every effort to ensure that the cost of travel arrangement is the most economical available.

- All travel is subject to funding availability for reimbursement from the employee’s department budget.

The Board of Education recognizes the following activities as appropriate travel purposes:

Travel for a job or assigned duties:

- Delivery of legislative testimony
- Lobbying on behalf of the Board
- As a requirement for grant funding
- Presentations on behalf of the Board
- Participation in legal proceedings as determined or requested by the General Counsel
- Recruitment of personnel on behalf of the Board
- Meeting with bond rating agencies and other regulatory bodies
- Business meetings with non-local vendors

Approval Procedure

- Travel that is an extension of an employee’s job or assigned duties requires departmental approval only. Employees, however, will be held to the same standard of securing the most economical cost of travel and are to follow the same reimbursement procedures.

Travel to attend conferences:

Includes conferences, meetings, seminars, or training sessions where:
The topic is of critical interest to the Board;

Representation at the conference is in the interest of the Board; or

The topic is related to an employee’s professional development

Approval Procedure

• Travel to attend conference, meetings, seminars, or training sessions must be approved by the employee’s principal and/or department head.

TRAVEL APPROVAL PROCEDURE

• A completed Request for Approval form must be submitted to the principal or department head for approval at least four weeks before the date of the conference or meeting in accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Board of Education of the City of Chicago and Chicago Teachers Union, Local 1, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

• Department heads (supervisors signing off on travel for employees in their department) are responsible for ensuring that travel expenditures strictly adhere to guidelines.

• Exceptions to the four-week rule must be approved by the employee’s principal or department head.

• If travel outside the 48 contiguous states is required, the employee must receive approval from the Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee.

REIMBURSABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

CONFERENCE FEES

• Reimbursement will be for all reasonable conference-related fees with appropriate proof of conference attendance and original receipts, where applicable.

• Payment of registration fees should be made through the purchase order process. Every effort should be made to receive the early registration discount, if available.

TRANSPORTATION

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.
• Reimbursement will be for coach fare.

• Original receipts are required and must show proof that payment was made by the employee requesting reimbursement. Canceled checks, debit, or credit card statement copies are considered as proof of payment.

GROUND TRANSPORTATION (TAXI, PUBLIC TRANSPORT, LIMOUSINE SERVICES)
• Public Transportation is encouraged.

• Reimbursement will be for travel from the point of departure to the airport/station to the hotel and from the hotel to the airport/station to the point of arrival for the lowest cost means available.

• Limousine services may be used if the cost is less than the cost of a taxi service or other means of transportation, or with prior approval from a department head.

• Reimbursement does not include gratuity.

• Original receipts are required.

CARS, PERSONAL
• Reimbursement will be for the “per mile” rate set by the Internal Revenue Service. The rate for 2013 is $.56.

• “Per mile” reimbursement includes the cost of gas, oil, insurance, repairs and general maintenance.

• Any personal vehicles used in the conduct of Board business must be insured in accordance with the laws of the State of Illinois. The employee's insurance applicable to the automobile will be primary and the Board's insurance programs are secondary, or excess. The Board is not responsible for any physical damage to an employee automobile, including any physical damage deductibles. Automobile incidents or accidents must be reported to the Board’s Risk Management & Emergency Planning (773-553-3310) within 24 hours of an incident.

• All Board employees must wear seatbelts while in an automobile, van, truck, etc. while conducting Board business.

CARS, RENTAL
• Car rental is a reimbursable expense only when other modes of transportation are cost prohibitive, no other transportation is available or the ground transportation distance renders public transportation, taxi or other mode of transportation impractical.
• Reimbursement will be for the midsize rental rate, and upgrades are not reimbursable.

• Board employees requiring the use of rental vehicle for Board business should arrange for physical damage insurance offered by the rental company. Any physical damage expenses not covered by the rental company such as the applicable deductibles will be covered by the Board. All incidents/accidents must be reported to the Board’s Risk Management & Emergency Planning (773-553-3310) via telephone and in the Oracle Incident Reporting System within 24 hours.

• All Board employees must wear seatbelts while in an automobile, van, truck, etc. and use hand-free wireless devices for cellular phones while conducting Board business.

• In the event that the vehicle will be used to transport a student, the Board’s Student Travel Policy must be followed.

• Original Receipts are required.

**LODGING**

• Reimbursement will be for the cost of a standard single room rate only, unless government, corporate, or conference discounted rate is available.

• First class accommodations are prohibited unless standard accommodations are not available within acceptable distance from the business location.

• Hotel lodging in the city of Chicago proper will not be reimbursed.

• Hotel lodging in the Chicago Metropolitan area (Cook, DuPage, Will, McHenry, Kane, and Lake Counties) will be reimbursed with prior approval of the employee’s department head.

• Original, detailed receipts are required and must show proof that payment was made by the employee requesting reimbursement. Canceled checks, debits or credit card statement copies are considered proof of payment.

**DAILY RATE FOR MEALS**

• The daily rate allowance for a conference, meeting or professional development that takes between 4 to 8 hours will be $20 and up to 15% gratuity.
• The daily rate allowance for multi-day travel for conference, meeting or professional development will be $35/day and up to 15% gratuity.

• Alcoholic beverages will not reimbursed.

• Original receipts are required and must be itemized.

**OTHER**

• Job-related phone calls will be reimbursed separately.

**REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE**

• Employees must submit the *Statement of Travel Expenses* with all original receipts attached within 30 working days of the date of return. Cash advances are not provided.

• Department heads (supervisors signing off on travel for employees in their department) are responsible for ensuring that travel expenditures strictly adhere to all guidelines.

• For reimbursement under $500 of cumulative expenses, employees must submit all forms with original itemized receipts to the designated manager in their department for entry into the iExpense Application.

• For reimbursements over $500, employees should also submit the Employee Reimbursement form to the designated manager in their department for entry into the iExpense Application. However, itemized receipts, along with proof of payment, should be scanned and attached to the document, or the receipts may be mailed to Accounts Payable, Mail Run #125. All reimbursements over $500 will be routed to Accounts Payable for further review.

• This applies to all forms of travel.

• Employees who receive their bi-monthly pay by direct deposit will also have their travel expenses reimbursed by direct deposit.

**INTRA-CITY TRAVEL POLICY**

**INTRA-CITY TRAVEL APPROVAL**

• Reasonable travel expenses related to intra-city travel approved and budgeted by the employee’s department head will be reimbursed. The travel must be directly
related to an employee’s job responsibilities. Factors the department head shall consider are: a) distance, b) need to transport materials, and c) other unique circumstances.

- The department head shall only approve the less expensive option between taxicab fare and car usage, taking into consideration gas and parking fees.

- No reimbursement shall be permitted for events of a purely social or political nature.

**PERSONAL CAR USAGE**

- Reimbursement will be for the “per mile” rate set by the Internal Revenue Service. The rate for 2013 is $.56.

- “Per mile” reimbursement includes the cost of gas, oil, insurance, repairs and general maintenance.

- Reimbursement shall be for mileage accumulated between Central/Area Office and field site or between field site and Central/Area Office. Travel from home to the first destination of the day and from the last destination of the day back home is not included in reimbursement.

- Any personal vehicles used in the conduct of Board business must be insured in accordance with the laws of the State of Illinois. The employee's insurance applicable to the automobile will be primary and the Board's insurance programs are secondary, or excess. The Board is not responsible for any physical damage to an employee automobile, including any physical damage deductibles. Automobile incidents or accidents must be Reported to the Board's Risk Management & Emergency Planning (773-553-3310) via telephone and in the Oracle Incident Reporting System within 24 hours of the incident.

- All Board employees must wear seatbelts while in an automobile, van, truck, etc. and use hand-free wireless devices for cellular phones while conducting Board business.

- Parking fees must be justified by the employee’s job responsibilities.

- Parking Fees will be reimbursed for up to $25 per segment of a trip with original receipts.

- In the event that the vehicle will be used to transport a student, the Board’s Student Travel Policy must be followed.

- City-wide employees that have been deemed qualified to receive the monthly flat rate reimbursement for travel according to the CTU Collective Bargaining Agreement are exempt from the above provisions. The Chief Financial Officer is
directed to establish guidelines and procedures for the qualified city-wide employees to receive the monthly flat rate travel reimbursement from the Chicago Public Schools.

**TAXI CABS**

- Reimbursement does not include gratuity.

- Original Receipts are required.

**REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE**

- Employees must submit the Automobile Reimbursement Form with all original receipts attached within 30 working days.

- Effective immediately, employees who receive their bi-monthly pay by direct deposit will also have their travel expenses reimbursed by direct deposit.
POLICY ON FOOD AND/OR REFRESHMENTS FOR MEETINGS AT CENTRAL AND AREA OFFICES

It is the general practice of the Chicago Public Schools to support and enhance all educational activities which are focused upon the improvement of student achievement. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board that no food or refreshments for central and regional office meetings and training activities can be purchased using Chicago Board of Education funds unless one of the following criteria has been met:

- The proposal submitted to the funding agency must clearly identify the cost for food and/or refreshments and has received approval from the funding agency.

- The funds utilized for purchase of food and/or refreshment for specific activities must be part of the provision of a grant.

- The food and/or refreshment must be funded by fees paid by the individuals participating in the activity and that portion of the fees allocated for food/refreshments must be identified.

- All funds used to pay for food or refreshment must be properly approved by department heads prior to expenditure.

- For the purpose of this policy, “food and refreshments” does not include water.

POLICY ON PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- A payment for membership in a professional organization requires that the membership be in the name of the Board or the title of the position, with individuals retaining such Board-sponsored membership only while the individual remains in the named position.

- Payment for membership in professional organizations will be determined by department heads and approved by the Chief Executive Officer, taking into consideration the relevance of the organization.
APPENDIX: SAMPLE FORMS

The following forms are available on the purchasing website: click here.

- Leave to Attend a Conference
- Statement of Travel Expenses
- Carefare Reimbursement Form