

## I. Purpose

To establish a uniform procedure for authorization and payment of certain travel, training, and other city business expenses.

## II. Scope

This policy pertains to all travel and travel related expenses incurred for city-business purposes. This policy applies to those expenses commonly associated with business travel including, but not limited to, meals away from home, lodging, fuel costs, event registration fees, small incidental expenses, etc.

It is expected that all significant travel expenses will be included and documented during the preparation of the annual budget ordinance, therefore, unexpected or unplanned travel requests must be approved by the City Manager. All travel arrangements and reimbursement requests are subject to (1) review by the City Manager; and (2) availability of budgetary funds.

Actual economic conditions may prohibit budgeting for extended travel. No expenses may be budgeted which would create a violation of the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.

## III. Lodging and Meal Expenses

Department heads are responsible for travel expenses incurred in their department and have the discretion to permit the use of a city credit card. The use of city credit cards is covered by a separate policy.

Employees making overnight lodging arrangements will seek to do at the lowest possible rate and will inquire as to available government or corporate discount rates.

Meals away from home when in overnight travel status will be paid or reimbursed in accordance with the current per diem rates as established by the Office of State Budget and Management. Current rates are published at <http://www.osbm.nc.gov/> and updated annually on the *Request for Travel Reimbursement Form*. Reimbursements will not be made for alcohol or for additional expenses incurred by an accompanying spouse.

Meals away from home for partial days of travel (when in overnight travel status and the partial day is the day of departure or the day of return) will be paid or reimbursed in accordance with the requirements as outlined below. *Note: Travel must involve a destination located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned work location or home, whichever is less.*

### Overnight Travel

- Breakfast  
Depart home or regularly assigned work location prior to 6:00 a.m. **and extend workday by 2 hours.**
- Lunch  
Depart home or regularly assigned work location prior to noon (day of departure) or return after 2:00 p.m. (day of return).
- Dinner  
Depart home or regularly assigned work location prior to 5:00 p.m. (day of departure) or return after 8:00 p.m. (day of return) **and extend workday by 3 hours.**

Employees are not eligible for lunch allowances if travel does not involve an overnight stay; however, employees are eligible for a breakfast and evening meal allowance when the following applies (allowances for breakfast and evening meals for employees working non-traditional shifts must have specific prior approval):

***Same Day Travel***

- Breakfast  
Depart home or regularly assigned work location prior to 6:00 a.m. **and extend workday by 2 hours.**
- Dinner  
Return home or to regularly assigned work location after 8:00 p.m. **and extend workday by 3 hours.**

**IV. Reimbursement Procedures**

Advance travel expense payments are not available to employees. When a city credit card is unavailable for use, the employee shall be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses including lodging, meals, and mileage upon submission of the current *Request for Travel Reimbursement Form*.

Receipts are not required for reimbursement when the expense is at or less than the per diem rate; however, receipts should be attached if the travel was approved to exceed the published per diem rate.

Mileage reimbursements will be made at the prevailing Internal Revenue Service Standard Mileage Rate available at <http://www.irs.gov>.

All credit card charges shall be supported by appropriate receipts or other documentation and submitted to accounts payable as promptly as possible upon the employee's return to work after the travel. To be acceptable, credit card receipts must show the purchase detail and not just the final signed charge receipt copy.