

TRAVEL EXPENSES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define the district's expectations of its employees who are required to travel in connection with their work responsibilities and to clarify which expenses the district will fund and which expenses are considered the personal responsibility of the employee.

Business travel is defined as authorized attendance at conferences, meetings and seminars or authorized travel for any other purpose in connection with official district responsibilities. Business travel includes out-of-county day trips and trips requiring one or more overnight stays.

2. General

This document assumes a mutual trust between the district and its employees. The district expects to pay all ordinary and necessary costs incurred by district employees when traveling on district business, and district employees are expected to follow the priorities of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) in their expenditures of public funds.

Each Supervisor shall be responsible and accountable for ensuring compliance with these procedures. The district will pay expenses not specifically addressed in this document provided the Supervisor determines the expenses are ordinary and necessary.

3. Authorization

The employee must complete the Business Travel and Training Request Form. Employees must obtain approval from an authorized supervisor in advance of registering, making arrangements and business travel. An individual shall not approve his or her own business travel or approve his or her own travel documentation. All out-of-state travel requires approval by the Board prior to making any travel arrangements. For the purposes of this administrative regulation, the Lake Tahoe and Reno areas shall be considered in-state. Supervisor is responsible for securing and identifying a capable replacement so that responsibilities are covered (prior to request).

The following considerations will be weighed when business travel has been requested:

- a. Relationship of business travel information to the District LCAP.
- b. Breadth of applicability to District and student achievement.
- c. Length of time since last attendance.
- d. District coverage: All efforts will be made so that an entire job classification will not be out of the district simultaneously.
- e. Funding source: Limit the use of unrestricted, general funds as much as possible.
- f. Training for employees new to a position.

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- g. Efforts to provide for in-District training opportunities should be utilized prior to attending training that requires travel.
- h. Efforts will be made to attend training opportunities in close proximity to VUSD.

Travel Arrangements

Travel and conference requests shall be completed as far in advance as possible to obtain the best possible travel fares and rates. A minimum of six weeks in advance is encouraged for all travel requiring board approval. If travel arrangements must be canceled for any reason, the person who made the arrangements shall cancel them in sufficient time to prevent the district from incurring unnecessary costs.

4. Transportation

Travelers shall use whatever mode of transportation is the most logical and least expensive. Consideration should be given to distance, time and total cost to the district. If multiple employees are traveling, carpooling is encouraged. When carpooling, only the owner of the vehicle may claim mileage reimbursement.

If an employee elects to use a mode of transportation other than the most logical and least expensive the District will pay only the cost of the most logical and least expensive mode. If an employee chooses to drive to a location where air travel is the most logical least expensive route, the employee will be reimbursed at the average cost of a flight. The difference between the selected mode and the least expensive mode shall be considered the employee's personal expense. Any additional lodging and meal expenses required as a result of the employee's selection should be paid by the employee. The District may cover the additional cost with non-federal funds at its discretion.

Any additional time spent traveling prior to or after a conference that is above and beyond the most expeditious and logical form of travel time shall be the employee's responsibility. This paragraph does not apply to special accommodations made to qualified employees under the Americans with Disabilities Act provided that the alternate mode of transportation is approved in advance by the Supervisor.

Employees shall not limit their air travel options by specifying an airline. The airline offering the lowest fare for a logical route shall be selected.

Employees shall be compensated for the use of their private vehicles at the prevailing Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate. Compensation shall be based upon the number of miles between the travel destination and either the employee's designated work location or residence, whichever is the shortest distance. Employees who receive a car allowance will be compensated at the current Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate for all miles outside Solano County.

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The district will reimburse all expenses, such as bridge tolls and parking fees, incurred as the result of an employee's authorized use of a vehicle while traveling on district business. Receipts for parking are required.

The district will not reimburse the full price of an airfare ticket if airline points, mileage, gift cards, or travel credit(s) are used. Only the actual out of pocket cost will be reimbursed.

Example:

Airfare Ticket Cost	\$200
Airline Points Used	\$120
Cost of the Ticket	\$ 80

The District will reimburse the employee \$80 for the actual out of pocket cost of the ticket.

Hotel courtesy buses, local shuttle services or public transportation should provide supplementary transportation within the destination city if available and logical. Rideshare (i.e.: Uber, Lyft) and taxi service shall be used only when no other convenient, less costly mode of transportation is available. Rental vehicles shall be used only when no other mode of transportation is available or when alternate transportation would be more expensive or impractical and must be authorized in advance by the Supervisor. If a rental vehicle is authorized, employees shall request the least expensive vehicle category that meets their needs, and the employee shall make the rental car reservation as far in advance as possible to get the best rates. Employees purchasing optional insurance (travel and auto) will do so at their own expense. Transportation not related to the conference is not reimbursable.

5. Internal Revenue Service Guidelines

Internal Revenue Service Regulations dictate that all reimbursable expenses in excess of generally-accepted business travel expense are considered earned income and must be reported as such.

6. Lodging

The district will pay lodging expenses for district employees during business travel requiring one or more overnight stays. Prior approval from the Superintendent or designee is required for all overnight stays within 75 miles of the District. The district will pay for lodging for the evening preceding or subsequent to a meeting or business event when the employee would have to travel at unreasonably early or late hours to reach his or her destination. The district will not reimburse for overnight stays prior to or after the meeting or business event without prior approval.

Employees shall make an effort to obtain lodging at or near the facility where official district business is to take place to minimize travel time and transportation costs. The district will pay only for standard single rooms for individual employees. Single standard rooms at conference, government or corporate rates shall be requested. When appropriate,

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efforts will be made to have staff share rooms. Should an employee choose to stay elsewhere, reimbursement shall be made up to the equivalent of the advertised room rate of the conference.

8. Meal Reimbursement for Overnight Travel

An employee is eligible for meals and reimbursement at the per diem or per meal rate while attending any overnight meeting, convention, conference, or seminar on District business, unless meals are provided by the conference/event. No receipts are required.

The per diem or per meal rate means that the employee will receive the allowance amount, specified below, for overnight stays where no meal is provided at the event/conference. The

employee is not required to submit receipts but must complete an Expense Report form with the meal amounts entered on days where no meal was provided at the conference/event.

To receive reimbursement, a conference agenda, and a fully completed Business Travel and Training Request form must be attached to the Expense Report form and submitted to the Accounting Department.

The per-meal amount allowed is as follows:

- a. Breakfast: \$15.00 (For travel starting before 8:00 a.m.)
- b. Lunch: \$25.00 (For travel time starting at 11:00 a.m.)
- c. Dinner: \$35.00 (For travel time starting at 4:00 p.m. and/or extending through 7:00 p.m.)

Total amount includes gratuity.

Official overnight travel, which takes the individual outside the boundaries of the County during the entire mealtime hours, will render eligibility for meal reimbursement. If lunch and/or dinner is offered at the conference/event, and the employee elects to purchase a separate meal, the District will not reimburse for this cost.

Alcoholic beverages are not allowable expenses within the per-meal amount.

9. Business Expenses

The district will pay for goods and/or services deemed necessary for the completion of official business, such as faxes, copier and computer usage, etc. Whenever possible, employees shall anticipate the need for supplies and shall take whatever they will need with them instead of buying supplies at their destination.

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10. Personal Expenses

The district will not pay personal expenses. In addition to those items identified as personal expenses through this document, personal expenses include in-room movies, spas and gyms, optional quasi-social functions or events in connection with a conference, laundry or dry cleaning, miscellaneous sundries, baggage fees, flight seating upgrades, early check-in transportation or lodging fees, or other items of a personal nature.

The district will not pay for any expenses of another person who accompanies an employee on business travel.

11. Conference Materials/Services

Reimbursement for business-related material/service purchases shall be submitted on the District Expense Report form.

12. Required Documentation for Reimbursement of Expenses

Upon completion of business travel, the District Expense Report form must be completed and attached to the original Business Travel and Conference Request form.

Submit MapQuest (or like) for mileage reimbursement, original, itemized receipts for hotel, event registration, and all other incidental business expenses (i.e.: parking, bridge tolls, etc.) which must support each item being claimed for reimbursement with the exception of meals, which are paid based on the Per Diem. All claims must be submitted to the District Business Office within 30 days of the event.

13. Non-district Paid Travel and Training

Employee travel for which no reimbursement from the district is requested shall also have prior supervisor approval. The Business Travel and Training Request Form must also be completed if the employee will be missing their regularly-scheduled responsibilities.

14. Cancellations

Employees shall cancel any reservations for lodging, travel costs and registration they will not use. Any charge for an unused reservation shall be considered the employee's personal expense unless failure to cancel the reservation was due to circumstances beyond the employee's control.

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Regulation: **VACAVILLE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**
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