

All employees who travel are expected to review the Travel Policy (Ordinance 4628) and its requirements.

The following is excerpted from the City of Mishawaka Employee Handbook, Rev. 11-20-2014, pages 24-27.

TRAVEL

INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

This document contains policies and procedures for employees, non-employees appointed by the Mayor, and elected and appointed officials for travel and reimbursement expenses while traveling on business for the City.

- A All persons seeking reimbursement should incur the lowest reasonable travel expense and should exercise care to avoid impropriety or the appearance of impropriety. Public funds should never be used for personal gain.
- B Occasionally an employee may take a trip that includes both personal time and business travel. A combination trip benefits the employee to some extent. Employees should exercise special care not to seek reimbursement for expenses that could be construed to be personal. Under no circumstances is an employee to be paid for compensatory time while on travel status, including time beyond the normal workday.
- C Each person requesting reimbursement for travel expenses must submit a claim covering only his (her) own expenses. No reimbursement will be made for the expenses of another person, including family members or other travel companions.
- D If a circumstance arises which is not specifically covered, employees should either adopt the most conservative course within the "spirit" of this policy or consult with his/her immediate supervisor.

TYPES OF TRAVEL

A. **Local** Local travel includes all travel within a fifty-mile radius of Mishawaka. Although certain expenses, like lodging, will not normally be reimbursed for local travel, other expenses, like compensation for privately owned automobiles used in City business, parking, etc. will be reimbursable. Reimbursement for meals, if not included in registration fees, will be reimbursable while attending pre-approved seminars, meetings, conferences or schools in the "local" area.

B. **Outside** Any travel outside a fifty-mile radius of Mishawaka must be authorized in advance by the employee's Department Head. Any travel outside a 150 mile radius of Mishawaka must be authorized in advance by the employee's Department Head and the Mayor, or Department Head and General Manager for Mishawaka Utilities employees, including approval of the mode of transportation to the destination. Outside travel by the City Clerk and staff or the City Council and Council Attorney shall be presumed to be with authorization of the City Clerk or Council President, and shall not require authorization by the Mayor.

TYPES OF REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

A **Allowable** Following are examples of reimbursable expenses:

1. Conference/seminar registration fees.
2. Auto rental (with prior approval only).
3. Taxicab/shuttle fares.

4. Parking and tolls (whether using a personal or a City vehicle).
5. Telephone calls/facsimile for official City business.
6. Airport parking. (Although if most economical, employees should use long-term parking lots).
7. Fuel costs for City owned vehicles ¹
8. Lodging - for employee only. If traveling with a companion, the City will reimburse an amount not to exceed the single room occupancy charge, including taxes.
9. Meals - for employee only, if traveling with a companion.
10. Mileage - when using privately-owned automobile. For travel 500 miles and under, employees will be reimbursed at the established per mile rate¹. For travel between 500 and 2,500 miles, employees will be reimbursed at fifty percent (50%) of the established per mile rate¹, and twenty-five percent (25%) of the established per mile rate thereafter. Mileage should be calculated beginning at the employee's place of employment. Miles from home to the workplace are not eligible for reimbursement.
11. Commercial air/train/bus fares.
12. Reasonable gratuities to restaurants and taxicabs/shuttle fares.

B Not Allowable Following are examples of non-reimbursable expenses:

1. Personal entertainment.
2. Business entertainment or expenses for non-City employees.
3. Fines for parking, traffic violations, etc.
4. Alcoholic beverages.
5. Valet, laundry, dry cleaning and other personal services.
6. Air travel insurance.
7. Expenses for travel companion(s) of City employees.
8. Purchase of personal items, including personal phone calls.
9. Gratuities to hotel or airport porters, parking attendants, etc.

MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

If the employee's travel will be by vehicle, City vehicles shall be used when available and practical. Employees traveling to the same destination shall travel together whenever possible.

Employees traveling to locations within four hours' drive time are generally expected to travel by automobile. However, individual circumstances, including airport meetings and time commitments before and/or after travel may necessitate airline use. Airline use in these circumstances must be with prior approval.

¹ Mileage reimbursement will be the rate as of April 1st. This rate will remain fixed through March 31st of the following year, or until replaced by a new rate published by the City Controller.

If an employee uses a privately-owned vehicle in lieu of a City-owned vehicle, the employee will be reimbursed in the amount equivalent to the gas receipt submitted or actual mileage, whichever is less.

If an employee, for convenience, prefers to use a privately-owned vehicle in lieu of rail, bus or air travel, the employee will be reimbursed in the amount equivalent to the coach air fare for the same trip, or the mileage expense as computed in III. (J), whichever amount is less.

Coach or Tourist class costs of travel by commercial air carrier will be reimbursed. The cost of

travel by rail or bus may be reimbursed but must not exceed an amount equal to what airfare to the destination would have been.

MEAL ALLOWANCE

- A The reimbursable meal allowance, including gratuities, will be the set April 1st each year and will remain at that rate until March 31st of the following year, or until replaced by a new rate published by the City Controller. These rates will be reviewed and updated by the Controller each year, based on current IRS standards. Current City of Mishawaka meal allowances, along with locations eligible for higher rates are attached. To be eligible for a breakfast allowance, travel must begin before 7:00 a.m. in Mishawaka. To be eligible for the dinner allowance, travel must extend past 6:00 p.m. in Mishawaka. When travel takes an employee 50 miles outside of Mishawaka, he/she will not be reimbursed for meals purchased within 50 miles of Mishawaka City limits.
- B In any event, individual meal reimbursements will be allowed only upon presentation of a valid itemized receipt(s), showing the name of the restaurant, the date of the meal(s), a list of each item purchased, and the total cost of the meal(s), including gratuities.² Each person seeking reimbursement shall produce a receipt. Group receipts; tear off tabs and unitemized charge slips will not be accepted as meal receipts.

LODGING

- A An employee may claim lodging expense (and meal allowance) for Saturdays, Sundays or holidays, even though the employee is not conducting City business on those days, in order to reduce the total cost of travel, including airline fare. The savings must be documented and approved in advance by the Mayor or General Manager. Neither lodging expenses nor meal allowance may be claimed for that portion of time during travel when the employee is using vacation or personal leave time.
- B If two (2) or more employees in travel status share a room, and each seeks reimbursement, they must request separate receipts.
- C An employee may not claim reimbursement for lodging when the lodging was provided by another person who is not in the business of providing lodging.
- D Employees are urged to stay in hotels offering government rates. These reduced rates usually must be requested of the hotel in advance. Employees who secure luxury hotel accommodations out of preference rather than necessity will not receive full lodging reimbursement. In those cases, the reimbursement amount will be equal to the rate from reasonably available hotels offering government discounts.

² *The maximum reimbursement for gratuities will be fifteen percent (15%) rounded up to the nearest dollar.*

When checking out of lodging facilities, employees must obtain a check out bill from the front desk. This bill is to be turned in whether or not reimbursement is requested.

RECORD KEEPING/CLAIMS PROCEDURE

- A A completed Request for Travel form approved by appropriate personnel as applicable.
- B If applicable, airline, seminar/conference, hotel reservations made by designated City staff person; paperwork processed for direct prepayment.
- C While in travel status, employee retains receipts for reimbursable expenses.
- D Employee completes approved Travel and Expense Voucher, itemizing each allowable expense; receipts are attached to the Voucher.
- E Department Head signs Voucher, approving of the expenses claimed.

- F Employee completes approved Claim Form and presents with Voucher and receipts for payment.

CREDIT CARD CHARGES

- A Since Indiana law prohibits the payment of interest for employee expenses, only the face value of a purchase on an employee's personal credit card will be reimbursed. Late fees or interest charges will not be reimbursed regardless of the reason. Whenever an employee uses a credit card during business travel he/she must also provide an itemized receipt.
- B Each Department must keep a record of all approved travel. The record must include a summary that shows the travel date, employee's name, a brief description of the reason for the travel, the total expended from City funds, the year-to-date travel expenditure by the department and a comparison of budget and actual expenses.
- C The Department Head has the responsibility to assure that travel expenses do not exceed amounts budgeted for his/her department. It is the responsibility of the Department Head to ensure that employees who travel are familiar with this travel policy and that reimbursed travel expenses on behalf of his/her department are in compliance with this policy document.

EXCEPTIONS

- A Any exception to this Policy granted as described below shall be subject to applicable laws and regulations.
- B The Mayor or City Controller may authorize exceptions to this Travel Policy for employees of the City. The Mayor, General Manager or City Controller may authorize exceptions to this Travel Policy for employees of Mishawaka Utilities. An employee requesting an exception must state the request in writing.
- C The City Clerk may approve exceptions to this Travel Policy for the City Clerk and City Clerk's staff. The President of the Common Council may approve exceptions to this Travel Policy for all members of the Common Council and the Council Attorney. The signing of a Claim by the City Clerk or Council President shall constitute approval of any exception.