AGENDA ITEM 1 G
Consent Item

MEMORANDUM

DATE: **August 6, 2026**

TO: **El Dorado County Transit Authority**

FROM: **Steffi Ahart, Human Resources Manager**

SUBJECT: **Proposed Revisions to Board Travel Policy D-1**

REQUESTED ACTION:
BY MOTION,
Approve the Proposed Revisions to Board Travel Policy D-1

BACKGROUND

The El Dorado County Transit Authority (El Dorado Transit) Board Travel Policy D-1 establishes the authorization and reimbursement requirements for expenses incurred by employees while conducting authorized business travel both within and outside of El Dorado County.

DISCUSSION

The attached proposed revisions to the Board Travel Policy establish a prepaid fixed daily allowance for meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) as the preferred reimbursement method for authorized business travel. This change is intended to streamline the reimbursement process and provide greater consistency in the administration of travel expenses.

The proposed revisions remove the existing prohibition on reimbursement for meal gratuities. The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) per diem rates, which are used to determine the M&IE allowance, already include an allocation for gratuities. Accordingly, a separate restriction on allowance for gratuities is no longer necessary.

In addition, the revisions update the recommended number of staff participants for each event to no more than two employees. This change recognizes that some conferences and training events include concurrent sessions or multiple courses that cannot be adequately covered by a single participant.

The attached Board Travel Policy incorporates all proposed revisions, with changes identified for the Board's review and consideration.

TRAVEL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

It is the intent of this policy that no EDCTA employee shall suffer any undue loss or gain any undue benefit while traveling on official EDCTA business. This policy ~~shall provide for the~~ establishes a prepaid fixed daily allowance for meals and incidental expenses during business travel as the preferred method of reimbursement. As an alternative, approved travel expenditures may be reimbursed within a reasonable period following completion of travel.~~or reimbursement of approved expenditures within a reasonable amount of time, and~~ This policy is applicable to all officers and employees in the service of EDCTA. The Executive Director or his/her designee is responsible for ensuring all travel reimbursement requests comply with this policy.

2.0 POLICY

2.1 In-County Travel

A. Travel by private auto in the performance of "official EDCTA business" shall be given a daily allowance or reimbursed at per State/Federal rate (see Policies & Procedures 4.2). Mileage for travel shall be computed from the employee's designated workplace. If travel begins from the employee's home, mileage shall be calculated from the home or workplace, whichever is less (e.g., If the employee lives in Cameron Park and drives to a meeting in Sacramento, leaving from home, mileage will be paid from the employee's residence to Sacramento and back to the residence).

B. Under normal circumstances, lunch expenses will **NOT** be reimbursed while traveling in El Dorado County and performing the employee's normally assigned duties. However, employees traveling from the western slope of the county to South Lake Tahoe and vice versa will be reimbursed for lunch expense if the employee is required to spend the employee's entire scheduled shift at that location **or section 2.C applies.**

C. In special circumstances, with the advance approval of the Executive Director, employees may be reimbursed for meal expenses incurred within the county, (i.e., when meals are approved as "part of a program" for special training sessions, conferences, workshops, when work is outside of a county facility, or less than an all day activity).

D. ~~Employees may be reimbursed for meals and lodging expenses~~ I~~i~~f ~~their~~ assigned activities require ~~them~~ an employee to spend one or more nights in an area of the county which is distant from their place of residence, (e.g. western slope employee assigned an activity in South Lake Tahoe), employees may be given a fixed daily allowance for meals, lodging and mileage expenses in normal circumstances, or may be reimbursed for meals and lodging expenses ~~. The rate of reimbursement for meals, lodging and mileage shall be~~ pursuant to the rates established by the General Services Administration (GSA). Employees must obtain prior approval from their supervisor before incurring allowable expenses identified above.

E. Overnight travel requests, other than those governed by 2.D above, must be approved by the Executive Director prior to commencement of travel unless emergency or other legitimate special circumstances prevent prior approval. If this is the case, a memorandum describing the circumstances and justifying the decision shall be attached to the travel authorization form and submitted to the Executive Director for approval as soon as possible.

2.2 Out-of-County Travel

A. Employees who are compelled to travel in the performance of their duties and in the service of EDCTA shall be given a daily allowance or reimbursed for their "actual and necessary expenses", within maximum rate limits established by the EDCTA Board for transportation, lodging, meals, tolls, parking, and other reasonable costs.

B. Maximum rates may be exceeded due to special circumstances as approved by the Executive Director.

C. Supervisors should try to minimize travel expenses by limiting travel participants for each event to no more than ~~one~~ two staff members, and having those individuals share information with the rest of the staff upon return.

D. Overnight travel requests must be approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee prior to commencement of travel unless emergency or other legitimate, special circumstances prevent prior approval. If this is the case, a memorandum describing the circumstances and justifying the decision shall be attached to the travel authorization form. **It remains up to the discretion of the Executive Director as to whether or not costs of travel which were not authorized in advance will be reimbursed.** Employees and other persons are advised to plan ahead and obtain the necessary approvals.

E. Travel will be by the most reasonable means available, taking into consideration employee time devoted to travel at the expense of performance of other duties.

F. When an employee is to travel by a common carrier (air, bus, rail), the requesting department is to obtain a quoted price through a travel agency or similar means. Reservations can be made but ticket purchase must await approval by the Executive Director or their designee. Tickets may be purchased on an EDCTA credit card, a personal credit card, purchase order, or through a travel advance after approval.

G. Common carrier travel must be in "Economy" or similar class unless otherwise specifically authorized in advance by the Executive Director.

H. For out-of-county travel, consisting of a day trip and where a common carrier is the mode of travel, prior authorization from the Executive Director is required.

I. Travel out of county in an EDCTA vehicle is allowed; however, the final destination of the trip is NOT to exceed a four (4) hour driving distance from the EDCTA office. Any exception to this policy must receive prior approval from the Executive Director.

2.3 Authorization

Generally, this policy sets forth a procedure whereby the Executive Director approves employee travel, training, and conference programs each fiscal year by approving and adopting the appropriation in the final budget process.

2.4 Mileage Allowances

The reimbursement rate represents the expenses of gasoline and normal wear and tear incurred during the use of one's personal vehicle in the course of performing one's duties in the service of EDCTA.

2.5 Reimbursement Rates

Employees shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses. Actual and necessary expenses do not include alcoholic beverages. ~~or gratuities (unless the gratuity is a quoted price of providing congregate meals).~~

A. Mileage Rate

Travel by private auto in the performance of official EDCTA business shall be reimbursed at the Federal rate as determined by the Internal Revenue Service.

B. Meal Rates

Reimbursement rates for individual meals shall be at the individual meal rate for that individual meal as established by the General Services Administration (GSA). Breakfast may be reimbursed only if an employee's travel consists of at least 2 hours in duration before an employee's regular work hours. These rates apply to in-county travel as well, where other sections of this policy apply.

Reimbursement may exceed the prescribed individual meal rate if the meal is being served as part of an authorized event and the cost of the meal is itemized separately from the event's registration or attendance fees. For example, the registration fee for multi-day conference includes lunches but an optional dinner is offered on one night at an additional cost. If a meal is provided as part of an event, the employee may not claim reimbursement for the meal if they choose to eat elsewhere unless authorized by the Executive Director or his/her designee. Receipts will be required for reimbursement of alternate meal if authorized.

Employees traveling on out-of-county business travel that requires overnight lodging are eligible to receive an allowance or claim reimbursement for meals taken out-of-county, and shall be reimbursed for full days (at least 12 hours) of travel equal to the per diem lump sum which covers meals taken by the employee for each full day. The per diem rate shall be equal to the maximum federal per diem meal and incidental expenses rate established by the GSA. The per diem rate includes taxes and gratuities. Gratuities are reimbursable up to a maximum limit of 20% of the total bill.

2.6 Lodging

A. Employees are eligible to claim reimbursement for lodging upon approval of the Executive Director or designee. Lodging expenses shall be claimed at either the actual cost of the lodging (limited to single occupancy rate for a single room) or EDCTA's maximum lodging rate (Federal Per Diem Rate established by the GSA), whichever is less.

B. Lodging costs may exceed the allowable maximum rate under the GSA if the authorized event is held at a specific hotel and lodging is a pre-arranged group rate in conjunction with a conference or event and prior authorization is given.

C. In all instances, the per diem rates for lodging refers to the room rate only. Additional charges for Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT) and sales taxes will be reimbursed at cost. Employees are advised that TOTs may often be waived by California hotels with a letter from the agency on letterhead stating the purpose of the travel. Such letters should be sent in advance of travel dates.

2.7 Rental Cars

When using public transportation on an authorized trip, employees shall utilize the least expensive ground transportation (i.e. taxi, rental car, mass transit). The use of a rental car **must** be noted on the Travel Authorization in advance and authorized by the Executive Director. Justification for the use of the rental car must accompany that request. Rental car costs will not be reimbursed without prior authorization except in the case of emergencies. Exceptions shall be granted at the sole discretion of the Executive Director. The employee shall choose the least expensive size and milage limits appropriate to the use required. Rental cars must be rented under the name of the authorized employee and shall only be driven by an EDCTA employee. The employee shall waive additional vehicle insurance provided by the rental company.

2.8 Air Travel

Air Travel reservations should be made in such a manner as to secure the best available fare. Available resources include, but are not limited to: travel agents, online resources or directly with the airline. ALL AIR TRAVEL MUST BE IN ECONOMY OR SIMILAR CLASS.

- Employees are expected to use the lowest logical airfare available.
- Employees are expected to reserve 7-day advance notice purchases.
- Employees are expected to use non-direct flights when the savings are substantial.
- Employees must obtain Executive Director approval for all trips.

Upgrades for Air Travel

Upgrades for air travel are not reimbursable. If an employee wishes to upgrade, it is done at the employee's expense.

Cancellations

When a trip is cancelled after the ticket has been issued, the employee should inquire about using the same ticket for future travel. Employees should reuse airline tickets if: a) they are traveling on the same route, or b) airfare eligibility requirements (verified with travel agency) are met.

Unused/Voided Airline Tickets

Unused airline tickets or flight coupons must never be discarded or destroyed as these documents may have cash value. To expedite refunds, unused or partially used airline tickets must be returned immediately to the issuing authority. Employees must NOT include unused tickets in with their expense reports.

Employees with an electronic ticket simply need to call the travel agency/issuing authority to initiate a refund.

Lost or Stolen Airline Tickets

Immediately upon discovery of lost/stolen ticket, the employee must:

- Report the loss to the travel agency/issuing authority who will file the lost ticket application
- Fill out the lost ticket application at the airline ticket counter

All other reasonable and necessary expenses (i.e. parking, tolls, etc.) will be reimbursed at cost provided a receipt is included. Receipts are required except for those charges for which receipts are not customarily issued such as bridge tolls.

2.9 Purchase Orders

Purchase Orders are **NOT** an acceptable means of obtaining goods or services for the purposes of travel and meeting expense reimbursement.

2.10 Advances

EDCTA may provide advance funds for estimated "out-of-pocket" expenses up to ~~seventy-five~~one-hundred percent (~~75~~100%), but no less than $50.00. The "out-of-pocket" expenses would include meals, taxi, rideshare, ~~and~~ public transportation, lodging, parking and pre-registration costs.

2.11 Compliance

It is the responsibility of the employee to understand and follow all policies and procedures herein in order to receive reimbursement for mileage, travel and expense claims. Any form completed improperly or procedure not followed will result in the return of claim without reimbursement.

2.12 Exceptions

Exceptions to the limits contained in this policy may be approved by the Executive Director. Any exception granted by the Executive Director is to be applied as a case-by-case basis and does not set precedent for future policy.

3.0 PROCEDURES

3.1 Forms

A. Travel Authorization Form (Attachment A)

B. Mileage Reimbursement Claim Form (Attachment B)

C. Miscellaneous Travel Reimbursement Claim Form (Attachment C)

D. Purchase Requisition Form (Attachment D)

3.2 Authorization

Travel and Mileage/Expense reimbursement claim forms must be signed by the employee requesting reimbursement and the Supervisor. The Executive Director or his/her designee must also approve overnight travel, any maximum rates being exceeded, when a Manager or Supervisor and additional staff member wish to attend the same out-of-county event, when a county vehicle is used and the expected driving time exceeds four hours to the destination, and when common carrier tickets are to be purchased.

3.3 Advances

A. To receive an advance for expenses itemized on the Travel Authorization, an employee must submit this form to the ~~Accounting~~ Finance Department at least one week in advance for processing.

B. Cancellation Policy: In the event an employee, through no fault of his/her own, must cancel pre-planned travel, any advance received must be returned to the ~~Accounting~~ Finance Department within five (5) working days of the scheduled departure date. If the advance is not returned within this time frame the employee could jeopardize his/her standing to receive advances in the future.

3.4 Reimbursement

Submission of travel, mileage and expense claims must be accomplished in a timely fashion for reimbursement to occur.

A. Reimbursement Claim Form

Upon return from approved travel, in order to receive reimbursement the employee is to complete the Miscellaneous Travel Reimbursement Claim Form, attach all pertinent original receipts, obtain Manager or Supervisor approval and submit to the ~~Accounting~~ Finance Department for reimbursement. The employee has thirty (30) days upon return to submit to the ~~Accounting~~ Finance ~~Office~~ Department to receive reimbursement.

B. Expeditious Payment

It is the policy of El Dorado County Transit Authority that no employee, official or person representing EDCTA shall be unduly burdened by costs associated with that representation. Therefore, upon receipt of a request for reimbursement, the ~~Accounting~~ Finance Department shall expeditiously review the request for completeness. If the request is found to be incomplete, the ~~Accounting~~ Finance Department~~Office~~ will return the request to the claimant noting the areas of deficiency. Upon receipt of a completed request for reimbursement the ~~Accounting~~ Finance Department shall provide reimbursement to the employee.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION FORM

Complete Travel Authorization Form & obtain approval prior to making reservations. Contact Kimberly Craw at extension 222 for all reservations

Is travel being booked at least seven (7) days in advance? Yes ☐ No ☐
If no, please explain____
Economy class fare is reimbursable; no upgrades at agency expense without pre-authorization
Estimated cost of trip____

TRAVELLER'S NAME	TELEPHONE NUMBER:	EMPLOYEE NUMBER:
DEPARTMENT AND LOCATION:	PROJECT NUMBER/NAME:	TRAVEL ARRANGED BY:

PURPOSE OF TRIP
☐ PLEASE CHECK THIS BOX IF GRANT APPLICATION AVAILABLE FOR TRIP AND/OR INFORMATION ATTACHED

ITINERARY

FROM	TO	DATE	DEPARTURE TIME

CAR RENTAL NEEDED? NO YES (IF YES PLEASE COMPLETE INFORMATION BELOW)

CITY	NUMBER OF DAYS	SPECIAL INFORMATION

HOTEL NEEDED? NO YES (IF YES PLEASE COMPLETE INFORMATION BELOW)

CITY	DATE(S)	H0TEL NAME (IF KNOWN)	SPECIAL INFORMATION

IS ANY PORTION OF THIS TRIP PERSONAL? IF YES, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE	DATE	SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE	DATE
DEPARTMENT MANAGER APPROVAL	DATE	HUMAN RESOURCES APPROVAL	DATE

EL DORADO COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT CLAIM FORM

NOTE: For Claims under $25.00, please use Petty Cash Requisition/Reimbursement Form.

Employee Name (*please print*): ___________________________________ **Date**: ____________

Make and model of car: _________________________ Vehicle License No.: __________________

I hereby certify that I possess a valid California driver's license, and I have sufficient public liability and property damage insurance at least equal to the requirements of financial responsibility laws of the State of California (Vehicle Code Section 16430). I further certify that the miles claimed for El Dorado County Transit Authority is and was necessary for the performance of my assigned duties and no prior claim has been made for any portion thereof.

Signature of Employee: ___________________________________ ***Date***: ___________________

Employee Drivers License No.: ___________________________________

Date	Destination	Purpose	Total Miles Traveled

I approve the miles claimed for the Authority recorded as reasonable and necessary for the performance of the employee's assigned duties and approve payment of this claim.

Supervisor's Signature: ___________________________________ ***Date***: __________________

Account Code______________________________

********************************* ***ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY*********************************

Total Mileage ___________x $0.72.5 = ___________________Account Code________________

TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT TO EMPLOYEE: _______________ Process Date: _______________

2026 Standard Mileage Rate

EL DORADO COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

MISCELLANEOUS TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT CLAIM FORM

NOTE: For Claims less than $25.00, please use Petty Cash Requisition/Reimbursement Form

____ **Date**________________________
Employee Name (*please print*)

I hereby the articles or service described by the **original invoice attached** and listed below have been delivered or performed and no prior claim has been presented for these articles or service.

Signature of Employee____***Date***____________________

Date	Articles/Service	Amount Allowed	Amount Paid	Reimbursable Amount

Explanation: Reimburseable amounts are based on GSA per diem rates. Please see attached original receipts.
____

I hereby certify the articles or services described above and by the original invoice(s) attached were necessary for use by the department. I have provided account codes for approved amount (s).

Signature of Supervisor____***Date***____________________

$ ____________________ ____________________ ____________________
Amount Approved ***Account Code*** ***Work Element***

$ ____________________ ____________________ ____________________
Amount Approved ***Account Code*** ***Work Element***

************************ ***ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY*************************

Total Articles/Service $____________ **Account Code:** ______________ **Work Element:** __________

Total Articles/Service $____________ **Account Code:** ______________ **Work Element:** __________

TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT TO EMPLOYEE: _____________ **Process Date:** ______________

EL DORADO COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

PURCHASE REQUISITION

(Use for purchases over $50, under $50 use Miscellaneous Reimbursement Claim Form)

Check One: [ ] PURCHASE ORDER Or [ ] BLANKET PURCHASE ORDER
If check is required, date needed is ____________________ Invoice/receipt of purchase must be returned.

Requested by: ____ Date: ________________________________

Item(s) Needed: Quantity: ____________________ Description: ____

____

Vendor Selected: ____ Total Cost: $ ______________________________

Grant Funding Source: ____ Amount: $ ___________________

VENDOR CONTACTS

(*) Contact at least three vendors for price quotation, unless approval not to do so is given below.
RFP to be issued on items costing over $10,000.00 and written bids are required.

Vendor 1: Name: ____ Terms: ____________________
Street/Mailing Address: ____
City: ____ State: _______________ Zip: ________________
Contact: _________________________________ Telephone: _____________________ Fax: __________________________
Quantity: _______ Price: $ ________ (each) Shipping: $ ________ Tax: $ _______ Total Cost: $ ______________________
Is Description as noted above? ____Yes If not, explain: ____

____

Vendor 2: Name: ____ Terms: ____________________
Street/Mailing Address: ____
City: ____ State: _______________ Zip: ________________
Contact: _________________________________ Telephone: _____________________ Fax: __________________________
Quantity: _______ Price: $ ________ (each) Shipping: $ _______ Tax: $ ______ Total Cost: $ ________________________
Is Description as noted above? ____Yes If not, explain: ____

____

Vendor 3: Name: ____ Terms: ____________________
Street/Mailing Address: ____
City: ____ State: _______________ Zip: ________________
Contact: _________________________________ Telephone: _____________________ Fax: __________________________
Quantity: _______ Price: $ ________ (each) Shipping: $ ________ Tax: $ ______ Total Cost: $ _________________________
Is Description as noted above? ____Yes If not, explain: ____

____

AUTHORIZATION

Supervisor Approval: ____ Date: __________________________
Purpose of Purchase: ____
Account Number: ________________________________

(*) *OVERRIDE OF THREE-VENDOR REQUIREMENT:*

Supervisor Approval: ____ Date: ____________________________
Reason: ____
Account Number: _________________________________

* ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT USE *

Purchase Order Number Issued: __________________ Date: __________ By: _________________

Circle Distribution: Purchasing Requestor

Purchasing Procedures

1. Carefully follow the form filling in each line completely. Unless the item is unique to one vendor (i.e. factory), you must find three (3) vendors for price comparison. If only two vendors are available, or if a vendor you have contacted does not respond, make a notation to that effect.

2. When the vendor has been selected and total cost (including sales tax) has been established, submit the form to your supervisor for approval. The supervisors will then fill out the “Purpose of Purchase” and “Account Number” portion.

3. The entire package including any vendor quotes will be given to the Accounting Department for processing. Accounting will then create a Purchase Order form.

4. The Executive Director will sign the original Purchase Order. Copies of the Purchase Order, Purchase requisition, and any pertinent information will be given to the Requestor to place the order with the Vendor. A copy of the Purchase Order <u>only</u> will be mailed to the Vendor by the Accounting Department. All original documents will be held by the Accounting Department for standard processing.