



Administrative Policy No. : B-9

Updated as of: July 26, 2023

Approved: [Signature]

REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL AND NECESSARY EXPENSES POLICY

1. **PURPOSE:** To establish an accountable plan and uniform procedures for reimbursing city employees for travel, meetings and out of pocket expenses incurred while on official business.
2. **SCOPE:** The City hereby establishes policies and procedures for the reimbursement of general travel and other actual and necessary expenses incurred by the city manager, department heads, and employees ("employees") in the course of performing their official duties.
3. **GENERAL POLICY:**
 - 3.1. This policy establishes standards for all City employees for travel and business expenses incurred while performing or conducting official City business.
 - 3.2. The City Manager and department heads are charged with the responsibility of authorizing travel and reimbursement per this policy, and ensuring that all expenditures hereunder are within approved budget limits.
 - 3.3. The Finance Director may refer any reimbursement claim to the City Manager for review and approval as set forth in Section 3.6.
 - 3.4. All employees requesting reimbursement for allowed expenses other than meals must provide a valid receipt. Any such receipt shall include or be accompanied by documentation of the name of the vendor (e.g., hotel, airline, taxi), the date and purpose of service and actual amount charged.
 - 3.5. In the event a receipt is not available to substantiate an expense, the employee may submit a written explanation, with all pertinent expense and situational details through their organizational chain of command to their respective department head. Requests approved by a department head will be sent to the Assistant City Manager, who will review such requests for reimbursement and make a final determination as to approval or denial. Reimbursement requests for business expenses without original receipts will be processed for payment only upon approval by the City Manager.
 - 3.6. Discretion. This policy does not claim to have addressed all contingencies and

conditions. Any necessary and reasonable expense that may from time-to-time be justified due to circumstances or opportunities for the City or any necessary and reasonable expenses that may deviate from the provision of this Policy, may be presented to the Finance Director and City Manager for their review and approval. The Finance Director and/or City Manager shall exercise due diligence to ensure that expenses are reasonable and necessary for the conduct of City business, are within budgetary limits and ensure the City's fiscal position by minimizing costs.

3.7. Personal and business travel shall not be commingled in such a manner as to increase allowable expense or otherwise adversely affect the interest of the City.

4. LODGING AND RELATED EXPENSES:

4.1. Actual and necessary cost of lodging and related expenses, including advance payments to any city employee, shall be allowed up to the Per Diem rates set by the U.S. General Services Administration for the city in which the lodging facility is located (www.gsa.gov), except as otherwise provided in this Section 4.

4.2. Employees should seek the most affordable rates available for safe, convenient, clean accommodations at 3-star quality properties, using group or discounted rates when available. In addition to the primary travel cost, *e.g.*, room rate, *etc.*, an employee making lodging arrangements should also consider secondary costs, *e.g.*, internet service fees, property use fees, *etc.* Reservations for lodging should be booked as early as possible to take advantage of lower rates.

Employees should only schedule refundable hotel reservations to ensure that you will be reimbursed if the event is rescheduled or cancelled. You will not be reimbursed for lodging reserved on non- refundable reservation sites unless preapproved by immediate supervisor.

4.3. Lodging in upgraded rooms is allowable if: **(a)** the employee pays the cost difference or **(b)** the employee or his/her department can document that no other option exists and the selected lodging is the only option available.

4.4. When lodging is in connection with a conference or organized educational activity, lodging expenses shall not exceed the group rate published by the conference sponsor for the conference in question. The employee shall endeavor to stay at the conference sponsored lodging facilities.

4.5. Lodging and related expenditures outside the provisions of this policy may be allowed only when pre-approved by the Assistant City Manager, in accordance with Section 3.6.

4.6. An employee's reimbursement claims for lodging, and credit card log when applicable, must include an explanation of the business purpose of the stay and be supported by a receipt/facility folio.

5. MEAL EXPENSES:

- 5.1. Meal expenses shall be allowed at the Per Diem rate set by the U.S. General Services Administration for the city in which the lodging, overnight, facility is located (www.gsa.gov), inclusive of taxes and reasonable tips. Per Diem advances and reimbursements for meals shall be allowed when related to attendance at conventions, scheduled meetings, conferences, seminars, special training or assignments that require an overnight stay.
- 5.2. An employee's reimbursement claim shall be based on the number of days multiplied by the daily Per Diem allowance, with the travel days (first and last) allowable at 75 percent of the daily rate. Meal expenses up to the Per Diem rate do not require a receipt to be allowable. Meal expenses beyond the Per Diem reimbursement allowance are the responsibility of the employee.
- 5.3. Meal expenses during attendance at any single day event will be allowable only when it is not reasonable for the employee to provide their own meal(s) and only when the employee travels more than 60 miles from City limits. Requests for a same-day travel meal shall only be allowed when preapproved by the employee's department head, in accordance with this policy. In evaluating any request for same-day meal reimbursements, the employee's department head shall consider special situations on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the distance traveled and the duration of the specific business activity. The maximum reimbursement for any single meal should be based on the daily Per Diem allowance breakdown as provided by the U.S General Services Administration (www.gsa.gov) for breakfast, lunch or dinner, respectively, inclusive of taxes and tip.
- 5.4. Travel to a temporary worksite does not qualify an employee for meal reimbursement.

6. TRANSPORTATION:

- 6.1. The most economic mode and class of transportation shall be used using the most direct and time-efficient route. Employees are to secure the least expensive flights and car rental arrangements possible at the time of the purchase. Reservations for transportation should be booked as early as is reasonable to take advantage of lower rates. In addition to the primary travel cost, e.g., airfare, rental rate, etc., an employee making transportation arrangements should also consider secondary costs, e.g., baggage charges, special fees, etc.
- 6.2. Travel in business class, first class or any category on any flight above the coach/economy level is allowable only if (a) the employee pays the cost difference or (b) the employee or his/her department can document that no other option exists and the selected flight is the only option for travel. Reservations for air transportation should be booked as early as is reasonable to take advantage of lower cost airfares. Upon request of the City Manager, supporting documentation that the flight and car reservations made were the least expensive option available is to be provided.
- 6.3. Airfare/Train. Allowance for air and train travel is based on actual round trip coach fare,

tourist fare or by the method least costly to the City. Employees are expected to make special efforts to take advantage of discounts, special fares and travel vouchers whenever available at reasonable and convenient times.

- 6.4. Car Rental. Allowance for car rental is based on actual cost to rent a mid-range size vehicle. Employees are expected to make special efforts to take advantage of discounts, special fares and travel vouchers whenever available at reasonable and convenient times. Employees must have a valid California driver's license and proof of insurance when using a rental vehicle while on City business. Employees are required to notify Human Resources at (760) 391-4066 and Risk Management Coordinator at (760) 391-4016 and the employee's supervisor as soon as possible (within 24 hours) of any event/incident causing property damage, or accident related to the rental car.
- 6.5. Taxis and/or Shuttles. Taxis and/or shuttles may be reimbursed, including up to a 20 percent gratuity or five dollars (\$5.00) per fare.
- 6.6. Parking Expenses. The City will provide reimbursement for actual cost of parking associated with travel, including parking at the airport, hotel and conference parking, training or meeting site or in conjunction with any employee City business activity.
- 6.7. Claims for payment or employee reimbursement shall be allowable when accompanied by a receipt for the purchase and a copy of the ticket purchased or other voucher for the common carrier expense.
- 6.8. Government and group rates must be used when available. Actual costs evidenced by an original, dated receipt and inclusive of all related taxes and other rental fees shall be submitted along with actual gas receipts (dated, vendor name printed on the receipt) obtained for the purchase of gas for the rental vehicle.

7. PRIVATE AUTOMOBILE:

- 7.1. With the exception of employees receiving a stipend for an automobile, the City's preference is for all employees to use City fleet vehicles rather than personal vehicles.
- 7.2. The City's private-vehicle mileage reimbursement rate is the same as the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) standard mileage rate for private vehicles and will be effective concurrently with IRS periodic establishment of said rate.
- 7.3. Mileage reimbursements for use of a private vehicle shall be allowed upon authorization of the employee's department head or the City Manager. Reimbursement of private mileage will only be granted when a more economical means of travel is not available. In any case, mileage will not be reimbursed for portions of the trip made for non-business related matters.
- 7.4. Private vehicle expenses are allowable when in the course and scope of employment, including overnight travel, and when the employee:

- a) Completes the "Authorization to Drive City of Indio Vehicle or Private Vehicle for City Business Form" (Attachment 1), subsequently approved by the employee's department head and the Human Resources Director/Risk Manager. Department head's shall confirm that each employee operating under him/her submitting an Authorization to Drive form, has a valid driver's license;
- b) Insures the vehicle to the minimum limits required by the City's personnel policies. Such insurance must be maintained at all times while the individual is employed in a position where it is required or may be required to use a personal vehicle while in the course and scope of employment. In the event of an incident or accident, the City does not assume responsibility for any physical damage to an employee's personal vehicle or for the payment of any kind of deductible; and
- c) Maintains a valid driver's license, which is appropriate for the class of vehicle to be operated. If any restrictions apply, the employee must notify his/her supervisor of the restrictions and/or any and all changes in the license (i.e. suspended, etc.).

7.5. The use of motorcycles, mopeds, and similar types of vehicles for the conduct of City business is expressly prohibited, with the exception of personnel on duty in a specific assignment.

7.6. When a department head or the City Manager authorizes use of a private vehicle for the convenience of the driver, instead of more economical travel by air, reimbursement shall not exceed the cost of usual airfare, plus ground transportation.

7.7. Employees are required to notify the risk management coordinator, and the employee's supervisor (if any) as soon as possible, but in no event more than twenty-four (24) hours after any incident or accident. Employees must complete the "Driver's Report of Accident" (Attachment 2).

7.8. Neither an employee receiving a monthly auto allowance nor an employee utilizing a city owned vehicle in their regular scope of employment is eligible to receive private-vehicle-mileage reimbursement unless preauthorized by the City Manager.

8. **PRIVATE AIRCRAFT:** The use of private aircraft for the conduct of City business is expressly prohibited unless pre-approved by the City Manager. Nothing in this policy shall be viewed to modify or in any way limit the applicability of the Political Reform Act or any related regulations to use of private aircraft by employees.

9. MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES:

9.1. Miscellaneous expenses, including charges for business telephone, calls, fax service, e-mail services, internet, the cost of usual or necessary services and supplies, including emergency repairs, parts or towing for City vehicles, conference registration fees, vehicle parking, bridge tolls, and any other justifiable business expenses shall be allowed if the

expense is necessary for the employee to conduct City related business or is otherwise a legitimate business need.

9.2. A satisfactory explanation and documentation of the circumstances is required for these miscellaneous expenditures. An employee's reimbursement request for actual miscellaneous expenses shall be accompanied by an original receipt or other original voucher. Personal telephone calls and personal internet usage are not allowable expenses.

10. ADVANCE TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION:

10.1. Necessary and allowable travel expenses require prior authorization by the City Manager or designee wherein the estimated total cost (including registration, transportation, lodging, and meals) is expected to cost two thousand dollars (\$2,000) or more per person, or if the travel is out of state.

10.2. Necessary and allowable travel expenses require prior authorization by the employee's department head wherein the estimated total cost (including registration, transportation, lodging and meals) is less than one two thousand dollars (\$2,000) per person. The department head's approval indicates that the travel is approved and within budget.

10.3. Each advance travel request shall be in the proper form, "Travel Approval Form" (Attachment 4) or IPD Training/Travel Requisition (Attachment 5).

11. CASH ADVANCES:

11.1. Employees may request a cash advance for use in the course of necessary and allowable travel. The employee's department head and the City Manager shall approve the issuance of any cash advance, when an excess of per diem for meals. Cash advances are to be documented and reported in the same manner as expenses incurred and submitted for reimbursements, e.g., receipts must be saved, a claim form must be submitted, expenses are limited, approvals of expenses must be secured, etc. Any and all unused cash must be returned to the City within five days of the conclusion of travel. Notwithstanding, a travel advance of any denomination will not be granted whenever the requesting employee has an open travel-advance on file, wherein the employee has not submitted all the necessary receipts and paperwork confirming that the previous advance was used in its entirety for actual and necessary expenditures in accordance with this policy.

12. USE OF EXPENSE REPORTING CLAIM FORM:

12.1. Each employee submitting a claim for reimbursement under this policy must file a "City of Indio Expense Reporting Claim Form," (Attachment 3) and must include date, business destination, amount, and business purpose. Claims shall be filed promptly, no later than 30 days after the expense occurred. Claims filed after this time will not be considered for payment.

12.2. Each claim form submitted must meet the requirements of this policy, including providing

receipts and/or credit card slips, and shall be reviewed by the submitting employee's department head and the Finance Department for compliance with this policy. Review of each City of Indio Expense Reporting Claim Form shall be documented in a "Travel Approval Form" (Attachment 4).

12.3. All claim forms and associated documents related to reimbursable City expenditures are considered public records, and are subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act {Chapter 3.5 (Commencing with Section 6250) of Division 7 Title 1}.

13. NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES:

13.1. Expenses that the City will not reimburse include, but are not limited to:

- a) Purchases made for goods and/or services of a business owned (whether in whole or in part) by any current member of the City Council, Housing Authority, Indio Water Authority, Indio Public Financing Authority, the Successor Agency to the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Indio or other authority for which the city is a partner agency;
- b) The personal portion of any trip;
- c) Political or charitable contributions;
- d) Family expenses, including spouse or partner's expenses when accompanying an employee on agency-related business, as well as children- or pet-related expenses;
- e) Entertainment expenses, including but not limited to theater, movies (either in-room or at the theater), recreational events not related to City business (including gym, massage and/or golf related expenses), and cultural events not related to City business;
- f) Personal automobile expenses, including repairs, traffic citations, insurance or gasoline;
- g) Personal alcohol or bar expenses, even when incurred in conjunction with reimbursable meal expenses;
- h) Personal losses incurred while on City business; and
- i) Expenses bearing no relation to City business, even if incurred while traveling for City business.

14. PENALTIES:

14.1. Penalties for the misuse of public resources, non-compliance with this policy or falsifying expense reports in violation of expense reporting policies may include, but not be limited to, employee discipline under the City's personnel rules as well as the penalties specified in state law including but not limited to:

- a) The loss of reimbursement privileges;
- b) Restitution to the local agency;
- c) Civil penalties for misuse of public resources pursuant to Section 8314 of the Government Code; and
- d) Prosecution for misappropriation of public resources, per Section 424 of the Penal Code.

Reference:

Previous policy dated 12/15/10

Previous policy dated 07/15/15

Previous policy dated 11/02/15

Previous policy dated 06/13/16

Attachment 1: Authorization to Drive City of Indio Vehicle or Private Vehicle for City Business Form

Attachment 2: Driver's Report of Accident

Attachment 3: Expense Reporting Claim Form

Attachment 4: Travel Approval Form

CITY OF INDIU AUTHORIZATION TO DRIVE CITY VEHICLE OR PRIVATE VEHICLE FOR CITY BUSINESS

NAME (LAST)	(FIRST)	(MIDDLE)	HOME ADDRESS (STREET)	(CITY)	(ZIP CODE)
DRIVER LICENSE NO.	STATE	CLASS	EMPLOYEE DEPT.	DATE OF BIRTH	SOCIAL SECURITY NO.
PHONE NUMBER	JOB TITLE		RESTRICTIONS TO LICENSE (IF NONE, WRITE NONE)		

VOLUNTEER: YES NO

I AM CURRENTLY IN POSSESSION OF A VALID CALIFORNIA DRIVER LICENSE: YES NO

I hereby declare that I will:

- a. Report immediately to my supervisor or department head and the police department all on-the-job vehicle incidents or accidents on all necessary forms whenever I am the driver of a vehicle while conducting City business.
- b. Inform my supervisor or department head immediately if my driver license is expired, suspended or revoked.
- c. Maintain vehicle liability insurance at the minimal insurance limits as required by the State of California or if registered/licensed out of state, equal to or greater than required by the State of California, for any private vehicle used while in the course and scope of City business.
- d. Maintain and operate my vehicle in a safe operating condition as defined by the California Vehicle Code.
- e. Operate a City owned vehicle in a manner that is safe and in accordance with the California Vehicle Code and appropriate City policies.

I understand that failure to do any of the above may result in disciplinary action.
 I acknowledge my personal insurance is primary when using my private vehicle for City business and that I am responsible for all deductible(s).
 I acknowledge that City policy requires me to carry business use insurance on my private vehicle.
 I hereby acknowledge the City may from time to time request and/or review my Department of Motor Vehicles driving record and I hereby authorize release of said information.

Signature of Employee: _____ Date: _____

I have validated that the individual has a valid driver's license, which is class appropriate, and that the individual has sufficient insurance coverage.

Signature of HR & Risk Management: _____ Date: _____

I hereby approve cancel the above named individual's authorization to drive a City or private vehicle in accordance with the appropriate driver license class for which the individual is licensed. Authorization is automatically cancelled if this individual's license becomes expired, suspended or revoked.

Signature of Department Head: _____ Date: _____