

Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, Inc.

Travel Policy

Policy #: ST-002

Local Manual Section: Staff (ST)

Of Interest to: Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, Inc. Board members, Board staff and Career and Service Centers of Southwest Florida staff under the administration of the Board

Effective Date: August 15, 2005 **Revised:** July 28, 2008

Purpose: To establish a travel policy to ensure appropriate use and accurate documentation of travel.

Background: The Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, Inc. and its employees are accountable for the use of funds received and will ensure that all trips are necessary and claimed travel expenses are reasonable.

General Policy: The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that all trips are necessary and claimed travel expenses are reasonable and in compliance with this Travel Policies. All persons who travel on Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, Inc. official business shall state on the expense voucher the purpose of the trip and maintain records to support their claims. If needed, cash advances for travel may be available with written approval of the Executive Director. All travel is subject to the availability of funds. The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that all reimbursements for travel expenses conform to this regulation. He/she may disallow, reduce or strike from expense vouchers any claims contrary to this regulation. Anyone abusing travel regulations will be subject to disciplinary action. All final interpretations of this regulation shall be made by the Executive Director of the Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, Inc.

The official headquarters of an officer or employee assigned to an office shall be the city or town in which the office is located except that: The official headquarters of a person located in the field shall be the city or town nearest to the area where the majority of the person's work is performed, or such other city, town, or area as may be designated by the agency head provided that in all cases such designation must be in the best interests of the agency and not for the convenience of the person.

No travel expense shall be reimbursed unless the travel was as follows:

- A. Authorized travel within Region 24.
- B. Authorized travel outside of Region 24, but still in Florida.
- C. Authorized travel outside of the State of Florida must be approved in writing by the Executive Director prior to trip being taken.
- D. Out-of-State Travel for the Executive Director will be approved in advance by the Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, Inc. President or his/her designee.

- E. Combining a personal leave with a Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board business trip must have the advanced authorization of the Executive Director. Applicable personal time must be charged to Paid Leave Time and applicable personal expenses must be borne exclusively by the employee.

Transportation

- A. Economy required - All employees traveling on official business shall use the most economical, standard transportation available. If the most economical mode of transportation is not used, the applicable travel expense claim must be limited to the cost of the most economical transportation unless approved in advance by the Executive Director.
- B. Privately owned vehicles - Mileage may be claimed when using a privately owned vehicle. Reimbursement will be only for actual official business mileage. No reimbursement will be paid for travel between residence and work station or for any personal business conducted after hours. The Executive Director will disallow excessive mileage claimed.
- C. Air Travel - Commercial airline travel shall be coach/tourist class. An employee may be requested to stay overnight Saturday at a meeting or business site to get the most economical airline fare if the overall travel cost is less. A comparison should be made of the airline fare savings to the cost of an additional nights lodging plus additional meals to determine if the overall travel cost is actually less.
- D. Special Transportation - The cost of renting cars or other special conveyances in lieu of ordinary transportation will be allowed only with acceptable documentation and approved by the Executive Director. Gas costs associated with the rental car will be reimbursed if the claim is reasonable and receipts are attached.
- E. Privately owned aircraft – This form of transportation may be used if properly approved by the Executive Director. Reimbursement for in-state travel will be based on actual mileage and be paid as if it were a privately owned vehicle. Reimbursement for out-of-state trips involving privately owned aircraft will be based on the comparable coach/tourist class airline rate.

Accommodation/Lodging

- A. Reasonably priced lodging is required. Excessive lodging cost claimed may be reduced by the Executive Director.
- B. Cost for lodging within forty (40) miles of the claimants official work station will not be reimbursed without a written explanation by claimant and approval by the Executive Director.

Sustenance/Meals: Any meal charges associated with the site of a meeting, workshop, conference, etc., whether at a hotel or restaurant, will be reviewed by the Executive Director.

- A. The claimed meal charges must be deemed reasonable prior to reimbursement. Excessive claimed meal cost may be reduced by the Executive Director.

- B. All claimed meal costs must be approved as part of the travel voucher by the Executive Director.
- C. The staff person will not be entitled to reimbursement for any meal charges if the meal was paid for as part of the registration fee for a conference, workshop or a meeting, etc. The agenda for the meeting, workshop, conference, etc. should be attached to the travel voucher to support any claimed expenses. (continental breakfast and/or optional dinner not included as a meal.)
- D. Alcoholic beverages must be excluded from claimed subsistence/meal costs because they are disallowable and must not be reimbursed.

Reimbursement Rates: Expenses will be considered reimbursable as follows:

A. In-State Travel

1. Lodging: A claimant who attaches the hotels or motel's receipted bill shall be reimbursed for that claimant's actual cost of lodging if the claimed cost is deemed reasonable and necessary. The Executive Director may disallow all or portions of the cost depending on the amount of the expense as compared to the reasonably priced accommodations in the area or if the rate paid is higher than the rate stated in the literature for the meeting, seminar, conference, etc.
2. Sustenance/Meals: Reimbursement Limits - Amounts deemed to have been spent for meals, generally will not exceed thirty-eight (38) dollars per day (per diem). Depending on the meeting time, time of departure and time of return, allowable meal costs may be prorated for any trip not requiring overnight lodging as follows:
 - a. Breakfast - departure time 7:00 a.m. or before - allowable maximum limit is \$8.00, tax & gratuity not included.
 - b. Lunch - meeting schedule requires departure prior to 10:30 a.m. and return after 2:00 p.m. - allowable maximum limit is \$10.00, tax & gratuity not included.
 - c. Dinner - return time after 7:00 p.m. - allowable maximum limit is \$20.00, tax & gratuity not included.

Alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed. The time of departure and return must be included on travel voucher when claiming meals. Tips will be reimbursed, if reasonable (acceptable amounts are 15% to 20%, for excellent service).

Copies of receipts for corporate credit card expenditures must be attached with travel expense form(s). Credit card expenditures will be reviewed for reasonableness of costs. If costs are deemed unreasonable, the amount(s) will be deducted from the expenditure request. The original receipt must be provided to Accounts Payable.

3. Privately Owned Vehicles - Reimbursement of mileage for official use of privately owned vehicle may be up to the maximum allowable by Federal or State regulations.

4. Commercial Transportation - With receipts, actual cost will be reimbursed if the claimed cost is deemed reasonable and necessary.
 5. Parking and Tolls - Actual parking, bridge, and toll charges are reimbursable if the claimed cost is deemed reasonable and necessary.
 6. Registration Fees - Registration fees required in official travel for admittance to meetings, workshops or conferences will be allowed. Prior approval by the Executive Director is required. Receipts must be included for all claimed fees before reimbursement will be allowed.
 7. Other Expenses - Where justified, other necessary and reasonable miscellaneous expenses of official travel may be allowed by the Executive Director. These may include tips to valet for parking car, tips to bellhop for luggage service, tips to other hotel employees for services, such as maids, telephone calls to the office on official business, taxi fare, registration fees, limousine service and any business costs, such as faxing or photocopying. Receipts for all expenses, except tips, are required. Personal expenditures, including, but not limited to, entertainment or side personal trips, will not be reimbursed. Parking tickets and moving violation tickets will not be reimbursed.
- B. Out-of-State Travel - All out-of-state travel must be approved in writing by the Executive Director prior to taking the trip. Failure to obtain proper approval may result in the disallowance of the expense.
1. Economy required - All employees shall be required to use the most economical transportation means available. Claimed transportation costs must be limited to the most economical transportation available unless approved in advance by the Executive Director.
 2. A receipt for out-of-state expenses must be provided or costs will be paid according to the in-state travel meal limits.
 3. Allowable costs that are reasonable and necessary include lodging, meals, mileage, transportation, tips, taxi fares, registration fees, baggage transfers, official business telephone calls and necessary business expenses (e.g. fax and copy expenses). Receipts for all expenses, except tips are required.
 4. If privately owned vehicle is used, the allowable reimbursement may be up to the maximum rate set by Federal regulations or equal to the cost of a regular round trip airfare whichever is less.
 5. Personal expenses (e.g. alcoholic beverages, entertainment and personal side trips) will not be reimbursed.
- C. Business Expense - When an employee of the Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, Inc. is meeting with representatives of the Private or Public Sector on official business during breakfast, lunch or dinner, it may be appropriate for that employee to cover

the costs of such a meeting. Reimbursement for reasonable expenditures may be allowed if accompanied by a receipt, and the nature of the business explained on his/her travel voucher, and the applicable expenses are approved by the supervisor and/or the Executive Director.

Requests for reimbursement of meal costs associated with a meeting must include the following information:

1. Names of meeting participants.
2. Association with Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, staff member, board member, employer, program participant, etc.
3. Purpose of the meeting.
4. Receipt for meal costs. (Note: alcoholic beverages must be excluded because they are disallowable and must not be reimbursed). The employee reimbursement rates for meals must be used as a guideline. Example: Meeting costs for lunch for four (4) people at the employee rate would be \$40.00 (4 x \$10.00).

*NOTE: The same information (items 1-4) must be provided when using a corporate credit card for business expenses.

Travel Advances - The Executive Director may approve travel advances if the request is reasonable and necessary. The applicable travel vouchers for trips requiring travel advances should be submitted within three (3) working days upon return from the trip.

Travel Expense Vouchers

- A. **The Travel Voucher** - The Travel Voucher Expense Form shall be used to claim all reimbursement for travel expenses. ~~and submitted no later than the fifth (5th) of the following month for authorized travel within Region 24.~~
- B. Preparation - The travel voucher may be either typed or legibly prepared in ink. All receipts shall be attached to the voucher.
- C. Computing Mileage - Mileage will be computed based on actual official mileage, showing beginning and ending mileage on the travel log form. A travel log form must be used for reimbursement of mileage expenses.
- D. Signatures - Travel vouchers shall be signed and dated by the employee submitting the claim and then forwarded to the supervisor for approval.
- E. Receipts - Except for mileage, claimants shall furnish for each expenditure, a receipt showing the name of the establishment or service provider, date, and location.

- F. **Timeliness** - All travel and expense reimbursement reports shall be submitted no later than the 15th of the month following the incurrence of the expenses, if expenses total \$100 or more. If reimbursement requests are less than \$100, reports must be submitted no less than quarterly. In such cases, the report is due the 15th of the month following the end of the quarter. Failure to follow this policy may result in denial of complete or partial reimbursement request.

Action - The Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, Inc. will take all reasonable steps to ensure that this policy is followed by all employees, officers and members. These steps will include periodic training sessions and general oversight by the Executive Director and the Fiscal Division. Anyone abusing the travel regulations will be subject to disciplinary action.

General Travel Guidelines

- A. **Reasonableness of Travel Expense** – Exercise discretion and good business judgment with respect to personal mileage reimbursement. For example, if long distance travel is required at or within one (1) hour of the start of business, and the distance from your residence to the location you will be traveling is closer than reporting to your place of work; do not travel to your workplace first. If reasonable, secure equipment or necessary items ahead of time so that travel to the office will not be necessary.
- B. **Driving Safety** – You are required to obey all traffic safety regulations and speed limits. Seatbelts must be worn while operating the vehicle.
- C. **Incurring Business Expenses** – Be cost conscious and spend Board money as carefully and judiciously as you would spend your own funds.
- D. **Courtesy Cars and Taxis** – Many hotels have courtesy cars which will take you to and from the airport at no charge. Employees should take advantage of this free service whenever possible. Another alternative may be a shuttle or bus. When courtesy cars and airport shuttles are not available, a taxi is often the next most economical and convenient form of transportation when the trip is for a limited time and minimal mileage is involved.

Forms: ST-002-TVB Travel Voucher - Board Staff
ST-002-TVC Travel Voucher – Center Staff

Other Attachments: NA

Links: NA

