

## **Travel Expense Guidelines Reimbursements**

a. **Within ten (10) working days from the date of return from travel**, a [Travel Expense Reimbursement Form](#) (sample form available in Forms Appendix 5.6) must be submitted to the Business Office with proper approvals and with **original documentation** of actual expenditures. Supporting documentation is to include but not be limited to the following: travel agency invoices and copy of airline tickets; lodging receipts; all receipts for meals and sundry items; ground transportation and parking; registration fees (receipt). All advances must be reflected and only original receipts will be reimbursed.

1. If the College credit card is used, the original credit card receipts are to be included on the travel form which is forwarded to the Business Office with the budget code.

2. The Travel Expense Reimbursement Form covers five (5) days. An additional report should be completed for a trip of more than five (5) days. The two forms should be totaled on the second page.

3. As long as a travel advance is outstanding, no additional travel advances can be issued.

b. For mileage reimbursement, (see below for further explanation) a Monthly Personal Car Mileage Reimbursement Voucher (sample form available in Forms Appendix 5.6) must be submitted to the Business Office with proper approvals. This is applicable for In-District Travel only. For a more detailed discussion of mileage, refer to Section 5.4.2.1.1.a, above,.

## **Travel Expense Guidelines**

### **Approved Travel Expense Items**

1) Overnight Stays – Overnight stays in the greater Houston area can be authorized by the LEO. Examples include when traveling home could be dangerous (i.e., late at night), when the employee is a host committee member, when it is not reasonable to expect the employee to commute, or when travel would restrict the employee from participating in professional development activities.

2) Airfare – All airline tickets for approved out-of-district travel must be purchased online. Whenever possible, airline reservations and ticket purchases should be made sufficiently in advance to take advantage of any available discount fares. The lowest fare available should be purchased, even if it requires additional overnight accommodations (assuming the savings is greater than the hotel charges).

#### 4) Meals

a) Cost of meals must be reasonable. Because different areas of the state and country have a higher cost-of-living than others, questions about reasonable costs for meals should be directed to the LEO.

b) The use of per diem for meals will not be accepted. Meal reimbursement requires a receipt. The receipt is not required to be itemized; however, the LEO may require additional information or documentation for costs that appear to be inappropriate or excessive. The LEO reserves the right to disallow meal expenses that are deemed inappropriate or excessive.

c) Public funds may not be used for reimbursement for the purchase of alcoholic beverages unless beverages are served as part of an official function which has been previously approved by the LEO.

d) Payment for meals should be made with the P-Card, or with personal funds that will be reimbursed upon completion of travel.

#### FOOD/MEAL EXPENSES

#### WHILE TRAVELING ON LSCS BUSINESS

**WHEN ON OVERNIGHT TRAVEL, LSCS EMPLOYEES ARE ALLOWED THREE MEALS PER DAY. EMPLOYEES MAY PURCHASE BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND DINNER AT A RESTAURANT OR FOOD STORE. SNACKS AND OTHER NON-MEAL REFRESHMENTS ARE NOT REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES.**

	<u>NOT</u> <u>Reimbursable</u>	<u>Reimbursable</u>
7:30 a.m.		Breakfast
10:00 a.m.	Coffee	
12 noon		Lunch
2:00 p.m.	Water	
4:00 p.m.	Candy Bar	
6:30 p.m.		Dinner
8:30 p.m.	Ice Cream	

5) Other Transportation – Other expenses such as taxis, shuttles, and parking are allowable and should be paid with the P-Card, or with personal funds that will be reimbursed upon completion of travel. Original receipts are required to be submitted with the Travel Reimbursement Form.

6) Registration Fees – Registration fees should be paid with the P-Card, or with personal funds that will be reimbursed upon completion of travel.

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#### 7) Airport Driving/Parking Arrangements

a) The most economical means of transportation to and from the airport should be arranged. If overnight parking is required at the airport, economical parking facilities should be used: for example, long-term shuttle or long-term extended parking facilities as opposed to short-term parking facilities.

b) Round-trip taxi or shuttle service may be used in lieu of airport parking and mileage. The maximum amount allowed for such expenses will be the lesser of the normal daily rate for economy parking times the number of days traveled, or the actual cost for round-trip taxi or shuttle service.

c) These expenses should be paid with the P-Card, or with personal funds that will be reimbursed upon completion of travel. Original receipts are required to be submitted with the Travel Reimbursement Form.

#### 8) Automobile Travel

a) The total mileage cost (including en route lodging and meals) or the lowest round trip coach airfare will be allowed, whichever is lower.

b) Mileage can only be reimbursed upon the presentation of an approved Travel Reimbursement Form with actual miles driven indicated.

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#### 9) Rental Cars

a) A rental car may be authorized when other forms of ground transportation are deemed not to be effective and economical. In determining the necessity for a rental car, the employee should consider the distance between hotel and conference center, alternate forms of affordable transportation (cabs, courtesy vehicles, etc.), number of persons traveling together, etc. In all cases, the least expensive method of ground transportation should be used.

b) An employee must meet the following requirements in order to request approval for the use of a rental car.

- Minimum age of 25 years old
- Possess a valid driver's license
- Must rent vehicle in the name of Lone Star College System
- Purchase the Loss Damage Waiver (LDW) for loss of or damage to the rented vehicle. Some rental companies use the term Collision Damage Waiver (CDW).
- Do NOT purchase liability insurance supplement (LIS), Personal Accident Insurance (PAI), or Personal Effects Coverage (PEC)

c) Use of a rental car MUST be approved in advance by the LEO.

d) Rental cars should be paid with the P-Card, or with personal funds that will be reimbursed upon completion of travel. Original receipts are required to be submitted with the Travel Reimbursement Form.

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#### 10) Other Covered Items

a) Telephone – All actual telephone expenses for District business will be reimbursed. An 800 number is available and should be used for Internet access. Personal calls to the employee's home are authorized unless they are excessive in number and length of time.

b) Gratuities – Gratuities may be reimbursed, if itemized and reasonable in amount. The LEO reserves the right to deny reimbursement, if the gratuities are deemed inappropriate or excessive.

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### **3. International Travel**

Any travel that is outside of the 48 contiguous states, Canada, or Mexico, is considered international travel for purposes of this policy. All international travel is required to be approved by the LEO, who will then notify the Chancellor's office of the approved travel.

## **Mileage**

### **A. Mileage, parking and toll road charges**

1) Mileage is reimbursed at the approved rate per mile published by the Internal Revenue Service. The District Finance office will announce new rates and their effective dates, as the information is received. Daily miles traveled must exceed the employee's normal daily driving distance between home and the regular work location. Reimbursement will be for the excess distance traveled (home to location minus home to work mileage). Refer to the approved mileage between Lone Star College System locations for mileage calculations. This mileage information is distributed by the District Facilities office.

2) Parking and toll road charges will be reimbursed when original receipts are attached. However, an employee may request reimbursement at the reduced EZ Tag rate for toll road charges, without submitting receipts.

3) For reimbursement, a Personal Vehicle Mileage Reimbursement Form (sample form available in Forms Appendix 5.6) should be completed.