

# AP 7400 Travel

## Reference:

*Education Code Section 87032*

*2 Code of Federal Regulations Part 200.474*

*Government Code Section 11139.8*

## 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.

Government Code Section 11139.8 prohibits a state agency from requiring its employees, officers, or members to travel to, or approving a request for state-funded or sponsored travel to, any state that, after June 26, 2015 has eliminated protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

## Control of Travel:

1. All travel requests require the approval of the immediate supervisors and president prior to the travel. All travel outside the United States requires the approval of the board of trustees. Please plan enough time to get all approvals prior to travel. Travel without prior approval will not be reimbursed.
2. 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.
3. Employees are required to submit receipts for all reimbursable charges except for the meal per diem.
4. Employees may be required to submit a trip report along with their final claimed expenses.
5. If an employee cannot attend the conference, the employee is personally responsible to cancel lodging, conference registration, and airfare. Failure to comply will result in personal liability for all non-cancelled charges. Employees who have justifiably cancelled conference attendance and who

have cancelled lodging, airfare and other costs will not be liable for expenses.

### **Approval Required:**

Expenses may be reimbursed only if incurred while the employee is on “travel status” meaning that travel has prior approval pursuant to District policy and regulations.

#### Steps to Activate Travel Status

1. Initiator will complete the travel request form and present it to both their immediate/approving supervisor and the Vice President of the employee’s department. The initiator should complete all portions indicating preference for pre-payment of conference fees, lodging, and transportation to cover these expenditures. It will also be necessary to attach all pertinent backup documents. Purchase orders must be submitted for prepayment requests and/or estimated reimbursement costs associate with the travel requests must be submitted in the system and the purchase order number noted on the form.

NOTE: the “Claim for Absence/Travel Reimbursement” form should always be submitted for approval even if there is not associated costs to the travel request.

2. Approved travel forms with appropriate documentation are to be forwarded to the Superintendent/President’s office for approval prior to the date of the trip.
3. “Claim for Absence/Travel Reimbursement” 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. Conference fees and travel arrangements should be paid by the individual and reimbursed by the District. A request for an advance of expenses may be made at time of submitting the “Claim for Absence/Travel Reimbursement” as long as the approved paperwork is submitted to the Business Office at least 30 days in advance of the travel.

Travelers are expected to obtain the lowest available airfare in coach or economy class tickets that reasonably meets district travel needs for domestic and international flights. Travelers are encouraged to book flights at least fourteen (14) days in advance to avoid premium pricing. A higher-priced coach ticket for a subsequent upgrade in seating will not be reimbursed. Additional costs from the change of the original ticket for the convenience of the employee will not be reimbursed.

Reimbursable for room and tax rate only when authorized travel is forty (40) miles or more from the traveler's home and primary worksite. Reasonable, single occupancy, standard business room rates, or limited to conference room rate when the conference provides hotel rates.

4. The District Board of Trustees reviews and approves all travel outside of the United States. 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 destination and/or purpose.
5. Once approved, authorized forms will be forwarded to the District's Business Services and Maintenance Operations Office (if requesting a District vehicle) for processing. District Business Services will work with the department's purchase order creator(s) to initiate any reimbursement requests by method of purchase order. A copy of the "Claim of Absence/Travel Reimbursement" form will be retained for District records and the original form will be returned to the initiator to be submitted when the travel is complete for reimbursement.

Within ten (10) working days after the travel is completed, the initiator will resubmit the "Claim for Absence/Travel Reimbursement" form back to District Business Services with the actual expense claimed portion completed travel form requesting reimbursement for meals and/or miscellaneous expenses. Receipts for all expenditures (excluding meals) including any pre-payments are required to be attached.

No reimbursements for prior fiscal year claims will be processed after July 10<sup>th</sup> of the succeeding fiscal year.

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

1. Per Diem: Employees will be reimbursed at the District stated per diem rates, not on actual amounts spent on meals. A copy of the conference schedule must be included with all per diem claims. Per Diem may not be claimed for any meals provided at the conference regardless of whether the employee chooses to consume the meal(s) provided. If there are dietary exceptions requested, please include an addition statement requesting an exception when the claim for reimbursement is submitted.

Meal reimbursements are subject to the following District per diem rates:

- A. Breakfast: \$13.00
- B. Lunch: \$15.00
- C. Dinner: \$20.00

The following meals may be claimed if:

- A. Breakfast: Trip begins at or before 7:00 a.m. and ends at or after 10:00 a.m.
  - B. Lunch: Trip begins at or before 11:00 a.m. and ends at or after 2:00 p.m.
  - C. Dinner: Trip begins at or before 4:00 p.m. and ends at or after 7:00 p.m.
2. Ground Transportation:- Travel will be made by the most reasonable means available.
- A. District/Personal Vehicle: Use of a District fleet vehicle is encouraged but not mandatory. The transportation method being used must be indicated on the "Claim for Absence/Travel Reimbursement" form. Requests will be routed to Maintenance and Operations for processing vehicle reservations after the travel has been approved. A copy of the employee's valid driver license must be on file.
  - B. Rental Car: Use of a rental vehicle must be itemized on the "Claim for Absence/Travel Reimbursement" form under estimated costs.
  - C. Public Transportation: Taxi, bus, ferry, shuttle, metro fares and other forms of public ground transportation are reimbursable when it is necessary.
3. Gas Reimbursement: Gas reimbursement is only applicable to rental cars or district vehicle use, and when the district gas card is not used. If an employee uses his or her own personal vehicle for travel, then mileage reimbursement will apply.
4. Mileage Reimbursement Guidelines: Mileage will be reimbursed for personal vehicle use only at the current approved rate established annually by the IRS. Mileage is paid from departure location to arrival location, except in the instances where there is a shorter distance from employee's assigned work location to arrival location. In these instances, the shorter distance will be paid. A map of the most direct route which indicates the total round-trip miles must be included for reimbursement. If additional miles are incurred due to weather, accident, or other road closures, a statement explaining the excess mileage must be attached.
5. Lodging: Actual lodging costs, not to exceed charges at the standard single occupancy rate, are allowed. Employees are expected to obtain the best possible rates for an acceptable standard room. Conference, government, and convention group rates should be utilized. 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.

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.

6. Miscellaneous Expenses: Miscellaneous travel expenses essential to the transaction of official college business are reimbursable to the employee when reasonably incurred. Such expenses include:
  - A. Telephone, fax and network charges incurred while conducting District business.
  - B. Minor supplies such as reproduction costs when necessary.
  - C. Bus fares, taxi, tolls and temporary parking when necessary.

**Non-Reimbursable** Expenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Reimbursable expenses without proper receipts and documentation.
2. Alcoholic beverages.
3. Entertainment expenses, movie rentals, and other luxury items similar in nature.
4. Upgrades to hotel rooms above the standard single occupancy rate.
5. Personal telephone
6. Traffic or parking citations while using a private or District vehicle.
7. Lodging in excess of the reasonable time to travel to and from the meeting destination to conduct official business.
8. Lodging for unauthorized personnel.
9. Transportation to or from places of entertainment and similar facilities.
10. Dining expenses when such meals are included in the conference or meeting fee.

**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. All expenses being claimed must be incurred as a group and the other members of the group are not claiming any expense reimbursements.
3. A separate sheet must be attached with reimbursement indicating the name and title of all members of the group.

**Student Travel:**

A student who is traveling on behalf of the District shall follow the same parameters set for a district employee. The student is also required to sign and submit a "Student or Participant Waivers" form to the appropriate Vice President or designee prior to the travel date.

**Field Trip:**

Field trips shall follow the same parameters set for District employee's travel requirements except in regards to the following:

1. Transportation reimbursements (i.e. gas reimbursements) are only eligible with an approved District vehicle request. If a student elects to use their personal vehicle as a mode of transportation, mileage may not be claimed.
2. Field trips are ineligible for a claim for meal per diem rate unless prior authorization is received by the Vice President of the requesting department.
3. All students participating in the field trip must sign a "Student or Participant Waivers" form and the field trip facilitator must submit forms to the Vice President of Instruction or designee prior to the travel date.
4. Only students, faculty and Taft College employees associated with the course names on the field trip may attend the excursion.

**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.

### **Use of a District Credit Card:**

Use of a District credit card for travel purposes is only allowed in case of emergency, and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Vice President of the employee's department. Any exception to this credit card use policy must be approved by the Vice President of the employee's department before payment by credit card will be considered.

### **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.