

**TITLE 4****MUNICIPAL PERSONNEL****CHAPTER****1. TRAVEL EXPENSE POLICY.****CHAPTER 1****TRAVEL EXPENSE POLICY****SECTION**

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**4-101. Policy purpose and intent.** This policy shall constitute the official policy regarding travel incurred by City of Clinton officials, board or committee members, or employees while in travel status and on official City of Clinton business. Authorization for travel and reimbursement of expenses must be in accordance with the provisions in this policy. It is the intent of this policy to assure fair and equitable treatment to all individuals traveling on city business at city expense. (1991 Code, § 4-301)

**4-102. General policy.** (1) In the interpretation and application of this policy, the term "traveler" or "authorized traveler" means any elected or appointed city officer or employee, including members of city boards and committees appointed by the mayor or the council, and the employees of such boards and committees who are traveling on official city business and whose travel was authorized in accordance with this policy. "Authorized traveler" shall not include the spouse, children, other relatives, friends, or companions accompanying the authorized traveler on city business, unless the person(s) otherwise qualifies as an authorized traveler under this policy.

(2) Authorized travelers are entitled to reimbursement of certain expenditures incurred while traveling on official business for the city. Reimbursable expenses shall include expenses for transportation; lodging; meals; registration fees for conferences, conventions and seminars; and other actual and necessary expenses related to official business as determined by the

city manager. Expenses considered excessive will not be allowed. Under certain conditions, entertainment expenses may be eligible for reimbursement.

(3) Travel must be necessary to execute official city business or educational objectives. Professional meetings, conferences, or workshops must be directly connected to the individual's duties and role within the city. If attending a conference, supporting documentation showing the dates of the conference must be attached to the travel expense report form. Any dates outside the conference dates must be explained.

(4) When traveling, all individuals should be as conservative as circumstances permit. Reimbursement for travel will be based upon the most direct or expeditious route possible. Employees traveling by an indirect route must assume any extra expense incurred.

(5) A complete reason must be provided to describe the purpose of the travel. Single words such as "meeting," "research," or "conference" do not constitute an adequate reason.

(6) The city manager or his or her designee shall be responsible for the enforcement of these travel regulations. The city manager shall have the authority to grant exception to any part or all of these rules and regulations when deemed appropriate and necessary.

(7) Deliberate disregard of these regulations or filing of an intentionally misleading or fraudulent travel claim is grounds for disciplinary and/or legal action for recovery of fraudulent travel claims and/or advances. (1991 Code, § 4-302)

**4-103. Travel requests.** (1) To ensure reimbursements for official travel, an approved travel authorization and estimated expenses form is required.<sup>1</sup> All travel forms shall be approved by the department head and city manager (city manager forms approved by city mayor). Lack of pre-approval does not prohibit reimbursement, but it does assure reimbursement within the limits of this policy.

(2) All cost associated with the travel should be reasonably estimated and shown on the travel authorization and estimated expenses form.

(3) An travel authorization and estimated expenses form is required before advanced expenses are paid or travel advances are authorized.

(4) If applicable, a copy of the conference or seminar program should be attached to the form. If the program is not available prior to the travel, it should be submitted with the travel expense report. (1991 Code, § 4-303, modified)

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<sup>1</sup>The City of Clinton Authorization for Travel form is of record in the office of the recorder.

**4-104. Advances.** An individual traveling on city business may receive an advance of money to cover expenses to be incurred while traveling.

(1) Travel advance requests are not considered documentation of travel expenses. If travel advances exceed documented expenses, the traveler must reimburse the city within ten (10) days.

(2) It will be the responsibility of the finance director to initiate action to recover any undocumented travel advances. If a cash advance is not repaid within thirty (30) days, a deduction may be made from the employee's payroll check. Any person for whom a payroll deduction is made will forfeit future cash advance privileges.

(3) All travel advances must be requested no later than five (5) business days before travel departure date. No travel advances will be issued more than thirty (30) days prior to the travel departure date. (1991 Code, § 4-304, modified)

**4-105. Transportation.** (1) All potential costs should be considered when selecting the mode of transportation. Time away from work should also be considered.

(2) City vehicles may be used for transportation while on official city business unless considerations of time or distance would indicate that such use would be unreasonable. If a city vehicle is used, the traveler is responsible for seeing that the vehicle is used properly and only for acceptable city business. The employee will be reimbursed for expenses directly related to the actual and normal use of the city vehicle when proper documentation is provided.

(3) Use of personal vehicles for travel on city business shall be allowed; however, city owned vehicles shall be used when feasible. Reimbursement shall be at the current rate as established by the Internal Revenue Service Standard Mileage Rate. The miles for reimbursement shall be paid from origin to destination and back by the most direct route. Necessary vicinity travel related to official city business will be reimbursed subject to documented necessity as business-related. If an indirect route is taken, the Rand-McNally or other published mileage table will be used to determine the mileage to be reimbursed.

(4) If a personal vehicle is used by two (2) or more travelers on the same trip, only the traveler who owns or has custody of the vehicle will be reimbursed for mileage. It is the responsibility of the traveler to provide adequate insurance to hold harmless the city for any liability from the use of the personal vehicle. Travelers will not be reimbursed for automobile repair or breakdowns when using their personal vehicle.

(5) Storage or parking charges resulting from the authorized use of either city or personal vehicles shall be at the expense of the city. Fines for traffic or parking violations will not be reimbursed by the city. Reasonable tolls will be allowed when the most direct route requires them.

(6) In no event will mileage reimbursement plus vicinity travel and associated vehicle costs exceed the lowest reasonable air fare and associated air fare travel costs.

(7) When other modes of travel are to be used, the city shall provide or pay for tickets for rail, air or bus transportation and any associated costs such as travel insurance, etc. The city will pay for the lowest available fare for these modes of transportation. When possible, the traveler should make full use of discounts for advance reservations.

(8) When an individual travels by common carrier, reasonable fares will be allowed for necessary ground transportation. Bus or limousine service to and from airports should be used when available and practical. The city will reimburse mileage for travel to and from the local airport and parking fees. The most economical means of transport should be used.

(9) For travel between lodging quarters and meetings, conferences, or meals, reasonable taxi fares will be allowed. Transportation to and from personal trips (e.g. entertainment, shopping) will not be reimbursed.

(10) Use of a rental car is not permitted unless it is less expensive or otherwise more practical than public transportation. Approval of car rental is required in advance by the city manager. Anyone who uses a rental car for out-of-state travel must obtain liability coverage from the vendor.

(11) If necessary to accommodate meeting times and travel arrangements, expenses will be covered for one (1) day before and after meeting dates.

(12) The traveler will be required to take annual leave for any additional time taken beyond the day before and after the meeting dates unless the traveler extends the trip to take advantage of discount fares. Additional authorized travel days must be pre-approved by the city manager. (1991 Code, § 4-305, modified)

**4-106. Lodging.** (1) Reimbursement for lodging will be based upon the locality, purpose of travel, and availability of accommodations. Reasonableness and economy should be exercised by the traveler in all instances. Hotels that offer government rates should be used when available.

(2) Actual cost of single occupancy of hotel or motel room shall be at the expense of the city. When a room is occupied by more than one (1) person and the additional occupant(s) is not on official city business, reimbursement will be made in the amount charged for single occupancy.

(3) The city's tax exempt status should be used for all in-state lodging. It is the traveler's responsibility to provide the necessary documentation and payment method required by the vendor in order to avoid sales tax charges. Sales tax charges will not be reimbursed by the city.

(4) A detailed receipt showing itemized room charges and taxes (if applicable) is required for all authorized travel. (1991 Code, § 4-306)

**4-107. Meals and incidentals.** (1) The authorized traveler will be reimbursed a daily amount of fifty-five dollars (\$55.00) as per diem. The per diem amount is expected to cover meals, tips, porters, and incidental expenses. The traveler will not be reimbursed more than the per diem amount. Receipts are not required for meals and incidentals.

(2) On the first day of travel, the traveler will be reimbursed seventy-five percent (75%) of the per-diem rate for each day.

(3) If a meal is included as part of a conference or seminar fee, the daily per diem rate shall be reduced as follows:

Breakfast--thirteen dollars (\$13.00)

Lunch--fourteen dollars (\$14.00)

Dinner--twenty-three dollars (\$23.00)

(4) For travel that does not require an overnight stay, per diem will be reimbursed at fifty percent (50%) of the established daily rate only if the traveler is required by city business to be outside a fifty (50) mile area of city hall and is in travel status for eight (8) hours or longer. (1991 Code, § 4-307, modified)

**4-108. Entertainment.** (1) The city may pay for certain entertainment expenses provided that:

(a) The entertainment is appropriate in the conduct of city business;

(b) The entertainment is approved in advance by the city manager;

(c) The group or individuals involved are identified; and

(d) Documentation is attached to the expense form to support the entertainment expense claims.

(2) Necessary meal expenses for group meetings will be allowed for city business subject to city manager approval prior to the meeting.

(3) The request for reimbursement for authorized entertainment expenses must include:

(a) Original receipts from the vendor (restaurant, caterer, ticket office, etc.). Only reasonable tips and gratuities included on the receipt by the vendor are reimbursable.

(b) A disclosure and explanation statement explaining the purpose of the entertainment and identifying the group and the number of people entertained (or individual names listed if not a recognized group). (1991 Code, § 4-308)

**4-109. Travel reconciliation.** (1) Within ten (10) day of return from travel, the traveler is expected to complete and file the travel expense report

form.<sup>1</sup> It must be certified by the traveler that the amount due is true and accurate. Original receipts must be provided for all expenses in excess of five dollars (\$5.00).

(2) If the city provided a travel advance, the traveler should include that information on the expense form. The balance due the traveler or the refund due the city should be clearly indicated on the travel expense report form. If the city is due a refund, the traveler should attach a check made payable to the city.

(3) The traveler is responsible for providing the city with original paid receipts for any payments made by the city directly to travel related vendors (e.g. hotels, conferences). (1991 Code, § 4-309)

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<sup>1</sup>The City of Clinton Travel Expense Report form is of record in the office of the recorder.