

## **BUSINESS AND TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

### **SECTION A**

NOTE: Please use current forms. The forms are available IN THE DISTRICT STAFF HANDBOOK AVAILABLE ONLINE; PLEASE CONTACT YOUR BUILDING SECRETARY FOR HOW TO ACCESS. The forms are in the Accounts Payable and Receivable section in PDF format so that they may be printed as needed.

**Business expenses and one-day workshop and seminar** reimbursements require a Check Request Form signed by the appropriate administrator with conference information/BROCHURE WHICH INCLUDES WHAT, WHERE, WHEN AND COST as well as original itemized receipts. Reimbursements are paid and listed on your regular paycheck issued under the normal payroll schedule. They need to be in the Business Services office two weeks before payment.

**Overnight travel** requires a completed and budget manager/supervisor approved Conference Request Form. This is an estimate of costs before the expenses are incurred. The agreed upon amount may not necessarily cover the full cost of the conference. Although the amount of reimbursement is generally based on actual expenses, the pre-determined authorized amount and/or the available FEA or other allocation may limit it. Original itemized receipts of expenses up to the agreed upon amount are required for reimbursement.

**ATTENDANCE:** ONCE YOU HAVE ADMINISTRATOR APPROVAL TO ATTEND A CONFERENCE, FOLLOW THE APPROPRIATE ATTENDANCE REPORTING PROCEDURE FOR YOUR CLASSIFICATION.

For reimbursement, an employee must submit to the Business Services office complete conference information/brochure, the original itemized receipts, Meal Reimbursement Tracking Form, an approved Conference Request Form (if overnight travel) and any other documentation of expense, all attached to the Request for Reimbursement of Conference Expenses Form. Advance payment of expenses may be made directly to the conference organization, hotel or travel agent provided the request is accompanied by an approved Conference Request Form (if overnight travel), a Check Request Form, documentation of costs and is submitted within the accounts payable timeline calendar. (See Section B for Reimbursement of In-service Conference expenses for attendance under Article XV of the FEA contract.)

Employees are to use a high degree of prudence and judgment when submitting items for reimbursement.

**Transportation**, other than personal automobile, must be approved in advance. Travel agent booked airfare is paid directly to the agent through accounts payable. Reimbursement of airfare booked personally requires submitting an airline ticket stub or other documentation showing the airfare cost and payment and the person using the ticket. The cost in excess of tourist, coach or economy accommodations is not reimbursed. Employees driving round trip to out of town business destinations are reimbursed on a per mile basis or the amount of round trip coach airfare, whichever is less. Documentation must be provided for coach airfare if an automobile is

used instead of air travel. Personal automobile use is reimbursed at the contract-authorized rate per mile, except as noted above. On a normal work day, submit for reimbursement only conference/workshop mileage that exceeds your normal commuting miles to and from work.

Use airport/hotel transfer services whenever available. When not available, reasonable taxi expenses to and from the airport and for other conference related meetings are acceptable. Transportation costs for meals and entertainment outside the general conference requirements are not reimbursable. Rental automobiles may be used if they are authorized in advance and are the most reasonable cost of transportation. Whenever possible, transportation should be used collectively/shared. Original, itemized receipts for all such transportation are required for reimbursement.

Overnight airport, station or hotel parking at self-parking rates is reimbursed when submitted with original receipts.

**Hotel/Motel rooms** shall not exceed conference-published rates for single occupancy. Employees are encouraged to request a government rate if special conference rates are not available. An original itemized lodging bill must be submitted for reimbursement. Unless there is advance supervisory approval, the conference must exceed 60 miles from the attendee's home to qualify for lodging reimbursement. Miscellaneous tips (including those for cabs and hotel personnel) have a \$5.00 per day maximum.

Accommodations and services required but not related to a conference shall be of modest quality from both the standpoint of comfort and the appropriateness for business. Where appropriate, employees are encouraged to share rooms.

**Meals**, on a per diem basis including a maximum gratuity of 20%, are reimbursed up to a total of \$50.00 per day when required to stay overnight. This amount is prorated for meals using \$10.00 for breakfast, \$15.00 for lunch and \$25.00 for dinner. There are no "lapovers". Each meal is independent. Reimbursement for meals should not be submitted if they could have been consumed prior to the commencement of travel, i.e., breakfast after reaching the airport that could have been eaten at home. Should an employee decide to "go out" for a meal rather than attend a meal included in the registration/conference, the employee covers that cost. Reimbursement for dinner up to \$25.00 is permitted FOR A ONE DAY seminar/conference session when evening travel is necessary, I.E., IF YOU ARE IN LANSING AND YOUR CONFERENCE ENDS AT 4:30 P.M., YOU WOULD NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR A DINNER MEAL REIMBURSEMENT. HOWEVER, IF YOU WERE IN GRAND RAPIDS AND YOUR SESSION ENDS AT 4:30 P.M., YOU WOULD BE ELIGIBLE FOR A DINNER MEAL REIMBURSEMENT IF NOT INCLUDED IN THE CONFERENCE. If the point of travel is to a higher cost of living area or special circumstances exist such as a banquet, reasonable allowances may be made by the appropriate Central Office administrator. Please use the Meal Reimbursement Tracking Form to log your daily meals. Copy as appropriate and submit with Conference Reimbursement Request form. No "stubs or un-itemized" receipts will be reimbursed.

Request for reimbursement for all meals, even those charged to your room, must be documented with an original itemized receipt as well as time, place, business purpose and with all included guests or employees identified.

Only itemized, original food receipts at other than meal times are reimbursed. Coffee and water purchased during conferences are the employee's expense.

Non-reimbursable items include any expenses associated with a person accompanying the authorized person, laundry, any personal expenses, entertainment, movies and car rentals for convenience and alcoholic beverages.

IF YOU DID NOT PAY FOR THE EXPENSE, YOU WILL NOT BE REIMBURSED FOR IT. INCENTIVES SUCH AS FREQUENT FLYER MILES, VOUCHERS, COUPONS AND OTHER NON-CASH INCENTIVES DO NOT CONSTITUTE AND WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AS PROOF OF PAYMENT BECAUSE THESE ARE NOT "OUT-OF-POCKET" FOR THE EXPENSE. ITEMS SUCH AS GIFT CARDS OR GIFT CERTIFICATES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AS PROOF OF PAYMENT EVEN IF YOU PURCHASED THE GIFT CARD/CERTIFICATE WITH PERSONAL FUNDS.

Business phone calls and reasonable calls to the attendee's home are appropriate for reimbursement. Employees are encouraged to use the hotel's business center for Internet connectivity. Internet connectivity charges are the personal responsibility of the employee.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

**Original expense receipts must be** attached to the approved Request for Reimbursement of Conference Expenses Form. You must also include the Conference Request Form if overnight travel is involved. No Check Request is required. Reimbursement requests are to be submitted within (30) days of the actual expense. The thirty (30) day requirement does not apply to FEA conferences.

Conference reimbursement requests must be made separately from other non-conference expenses.

These procedures are applicable for travel in the United States and Canada. Foreign travel, if reimbursable, requires the approval of the Central Office Team.

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### **SECTION B**

#### **REIMBURSEMENT OF IN-SERVICE/CONFERENCE EXPENSES FOR ATTENDANCE UNDER ARTICLE XV OF THE FEA CONTRACT**

If a teacher wishes to seek reimbursement for conference/in-service expenses, he/she will submit a Request for Reimbursement of Conference Expenses Form to the Building In-service Committee. The teacher must submit the form by May 15th and attach all itemized expense receipts. Provided that the Committee determines that the conference/in-service and expenses are legitimate, a request for reimbursement will not be denied. However, non-reimbursable items include any expenses associated with a person accompanying the authorized person, laundry, any personal expenses, entertainment, car rentals for convenience and alcoholic beverages.

A teacher who submits a request for reimbursement understands that if the expenses exceed the per capita allocation defined in Article XV.B. of the contract, only the per capita allocation is assured. However, provided that a teacher's entire building/pool allocation has not been distributed, the teacher will receive a prorated share of the remaining funds for expenses up to 100% of the submitted expenses. All payments will be made by June 30th. In addition, in buildings/pools where there has been a carryover of funds, the Building In-service Committee may approve 100% reimbursement of a conference registration fee, as soon as proper documentation has been provided during the school year. Upon approval of the Committee, the District will process the payment as soon as possible.

Teachers who attend conferences at the request of the District, or attend a conference that is reimbursed with monies from a fund other than the allocation bargained in Article XV of the FEA contract, will be subject to the provisions of Section A of this procedure.

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