

I. PURPOSE

This document outlines the Policies and Procedures for individuals traveling on Lawrence County business using County funds, and applies to both day and overnight travel.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Authorized Travel: Travel to be performed by County employees for which funds are included in the adopted budget and approved in advance as outlined in Section VIII-Travel Approval, below. Department Heads/Constitutional Officers will manage the allocation of available resources to accomplish travel efficiently and effectively throughout the year.

B. Daily Travel: All travel not requiring overnight accommodations for employees accomplishing their assigned duties.

C. Extended Travel: All overnight trips to attend meetings, conferences, training, or other work-related functions.

D. International Travel: Travel to locales outside the 48 contiguous United States.

III. GENERAL POLICIES

A. Applicability: This policy shall apply to all employees and members of boards, commissions, and authorities of Lawrence County engaged in travel required to conduct Lawrence County business. Employees are not guaranteed attendance at conferences and training seminars. County Administration/Department Heads/Constitutional Officers will determine the appropriateness of all travel undertaken by staff and have the authority to approve or disapprove requests for conferences, training seminars, and other business travel. Supervisors are encouraged to provide these opportunities appropriately and fairly. Travel undertaken by sworn officers of the Sheriff's Office for the purposes of prisoner extradition is subject to extradition policies and procedures as contained in the Sheriff's Office Standard Operating Procedures Manual.

B. Responsibility:

1. Each Department Head/Constitutional Officer:

- a. Is expected to exercise sound and prudent judgment when approving, arranging for, or incurring travel expenditures
- b. Shall determine who is eligible for reimbursement for Internet access, if the place of lodging does not provide this service for free.
- c. Shall ensure the refund of any unused travel advance is submitted with the Travel Reimbursement Form to the Office of Accounts and Budgets.

In the event the travel advance is not properly accounted for within forty-five (45) calendar days after the trip, the difference may be deducted from the individual's reimbursement or regular pay check.

2. Each individual participating in County-funded Travel:
 - a. Shall obtain approval prior to making any reservations/travel arrangements in accordance with the expenditure limits and authorization levels outlined in Section VIII-Travel Approval, below. When estimating travel-related expenses for advance approval, all expenses are to be itemized on one form; expenses may not be divided between two forms to avoid the expenditure limits as defined.

Advance approval may be in the form of an e-mail or memorandum. This documentation shall be included with the reimbursement request.

- b. Shall submit a Travel Reimbursement Form to the Office of Accounts and Budgets within thirty (30) calendar days of return from travel, with all appropriate receipts, conference schedules, details of expenses, explanations, and if applicable refund of unused travel advance funds. Receipts are not required for items included in a per diem (meals and incidentals).
 - c. Shall ensure proper authorizations of reimbursement requests. Under no circumstances shall:
 - 1) Any individual approve reimbursement of his or her own travel
 - 2) Any individual ask a subordinate to approve his or her travel expenses

Requests for reimbursement submitted more than thirty (30) calendar days after travel will not be paid.

- C. Advance Payments: Only registration, per diem, and advance conference fees may be paid prior to travel. All other travel payments shall be in the form of employee reimbursements after travel unless prior approval for additional advance payment is obtained from the County Executive, or Department Head. Employees must request advance payment at least 5 business days before departure.
- D. Excessive Expenses: Persons traveling on official County business will exercise care in incurring expenses to minimize the cost to the County. Excessive and unnecessary expenses will not be reimbursed. Those with authority as specified in Section III-B above will determine if expenses are excessive.

- E. Joint Travel: When it is known that two or more employees will be traveling to the same destination, maximum use shall be made of special group travel discounts, joint use of taxicabs and joint use of County-owned, leased or privately-owned vehicles. County Government strongly urges such employees to carpool, use commercial transportation, etc., where feasible.
- F. Fuel Credit Cards: In the event a department has County-issued gasoline credit cards, they may be used when traveling in a County-owned vehicle with the following restrictions:
 - The card may only be used to purchase gas or oil and/or for emergency repairs. The card may not be used for food, drinks, cash advances, or items for personal use.

IV. POLICY ADMINISTRATION

The administration of this policy shall be as follows:

- A. County Legislative Body shall adopt provisions of policy, set rates of reimbursement, and make any significant alterations.
- B. County Executive shall implement all provisions of this policy, authorize exceptions as permitted and make changes to operating procedures as necessary.
- C. The Office of Accounts and Budgets will administer the policy (review practices for policy compliance, keep records, prepare advances and checks, note discrepancies, etc.)

V. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is paid only if it is reasonable and necessary to accomplish the County's business.

- A. County-owned vehicles should be used for daily or extended travel when available and cost beneficial to the department.
- B. Employees are permitted to use their personally owned automobiles when a County-owned vehicle is not available, or when the use of a personally owned vehicle is cost beneficial to the department. In the event of an accident, the employee's insurance will be sole and primary.
- C. Reimbursement for rental cars shall be authorized only when necessary, cost effective, or otherwise beneficial to the County. The Department Head must request that the vehicle be added to the county's policy during rental and obtain verification before traveling.
- D. When traveling to training, conferences, etc., the distance normally traveled from home to worksite (or the equivalent distance) is not reimbursable.

- VI. It is expected that the most economical and efficient mode and route of travel is used when travel is necessary to accomplish the County's business. Transportation should be shared by employees traveling together whenever possible.

LODGING

Extended travel must be necessary and reasonable to accomplish the County's business to be eligible for reimbursement (Note: Employee is responsible for making all reservations)

- A. Lodging reimbursement will only be approved as follows:
 - 1. Conference agenda must accompany reimbursement request
 - 2. Employee will only be reimbursed for lodging in excess of 60 miles (one way)
 - 3. Travelling days and conference days will be reimbursed according to conference times on agenda

- B. Accommodations will be reimbursed on a single occupancy basis only, unless there is more than one County employee traveling and a room is being shared voluntarily.

- C. Accommodations shall be arranged at (or closest to) the site of business.

- D. Accommodations will be reimbursed at the conference rate or government rate plus applicable taxes, whichever is lower and available. A receipt for lodging expenses shall be required and must accompany the Travel Reimbursement form to ensure reimbursement. In the event these rates are not available refer to Appendix 1 and use the General Service Administration rates for your destination
<http://www.gsa.gov>

- E. Employees will communicate travel plan changes to the hotel as soon as possible if a confirmed reservation is being held. Since hotels may charge for non-canceled reservations, these charges will not be reimbursed if the traveler is negligent in canceling reservations.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

- A. Tolls and parking fees are reimbursable.
- B. A receipt is required for reimbursement claims
- C. Telephone, facsimile, and internet charges will be reimbursed only if an approved business justification is provided with the Travel Reimbursement form.

VIII. TRAVEL APPROVAL

All travel must be approved in accordance with the following matrix.

Travel By:	Daily Travel	In-State Overnight Travel	Out-of-State Travel	International Travel
Departmental Staff	Department Head		County Executive	Board of Commissioners
Department Heads	Self		County Executive	Board of Commissioners
County Commissioners	Self		County Executive	Board of Commissioners
County Attorney	County Executive		County Executive	Board of Commissioners
County Executive	Self		Self	Board of Commissioners

IX. PER DIEM ALLOWANCES FOR MEALS AND INCIDENTALS

A. Employees will be compensated for meals consumed during official travel as

1. Daily Travel: An employee will be reimbursed for meals, tips and incidental expenses not to exceed the per diem rate set out in Appendix 1 of the policy. The amount of per diem depends on the time period of travel:
 - a. Breakfast: Until 10:00 a.m.
 - b. Lunch: 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
 - c. Dinner: After 3:00 p.m.

2. Extended Travel: An employee is eligible for reimbursement not to exceed the per diem for the cost of meals, tips, and incidentals for each full day of travel. For per diem allowances, travel begins on the day the employee leaves the place of abode, office or other point of departure and ends on the day the employee returns to the place of abode, office, or other arrival point. For partial days, while en route to or from extended travel, an employee will be reimbursed as stated in paragraph 1 above.

B. Non-reimbursable Meals: An employees will not be eligible for per diem or reimbursement at the maximum daily allowance for meals when any or all meals are furnished as a condition of travel. If all meals are provided on any given day(s), the employee will not receive the amount specified for the non-included meal(s). The number of reimbursable meals will be indicated on the Travel Reimbursement form with the date the meal(s) was (were) consumed. Non-reimbursable meals are defined as:

1. Any meal included in a registration or conference fee ultimately paid by the County; or

2. Any meal furnished at no cost to the employee by a school or vendor while attending a course of instruction if the cost of the meal is ultimately paid for by the County as part of the cost of instruction; or
 3. Any meal furnished by an airline where the cost of the ticket is paid for by the County; or
 4. Any meal(s) furnished by a private individual or firm that serves to replace a meal(s) that would normally be funded as part of the per diem.
 5. Under no circumstances will expenditures for alcohol be reimbursed by County funds.
- C. A flat \$5 per diem is paid for each day of extended travel for incidental expenses such as bellhop, waiter, or taxi tips. The incidentals amount is not prorated on a travel departure or return date, but is paid on all travel days>
- D. Personal expenses such as gratuities for maid or room service, valet services, self-entertainment expenses, etc., are not reimbursable.

Exception: If valet services are required, expenses will be reimbursed.

Appendix 1 to Travel Policy and Procedures

PER DIEM RATES

I. Mileage:

Mileage shall be reimbursed at the Standard Mileage Rate, as determined by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The current IRS rates (\$0.51 per mile in 2011) can be found at the following site:

<http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=232017,00.html>

II. Meals and Incidentals:

A. Meal and Incidental Reimbursement Rates:

- | | |
|----------------|---------|
| 1. Breakfast | \$7.00 |
| 2. Lunch | \$11.00 |
| 3. Dinner | \$23.00 |
| 4. Incidentals | \$5.00 |

B. Daily Per Diem: \$46.00

Refer to www.gsa.gov for 2011 standard rates.

Travel day standard rate \$34.50 each day.

III. Lodging:

Government or conference rate, whichever is lower, plus applicable taxes

GSA rates: www.gsa.gov