

CHAPTER 3 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Article 1

TRANSPORTATION/TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Section 3-1.1. Procedures.—A. The following procedures shall be used in determining transportation or travel reimbursement.

- (i) **Authorization:** All travel requires the employee to prepare an estimate of the total costs of any proposed travel on the *Request to be Absent From Duty* form. The number of employees allowed to attend the same conference/convention will be determined by the superintendent or designee.
- (ii) **Mileage reimbursements:** Mileage reimbursements for the use of an employee's personal vehicle will be paid at the rate established by the Internal Revenue Service.
- (iii) **Lodging expenses and meals:** Lodging expenses and meals consumed at the hotel may be charged to the employee's personal charge card. The total invoice, noting payment by charge card, shall be submitted with the travel voucher (discussed in "iv") for reimbursement.
- (iv) **Reimbursement:** At the end of the month, the employee shall complete a travel voucher. The voucher, with all required receipts attached, must be completed and submitted no later than the 15th of the following month to the coordinator/supervisor for approval for reimbursement. Reimbursement for later submissions will be forfeited by the employee. The Finance Department will review the travel voucher to assure that listed expenses are allowable and supported by proper receipts. The voucher will be processed for payment to the employee in the next vendor check run. Manual reimbursement checks will not be written.
- (v) **Business Guests:** The superintendent or designee may determine that it is in the best interest of the school system to incur expenses for persons other than a Suffolk Public School employee. Other employees who recommend that expenses be incurred for a non-employee must obtain prior approval from the superintendent. Allowable expenses for persons other than the employee shall be

documented and supported by receipts as well. The business relationship of the guest must be stated and the reason for incurring expenses for these persons must be justified. Where the above is properly documented, the expenses of the employee may also be also be reimbursable.

- (vi) Receipts: Receipts must accompany the travel voucher for all expenses incurred in order to receive reimbursement. It is the responsibility of the employee to obtain a receipt where one is not given automatically.

B. The method of transportation will be that which provides for the most efficient and economical use of School Board funds and time necessary for the conduct of School Board business. An employee who chooses to travel by other than the most efficient mode may not be reimbursed above that cost and must procure documentation to support the lower cost to be used for reimbursement. Any mode other than those that are most economical must be approved by the supervisor with reasons documented. The following methods and/or modes of transportation are acceptable.

- (i) School Board Vehicles: School Board vehicles should be used whenever possible.
- (ii) Commercial Aircraft: This mode of transportation should be used whenever cost and time make it more feasible than other available forms of transportation. The air fare should be no more than the regular tourist class fare and economy or excursion fares should be utilized in all cases where possible.
- (iii) Private Automobile: Use of private automobiles for School Board travel is permissible where it proves more efficient and practical for the School Board. The employee shall be reimbursed for mileage at the established rate set by the School Board.
- (iv) Other: Train, bus, boat, rental car or any other form of transportation may be reimbursed when it can be shown to be necessary and the most economical of the options available.

C. Reasonable efforts shall be made to obtain the most economical and efficient accommodations available. Employees or other persons officially recognized as traveling on School Board business necessitating overnight stays will be reimbursed for the actual cost of lodging, which must be approved by the employee's supervisor/coordinator. (Issued July 13, 1995; Revised June 26, 2003; Effective: February 1, 2009)

Note: In **2009** Section 3-1.1(A)(ii), delete from line three, “in effect July 1st each year.” In **2003** Section 3-1.1(A)(ii), was revised by deleting reference to mileage reimbursement rate being that which is established by the “the School Board and shall not exceed the rate established by the Commonwealth of Virginia” and inserted in its place “Internal Revenue Service in effect July 1st of each year.”

Legal Authority-School Board Policy §7-17.1 & 7-17.2.

Section 3-1.2 Meals; reimbursement therefore.—A. When meals are provided at no cost in conjunction with travel events, reimbursement for actual expense otherwise incurred is not permitted. When meals are included with registration or lodging expense as part of a package plan, record the number and type of meals (breakfast, lunch or dinner) on the travel voucher.

B. Meal expenses are reimbursable only for overnight official business travel. To be reimbursed for breakfast expenses, the traveler must, out of business necessity, leave home before 6:30 a.m. To be reimbursed for lunch expenses, the traveler must, out of business necessity, leave before 11:00 a.m., or return after 2:00 p.m. To be reimbursed for dinner expenses, the traveler must, out of business necessity, be unable to return home before 7:30 p.m.

C. Each meal and tip (not to exceed 15%) must be itemized on restaurant receipts for reimbursement. Meal reimbursement shall not exceed \$40.00 per day, including tips. (Issued July 13, 1995; Revised July 1, 2007)

Note: In **2007** the revision deleted a third sentence under subsection C, which read “In order to claim any meals (breakfast, lunch, or dinner), the departure and return times must be entered on the travel voucher. The 2007 revision also deleted the schedule for reimbursements for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and in its place inserted a maximum reimbursement rate of \$40.00 per day, including tips. The 2007 revision also deleted language allowing for meal rollover.

Legal Authority .School Board Policy §7-17.1 & 7-17.2.

Section 3-1.3. Incidental Expenses.—A. The following incidental traveling expenses will be reimbursed while on official business:

1. Ferry fares and bridge, road and tunnel tolls
2. Taxi, airport shuttle or bus fares. Reasonable effort shall be made to obtain the most economical transportation to and from airports.
3. Fees for storing or parking motor vehicles.
4. Conference or seminar registration fees
5. Charges for special transportation of equipment or material necessary for the purpose of travel
6. Telephone and telegraph charges when related to the business of the School Board directly or assistance to the traveler in aid of arrangements of the travel and

- identified as to person and/or office called
7. Tips and gratuities other than meals, such as hotel bell hops and hotel shuttle bus drivers, when reasonable and explained

B. The following items will **not** be reimbursed to a traveler:

1. The cost of air travel insurance
2. The cost of closed circuit/cable TV movies
3. The cost of alcoholic beverages
4. Personal telephone calls
5. Personal entertainment not included in general registration fees
6. The cost of purchasing traveler's checks

C. Any expenses not covered by these regulations shall be documented and shall be addressed on a case-by-case basis. (Issued July 13, 1995)

Legal Authority - School Board Policy §7-17. I & 7-17.2.