

CITY OF BRANSON, MISSOURI
ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

RULE NUMBER 7 REFERENCING ARTICLE 16 OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES MANUAL
AMENDED 5-1-2010, 7-10-2012, 1-1-2014

A RULE PERTAINING TO **TRAVELING ON BEHALF OF THE CITY**

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this rule is to insure the fair and uniform treatment of all employees traveling on behalf of the City and to protect the interests of the City.

Section 2. Policy

- A. Requests for travel shall be approved only for travel to transact official business, attend official and professional meetings, and participate in conferences and training sessions necessary to promote the efficient conduct of City services.
- B. Only expenses incurred by the employee in the transaction of official business are to be reimbursed. Employees are encouraged to use a Purchasing Card whenever possible. Expenses such as personal entertainment, alcoholic beverages and expenses incurred by the employee's family are not reimbursable.
- C. Travel requests must be approved by the City Administrator prior to the travel unless an exception is granted by the City Administrator.

Section 3. Classification of Expense Items

The following list of allowable expenses is intended as an informational guide for determining appropriate expenses when traveling on City business. It is not all inclusive and interpretation is within the scope of the City Administrator.

- A. Transportation
 - (1) City vehicles shall be the standard method of transportation while traveling within the State; however, travel by air or personal vehicle may be approved when circumstances warrant.
 - (2) Air, City vehicle or personal vehicle may be approved for out-of-state travel when circumstances warrant.

- (3) When a City or personal vehicle is used for travel; lodging, meals and travel time will be allowed on the same basis as if the individual has traveled by air. Time used in excess of air travel will be charged to vacation or accumulated compensatory time with few exceptions.
- (4) Use of personal vehicles may be authorized when the convenience of the City is served. If an employee does not have a City vehicle available and use of a personal vehicle is authorized, a flat rate per mile equivalent to the prevailing IRS rate will be allowed. The most direct route will be used when calculating vehicle mileage. If an employee has a City vehicle available and uses a personal vehicle for their own convenience, the City will pay what it would have cost if a City vehicle had been used – the cost of the employee's gasoline. In addition, if two employees are to ride together in one City vehicle, and one employee decides to take their own vehicle for their own convenience, there will be no reimbursement for gasoline for the personal vehicle. The total allowance shall in no case exceed the cost of air passage if such service is available
- (5) When air travel is necessary, tourist or discount airline rates shall be considered standard for out-of-state travel. First class travel is not allowed.
- (6) When air travel is used, expenses for local transportation such as taxi, shuttle fare, or car rental will be allowed whenever such transportation is necessary to properly conduct City business. Receipts should be obtained.
- (7) Private general aviation aircraft can be used when circumstances warrant.
- (8) When traveling with family members, the City will only pay for the employee's fare at the lowest cost.

B. Lodging

Expenses will be allowed for adequate housing necessary and appropriate to the purpose of the trip (relative to the area and availability where business is taking place). Receipts must be provided. Additional rates necessitated by family members will be at the employee's expense.

C. Meals

- (1) Meal costs, not to exceed per diem allowances, are provided when conducting official City business. Receipts must be attached to the completed Travel Request Form. Per diem allowances shall be established annually by the Finance Department based upon IRS guidelines for both standard and higher allowance locations. No expense for alcoholic beverages shall be reimbursed.
- (2) No allowance will be given for meals that are included with the registration fee.

- (3) The number of meals provided per day will depend upon when the employee would have departed from or arrived back at their normal work site, even if they don't actually leave from that site. Departure before 6:30 a.m. entitles the employee to the breakfast per diem allowance and arrival back after 6:30 p.m. entitles the employee to the evening meal per diem allowance.

D. Telephone and Fax Expenses

Telephone and fax charges will be allowed for official calls only and require proper documentation. Official calls may be interpreted to mean local business calls; long distance calls related to City business; or personal calls home while traveling on City business (15 minute maximum, not to exceed one call per day).

E. Registration Fees

Fees charged for registration at any convention or meeting are allowed for reimbursement. A receipt or some other proof of the fee, such as a copy of the conference program setting forth the fee rate, must be provided.

F. Miscellaneous

All miscellaneous expenses must be itemized. Incidental expenses may include parking fees, toll road fees and gratuities for baggage handling. Gratuities for meals are included in per diem meal allowances, and should not be listed as a miscellaneous expense.

- G. Discretion is allowed, with the approval of the Director and the City Administrator, for expenses to provide for unusual circumstances. All requests for special considerations shall be in writing and attached to the travel request.

Section 4. Procedure

To facilitate control of travel costs and to insure accountability, the procedures for authorization, advance payments, reconciliation of advances, and reimbursement for approved expenses should be as follows:

- A. Expenses for local travel (this includes cities within a forty-five mile radius) for which only staff time and the cost of one meal will be expended, will be reimbursed to the employee following the actual travel. Per diem allowances shall not apply to these expenses. A Petty Cash Reimbursement Form must be completed and turned in to the Finance Department, with the receipt attached, to qualify for reimbursement. Directors shall be responsible for ensuring that the meal expense is within reason for the circumstances.

B. All other travel to attend conferences, training sessions, or other meetings shall be requested on the official Travel Request Form, and must be supported by a program or other evidence.

- (1) Any person traveling on behalf of the City shall submit the above noted form on which the nature of the trip, destination, dates of the beginning and termination of the official leave, and estimates of expenses must be stated.
- (2) Authorization and approval by the Director and the City Administrator is required for all out-of-City travel, except as noted in A. above. Criteria for approval shall include, but not be limited to, availability of budgetary funds, manpower required to cover for the traveling employee and applicability of training or travel to the employee's job responsibilities.
- (3) Requests for prepaid expenses such as room costs, airfare and registrations must be noted on the Travel Request Form in the Advance Expense Column with the vendor noted and the date needed. Travel requests which require prepaid expenses should be submitted at least ten days in advance of the anticipated travel.
- (4) Advance Payments
 - a) Travel advances are available for City employees and must be noted on the Travel Request Form in the Expense Advance Column with the employee's name noted in the Payment Instructions Column. These advances may include mileage allowance for use of a personal vehicle, estimated expenses for use of a City vehicle, rental vehicle, lodging expenses, meal allowances and any miscellaneous expenses. Advances are not allowed if the total expense is less than \$15.00.
 - b) An advance payment does not constitute approval for expenditure of the entire amount; all expenditures must be justified and approved on the completed Travel Request following completion of the travel.

C. Reporting of Expenses

The completed Travel Request Form shall be approved by the Director and filed with the City Administrator no later than five (5) working days following the employee's return to work. Approved receipts for expenses and any unused portion of a travel advance must be attached. If the actual expense exceeds the advance, completion of the Travel Request Form with approved expenses attached shall constitute a voucher for payment to the employee.

D. Reimbursement by an Outside Agency

Whenever travel is secured on the basis of reimbursement of expenses to the City by an outside agency, the employee's Director shall be responsible for indicating this fact on the Travel Request Form and also for obtaining reimbursement.