City Personnel Policy

PAYMENT OF TRAVEL AND BUSINESS EXPENSES

POLICY: 401

Council approval: 6/26/2017 # Pages: 3

POLICY:

The City of Council Bluffs will pay reasonable expenses which are incurred in the course of authorized City travel for the purpose of conducting City business, representing the City at meetings and professional associations, as well as for training to enhance performance.

APPLICABILITY:

All City personnel, including both elected and appointed City officials.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to inform employees, supervisors, Department Heads, and other City officials of their respective roles and responsibilities relative to submitting and approving travel and business-related expenses. It is the expressed purpose of this policy to provide employees with reasonable travel accommodations and related expenses, while maintaining a prudent spending policy.

ADMINISTRATION:

The Director of Finance is primarily responsible for the contents and administration of this policy. All other Department Heads have collateral responsibility for administration of this policy.

PROCEDURE:

1. Authorization to Travel**.** Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that travel is appropriate, reasonable, and necessary to the mission and responsibilities of the department and/or City government, and that funds are available for related expenses. Supervisors must approve travel requests prior to the travel occurring.

2. Expenses Eligible for Payment or Reimbursement. Travel expenses that may be paid by the City include conference or training fees, meals, lodging, and transportation costs. Excess costs, indirect routes, or luxury accommodations and services unnecessary, unjustified, or solely for the convenience or personal preference of the employee are not eligible for reimbursement.

A. Lodging Expense: Reasonable lodging expense will be paid either directly by the City or will be reimbursed to the employee for an approved function. Tips paid for hotel/motel services will not be reimbursed.

B. Seminar/Tuition Expense: Approved conference, seminar or tuition registration expenses will be paid by the City.

C. Transportation: Reimbursement or payment of transportation expenses shall be in the best interest of the City. In no case shall the total travel reimbursement exceed the tourist class air rate or the actual mileage rate incurred, whichever is less. Tips for transportation services will not be reimbursed.

(1) Air Travel Procedure: Each Department is responsible for making air travel arrangements in a prudent manner.

(2) Travel by Personal Automobile: Travel by personal automobile will be allowed when it is in the best interest of the City. Employees are eligible for mileage reimbursement for actual miles driven to and from the function. The approved mileage reimbursement rate shall be the current rate established by the IRS for business purposes.

(3) Travel by City-owned Automobile: When taking a City automobile, the employee will be reimbursed for any gasoline expenditures incurred. A copy of the receipt with the mileage and vehicle number driven must be forwarded to Fleet Maintenance.

D. Meal Reimbursement: The City will reimburse employees for actual meal costs while travelling for business purposes.

(1) Meal expense reimbursement will not exceed these per meal amounts:

$ 15.00 Breakfast
15.00 Lunch
25.00 Dinner

(2) All meal receipts must be submitted in order to receive reimbursement. Meal reimbursement in excess of these amounts may be made only upon a showing of extraordinary circumstances, and should be pre-approved by the employee's supervisor when possible. The City will not reimburse any purchases of alcohol.

E. Miscellaneous Expenses: Employees will also be reimbursed for any other necessary charges such as taxi, bus, parking, etc. Receipts are required for any miscellaneous expenses for which the employee is requesting reimbursement.

3. Forms of Payment for Travel and Business Expenses. Travel and business expenses can be paid for or reimbursed in the following manner:

   A. Use of a City of Council Bluffs Purchasing Card is the preferred payment method for travel and business expenses.

   B. Employees who pay for their own travel and business expenses may obtain reimbursement for eligible expenses by completing the Travel and Business Expense Reimbursement Request form (see Appendix "A" – F401-1) and attaching receipts showing payment of applicable expenses within thirty (30) calendar days of return from the function. Employees will be reimbursed via direct deposit.

   C. For expenses that can be directly billed to the City, the employee can process payment through the normal accounts payable system. This method can be used to have a City check prepared for the employee to deliver at the time of the event.