

# AP 7400 Travel

## Reference:

*Education Code Section 87032*

## General:

This procedure is in compliance with the previously approved Board Policy #7400, by the Governing Board and is consistent with Education Code Section 87032. The Governing Board encourages members of the faculty, administration, classified staff, governing board, and selected student representatives to participate in off-campus activities for institutional, professional and educational purposes that will enhance the programs and services for Taft College.

## Control of Travel:

1. Employees are expected to exercise prudent judgment when incurring travel expenses for official District business. Excessive and unnecessary expenses will not be approved or reimbursed.
2. Employees may be required to submit a trip report along with their "Expense Report."

## Approval Required:

1. An "Absence Request Form" is to be prepared by the employee for in-district and out-of-district travel. All costs in conjunction with official business travel must be included. The "Absence Request Form" must be approved by the Vice President of the employee's department and the District Board of Trustees prior to the date of the trip.
2. The District Board of Trustees reviews and approves all "Absence Request Forms." Employees must be clear and concise when stating their "Destination and Purpose" on the form. The "Destination and Purpose" section assists in justifying an employee's travel or attendance at events when approving or disapproving travel. Be specific and do not use acronyms when stating the purpose.
3. Employees may request to use a District vehicle if they have a valid California driver's license. If an employee uses their personal vehicle for District travel, the employee's insurance will be primary and the District's insurance secondary prior to travel, the employee must submit a copy of their verification of vehicle insurance. A "Request for Transportation"

must be submitted for authorization for use of District or personal vehicle for District travel for each trip.

4. Travel must be by the most direct route possible and any employee traveling by an indirect route must assume any and all additional expenses incurred.

#### **Travel Prepayments:**

1. Conference Registration: An "Absence Request Form" should be prepared far enough in advance to allow for obtaining the required signatures at the District and to take advantage of any early bird discounts. Documentation must identify the event, dates, location, and all fees. Employees may be asked to submit a trip report along with their "Expense Report" regarding their conference. Conference fees can be paid by the District in advance by submitting a check request or source requisition to the Business Office along with the appropriate backup documentation.
2. Commercial Air Travel: All air travel requests must be submitted in advance to the Administrative Assistant of the Superintendent/President. This will allow sufficient time to make appropriate arrangements and issue advance payment through the District. However, in special circumstances with prior approval, if an employee personally pays for the air travel, an original receipt is required for reimbursement.

#### **Summary of Reimbursements:**

1. Meals are reimbursed at the rate of \$40 per day including gratuities. This is the maximum allowed regardless whether receipts are provided or not. Receipts are encouraged as documentation, but not required. Employees will not be reimbursed for meals when such meals are included in conference or meeting.
2. Lodging is reimbursed at *actual cost* and must be supported by an itemized receipt. No reimbursement will be authorized without an appropriate receipt.
3. Conference and registration fees will require an original receipt, along with agendas or programs when available to support employee's attendance and/or participation.
4. Employees will not be reimbursed for alcoholic beverages, personal phone calls (*exception*: safe arrival and departure phone call not to exceed 5 minutes), entertainment, or any other expenses that are not necessary to business travel.

5. Parking, bridge tolls, taxi, and miscellaneous business expenses shall be an allowable reimbursement when submitted with an original receipt. Receipts are not required for incidental expenses up to \$5 per day such as taxi fares, bus fares, ferry, tolls, temporary parking, etc. These expenses must be reasonable and itemized on employee's "Expense Report." However, whenever possible, receipts are encouraged as documentation.
6. Mileage reimbursement for use of personal vehicles will be at the rate established annually by the I.R.S.
7. Rental of vehicles must be authorized on an "Absence Request Form" prior to travel. Reimbursement will be for actual and necessary costs of the rental when substantiated by an original receipt and appropriate documentation.
8. Air travel approved by the Administrative Assistant of the President in advance.
9. Each employee is responsible for submitting a **separate** travel "Expense Report" for the expenses they incurred as a result of the travel. Please do not combine expenses for more than one person on each "Expense Report" form.

**Lodging:**

1. Actual lodging costs, not to exceed charges at the single occupancy rate, are allowed. This cost may be paid directly to the hotel in advance. Expenses must be verified by hotel billing. Original itemized hotel receipts are required. Credit card receipts are not acceptable.
2. Employees are expected to obtain the best possible rates for an acceptable standard room. Conference, government, and convention group rates should be maximized. Hotel rates that may appear to be abnormal should be explained with a short note, such as seasonal rates, etc.
3. If lodging is shared with another employee, one may pay and be reimbursed for the expenses of the other employee(s). Appropriate documentation verifying the payment must be included in the travel claim.
4. When an employee shares lodging facilities with a non-district person (e.g., spouse, children, etc.), reimbursement is limited to the employee's room expense only at the single occupancy rate. **All reimbursement claims for such instances must include the rate for single occupancy in addition to the original hotel receipt.**

5. Under no circumstances will lodging be paid for a guest or spouse. If an employee stays with friends or relatives while on official college business, no cost for lodging is allowed, whether or not any payment is made to the friend or relative.
6. Lodging costs only for the appropriate and reasonable amount of time to conduct official business will be reimbursed. All additional expenses will be the responsibility of the employee.

**Meals:**

1. Reimbursement for meals is at the daily rate of \$40 per day including gratuities. Receipts are not required. This is not a blanket stipend of \$40 per day; in the event meal expenses are less than the \$40 per day, the actual amount should be claimed. Employees will not be reimbursed for meals when such meals are included in conference or meeting.
2. Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

**Transportation:**

1. A "Request for Transportation" must be submitted for authorization for use of District or personal vehicle during travel. A copy of the employee's current insurance card **must be** on file with Taft College if they are using their personal vehicle.
2. District vehicles are the preferred method of travel when available.
3. Mileage reimbursement for personal vehicles will be at the standard I.R.S. rate established annually.
4. Rental of vehicles must be authorized on employee's "Absence Request Form" prior to travel. Reimbursement will be for actual and necessary costs of the rental when substantiated by an original receipt and appropriate documentation.
5. All air travel requests must be submitted and processed by the Administrative Assistant of the Superintendent/President in advance.

**Miscellaneous Expense:**

Miscellaneous travel expenses essential to the transaction of official college business are reimbursable to the employee, when reasonably incurred. Such expenses include:

1. A safe arrival and departure phone call home not to exceed 5 minutes each.

2. Telephone, fax, and network charges incurred while conducting District business.
3. Minor supplies such as reproduction costs when necessary.
4. Bus fares, taxi, tolls, and temporary parking when necessary.

**Non-Reimbursable Expenses:**

1. Alcoholic beverages.
2. Entertainment expenses, movie rentals, and other luxury items similar in nature.
3. Personal telephone calls, other than the safe arrival and departure phone call not to exceed 5 minutes each.
4. Traffic or parking citations while using a private or District vehicle.
5. Lodging in excess of the reasonable time to travel to and from the meeting destination to conduct official business.
6. Lodging for unauthorized personnel.
7. Transportation to or from places of entertainment and similar facilities.
8. Dining expenses when such meals are included in the conference or meeting fee.

**Receipts:**

1. Receipts are required for lodging, conference registration/fees, airfare, car rental, business phone calls, parking, tolls, and all other miscellaneous expenses.
2. Receipts are not required for meals (when using the per diem rate).
3. Receipts are not required for incidental expenses up to \$5 per day such as taxi fares, bus fares, ferry, tolls, temporary parking, etc. These expenses must be reasonable and itemized on employee's "Expense Report." However, whenever possible, receipts are encouraged as documentation.

### **Group Travel:**

A group Travel Reimbursement may be claimed under the following circumstances:

1. They must travel together to the same destination as a group.
2. Air travel is not involved.
3. All expenses being claimed must be incurred as a group and the other members of the group are not claiming any expense reimbursements.
4. A separate sheet must be attached to the Travel Claim indicating the name and title of all members of the group.

### **Hosting Official Guests:**

Expenses of luncheon or dinner meetings held in connection with Taft College business or with the entertaining of guests visiting Taft College on official business are allowable with prior approval. Expenditures should be limited to the cost of food only. The District does not pay for alcoholic beverages. Meal expenses of staff members are usually a personal responsibility; however, reimbursement for meals of employees may be allowed in situations such as:

1. A member of a search committee hosts a candidate for a position; or
2. A departmental employee hosts a visiting lecturer, potential donor, or other official guest to the District.

### **Exceptions:**

Vice Presidents and the President/Superintendent have an open approved authorization for hosting official guests on official business without the required signed authorization from the department head. However, documentation as to the reason for the expense must be provided.

### **Executive and Board of Trustee Travel:**

Meal expenses of approved travel by the Superintendent/President and members of the Board of Trustees will be reimbursed at actual costs with receipts. All other District travel reimbursement allowances and regulations apply.

### **Claiming Reimbursement:**

Employees must submit an "Expense Report" and provide the following:

1. List all expenses and submit appropriate receipts for expenses authorized. (Examples: hotel receipts, airfare, car rental, conference fees, etc)
2. Proper signatures for authorization of reimbursement.
3. Submit Expense Report/Travel Claim to the Business Office for reimbursement.
4. Claims should be submitted within two weeks after travel has been completed, and no more than 30 days. All travel claims must be submitted during the fiscal year in which they occurred.

**Claims May Be Disallowed:**

1. If an employee does not provide proper itemization of an expense;
2. If an employee does not provide receipts or other documentation required to support their claim; and
3. If an employee claims an expense which is not authorized.

**Reconsideration for Disallowance of Claim:**

1. When a claim is disallowed, a notice will be issued to the employee, and the remainder of the employee's claim for those items, which are not disallowed, will be processed.
2. An employee may request reconsideration of their claim by the Business Office if they have additional facts or documentation to support their request for reconsideration.