

**TRAVEL POLICY
OF THE
CITY OF DINUBA**

A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide uniform procedures relating to the performance of travel on City business by employees and Council members. It is issued to advise and assist in the performance of official duties and in obtaining advancement and/or reimbursement for traveling expenses.

For the purposes of this Policy, the terms "employee," "Council member," and "traveler" will be synonymous to mean persons authorized to travel and conduct business on behalf of the City of Dinuba.

"City Business" for Council members will be construed to include, but is not limited to:

1. In-state attendance at any meeting of any committee or board to which the Council member has been officially appointed by the Council,
2. Attendance at any training, workshop, or meeting which has been authorized in advance by the Council, or
3. Any other travel that has been requested and approved by the Council.

The City recognizes that attendance to meetings for conducting the official business of the City, training, and conferences serves a vital forum for the exchange of ideas and methods in all areas of municipal administration, presenting and receiving information, and advocating legislation of benefit to the City. The City encourages these activities, and, to accommodate them, has established the following policies and procedures:

B. RESPONSIBILITY

The City Manager has the administrative responsibility to determine the reasonableness of travel costs, as justified by the nature of travel. He may delegate this authority to the Department Directors. The intent is to limit

reimbursable expenses to the extent that each traveler accomplishes essential City travel as economically as feasible by:

1. Critically examining each trip to determine necessity. Travel should not be permitted and will not be reimbursed when the matter can be handled by mail or electronic means.
2. Minimizing the number of people who must travel for a single purpose.
3. Authorizing itineraries that are the most cost effective.
4. Requiring the use of air accommodations less costly than first class.
5. Requiring the use of available City owned vehicles when vehicle travel is officially necessary and advantageous to the City.
6. Reviewing these procedures periodically with City staff.

The City Manager shall administer the expenditure of travel funds in accordance with appropriations made by the City Council from the annual adopted budget. All travel is subject to the availability of funds.

It is the duty of each traveler to exercise sound and reasonable judgment in the conduct of City travel. All expenses that do not fall within this adopted travel reimbursement policy shall be approved by the approving authority (Council or the City Manager, as appropriate) in advance of the travel. In the case of travel by Council Members or Committee Members, the approval for these requested expenses shall occur, when possible, during a public meeting before the expense is incurred.

C. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

Official travel by City travelers requires prior written authorization by the appropriate approving authorities. The Mayor, upon approval by the City Council, shall approve all travel requests and reimbursements for City Council Members and Commission Members. The City Manager shall be the approving authority for all employees and others traveling on behalf of the City. The City

"Travel Request" form shall be used by City Council Members, officials, and employees to document travel authorization.

Travel trips of one day or less shall not require a "Travel Request," but the traveler is required to complete and file a "Travel Expense Report" Form or other suitable documentation upon return to work if the trip involved reimbursable expenses.

The use of a private vehicle for travel within a ten-mile radius of the City when a City vehicle is available will not be reimbursable unless approved by the Mayor or City Manager.

D. TRAVEL ADVANCES

All requests for advance of travel funds shall be submitted through the approving authority to the Administrative Services Director for advance funds. All efforts should be made to make requests for advances at least eight working days in advance of the travel in order to process the payment. Exceptions may be made with the approval of the department head.

All advances must be properly accounted for on termination of travel for which the advance was made. A "Travel Expense Report" form should be filed documenting the expenses, even if no additional reimbursements are to be made. If the "Travel Expense Report" form is not filed, the City is required under IRS regulations to report the amount of the advance as taxable income at the end of the year.

E. TRANSPORTATION

Individuals requesting official travel should attempt to travel by means most economical to the City; therefore, when travel is by City officials and/or employees only, travelers should use City vehicles when available in preference to a privately owned or rented vehicle.

1. **Privately Owned Vehicles.** The use of a privately owned vehicle on City business is permitted when a City vehicle is not available, when this mode of travel is more advantageous to the City, or when authorized prior to the travel by the City Manager.

Mileage reimbursement for privately owned vehicles used on City business shall be at the rate per mile determined by Resolution. This mileage rate is intended to reimburse the traveler for all expenses pursuant to the use of that vehicle, including gasoline, oil, maintenance, tires, depreciation, etc. When privately owned vehicles are approved for out-of-state travel, total payment for mileage will normally not exceed the cost of tourist class air passage. Mileage reimbursement will be based on actual miles traveled for City business and shall not exceed actual map mileage unless adequately documented.

If a City vehicle is available and the use of a private vehicle is not advantageous to the City, and the traveler chooses instead to take his or her own private vehicle, then mileage will not be reimbursed.

2. **Commercial Auto Rental.** Travelers will be reimbursed for commercial auto rental for the actual and necessary cost of such rental when substantiated by a receipt.
3. **Commercial Airlines.** When reimbursement is claimed for transportation via scheduled commercial airlines, reimbursement will be limited to the cost of travel by air coach (tourist or economy fare.)

Travel to and from airports shall be by bus or complimentary shuttles where such services are in operation and schedules permit. Taxicabs shall be used only as a last resort.

4. **Railroad Transportation.** Reimbursement shall be limited to coach fares.
5. **Parking.** Parking fees in excess of \$3.00 per day will be reimbursed in the full amount by the City upon presentation of a valid receipt. Parking fees of less than this amount are to be deducted from the per diem miscellaneous allowance.

F. LODGING

The reasonable cost of accommodations at the hotel or motel in which the traveler stays will be allowed. "Reasonable cost" shall be determined by taking

into account such factors as prevailing lodging rates of the area, proximity of lodging to City business destinations, and potential additional transportation requirements. The rate for lodging shall be for single occupancy unless otherwise authorized.

If the lodging is in connection with a conference, seminar, or other organized activity, lodging costs shall not exceed the maximum group rate published by the conference or activity sponsor.

A traveler is expected to make reservations well in advance whenever possible and to take other actions to ensure that lodging is secured at moderate rates. Reimbursement for lodging shall be limited to the minimum number of nights required to conduct the assigned City business.

When traveling outside of a 200 mile radius of Dinuba (which includes both San Francisco and Los Angeles), when City business starts at 9:30 A.M. or before, the traveler may arrive the night before; if City business ends by 3:00 P.M., the traveler is expected to return home on the last day of the meeting, weather permitting.

If a traveler chooses to arrive earlier or stay later than the length of City business, the additional lodging and other expenses related to this decision are at the individual's personal expense.

When the traveler prefers to remain overnight as a guest of friends or relatives while traveling on behalf of the City, no amount may be claimed for lodging expenses.

G. PER DIEM ALLOWANCES

The City Council shall establish by Resolution the per diem necessary for the conduct of City business during travel status. The per diem rates ~~could~~ apply equally to all persons traveling on behalf of the City of Dinuba, whether employee, Council member, Commission member, consultant, or contractor. Established per diem rates may be periodically reviewed and modified by resolution of the City Council.

The maximum allowable per diem rate is based on a complete day in travel status and for continuous travel of more than 24 hours. The calendar day (midnight to midnight) is the unit used for computing per diem allowances. When

a traveler leaves on or before 7:00 A.M. or returns on or after 7:00 P.M., the entire per diem for that day is allowed. Otherwise, the amount of meal and incidental allowance is prorated according to the following schedule:

	To be eligible for meals and incidental expenses, a traveler must.....	
	Leave Before:	Return After:
Breakfast	7:01 A.M.	7:00 A.M.
Lunch	1:01 P.M.	1:00 P.M.
Dinner	7:01 P.M.	7:00 P.M.

The per diem allowance is intended to cover all expenses incurred by the traveler on the City business other than registration, lodging accommodations, and primary transportation costs. No receipts are necessary.

Allowable expenses for per diem are all charges for:

Meals, except those included in the cost of the registration (which should be noted on the Travel Expense Report and deducted from the per diem for travel);

Incidental transportation expenses, such as street car, bus, and ferry fares, bridge and toll road fees, and parking fees \$3.00 and under;

Fees and tips paid to waiters, porters, baggage handlers, bellhops, hotel staff, and other service personnel;

Purchase of necessary stationery, office supplies, and emergency toiletries;

Expenses which are intended for the personal benefit or pleasure of the traveler shall not be considered in the per diem allowance such as, but not limited to:

Entertainment;

Alcoholic beverages;

Barber and beauty shop charges;

Tailors;

Fines for traffic violations;

Private automobile service or repairs;

Expenses for member(s) of the person's family who may accompany the traveler on the trip;

Purchase of personal items.

Whenever meals are furnished at no cost or are covered in the registration fee, the per diem for said meal shall be deducted from the total per diem for that day. Whenever meals are served as part of a conference meeting at a fixed cost that exceeds the per diem allowance, said meals shall be considered as an allowable conference expense subject to additional reimbursement when documentation is provided. If attendance at a conference includes no meals, the phrase "No Meals Included" should be included on the Travel Expense Report Form.

H. ATTENDANCE OF SPOUSES

The City recognizes that spouse attendance to City business functions is beneficial in some cases. Where attendance of spouses is supportive to travelers representing the City, the City shall provide for the expenses of lodging (double occupancy) and registration costs for the spouse. The City Council must approve in advance the official travel of any spouse in order for the Council member or traveler to receive reimbursement for the spouse's expenses.

In the event that the traveler travels with someone not authorized for travel reimbursement, then no expenditures relating to that person will be honored. Lodging rates will only be allowed up to the portion applicable for a single room.

I. NON-ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES

Examples of personal expenses that the City will not reimburse include, but are not limited to:

1. The personal portion of any trip;
2. Political or charitable contributions or events;
3. Family expenses, including partner's expenses when accompanying the authorized traveler on City-related business, as well as children or pet-related expenses, except for a partner's meal expense at an event-sponsored meal when it is obvious that the partner is expected to attend and would not otherwise attend except for the official's role;
4. Entertainment expenses, including theater, movies (either in-room or at the theater), sporting events (including gym, massage and all unauthorized sporting activities), or other non-City related cultural events;
5. Non-mileage personal automobile expenses, including repairs, traffic citations, insurance, or gasoline; and
6. Personal losses while on City business.

Any questions regarding the propriety of a particular type of expense should be resolved by the approving authority before the expense is incurred.

J. "TRAVEL REQUEST" FORM

All requests for travel must be submitted on a "Travel Request" form and approved by the approving authority prior to the travel. Requests for advances of funds must be made on that form and in the timely manner heretofore mentioned.

K. "TRAVEL EXPENSE REPORT" FORM

A "Travel Expense Report" form must be submitted to the City Manager within ten (10) working days after returning from the conference and/or trip. If a traveler has drawn an advance of funds, a settlement must be made on the basis of per diem and actual reimbursable expenses.

To be reimbursed for travel expenses, a traveler must sign and submit a "Travel Expense Report" form, with receipts attached for all reimbursable expenditures. No reimbursement shall be made until the expense form has been properly executed and approved by the approving authority.

The decision of the City Manager shall be final in all cases where conflicts of opinions on reimbursement or allowable expenses exist.

L. IN-TOWN MEETINGS, OR MEETINGS HELD IN FRESNO, KERN, KINGS, MADERA, STANISLAUS, OR TULARE COUNTIES.

For attendance at meetings held in the above counties, per diem expenses shall not apply, and only actual costs shall be reimbursed. Again, the traveler is cautioned to exercise sound and reasonable judgment in the conduct of City travel. Eligible expenses include:

1. Meeting registration fees as required for attendance.
2. Transportation costs to be paid on the basis of current mileage allowance for the use of a private vehicle. Where applicable, City vehicles shall be used.
3. Meals and miscellaneous items of expense (such as tips, parking, business related phone calls, etc.)

M. INSURANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Liability insurance coverage will be provided by the City to cover any property damage and bodily injury to vehicles involved in collisions with City owned vehicles.

If a traveler who is attending a meeting and/or conference in his/her personal vehicle is involved in an accident with another vehicle, the traveler's insurance would be responsible for any property damage and bodily injury claims involving the second vehicle. The City's liability insurance policy would serve as an excess in the event that the traveler's coverage is not sufficient. The traveler would be responsible for any property damage to his/her own vehicle, and worker's compensation would pick up any of his/her medical expenses.

In the event that a traveler uses a vehicle for City related business, not otherwise owned, rented, or leased by the City of Dinuba, he or she is required to obtain liability and property damage insurance with a carrier acceptable to the City. Such insurance shall have as a minimum coverage, \$15,000/\$30,000 bodily injury and \$10,000 property damage. For those travelers that receive a per diem or monthly vehicle allowance, the minimum coverage shall be \$100,000/\$300,000 bodily injury and \$50,000 property damage.

The City does not provide any insurance for non-authorized spouses or other passengers in the event of an accident, whether travel is in a City-owned vehicle or in a privately owned vehicle.

N. REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATIVE BODY

Council members traveling on City business shall briefly report on meetings attended at City expense at the next Council meeting. If multiple Council members attend, a joint report may be made.

O. COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

All persons traveling at City expense should keep in mind that some expenditures may be subject to reporting under the Political Reform Act and other laws. All City expenditures are public records subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act.

P. VIOLATION OF THIS POLICY

Use of public resources or falsifying expense reports in violation of this policy may result in any or all of the following: 1) loss of reimbursement privileges, 2) a demand for restitution to the City, 3) the City's reporting the expenses as income to the traveler to state and federal tax authorities, 4) civil penalties of up to \$1,000 per day and three times the value of the resources used, and 5) criminal prosecution for misuse of public resources.

Travel Policy as adopted by the Dinuba City Council May 9, 2006

	AMOUNTS OF PER DIEM ALLOWANCES	
	Meals	Incidentals
Breakfast	\$ 8.00	\$ 3.00
Lunch	\$ 12.00	\$ 6.00
Dinner	\$ 25.00	\$ 6.00
Total	\$ 45.00	\$ 15.00