

AGENDA ITEM 1G
Consent Item

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 2, 2021

TO: El Dorado County Transit Authority

FROM: Maria Harris, Human Resources Manager

SUBJECT: Proposed Revisions to the **El Dorado County Transit Authority Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual**

REQUESTED ACTION:
BY MOTION,

- 1. Adopt Resolution No. 21-29 revising the El Dorado County Transit Authority Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual with regard to policy revisions and additions**
- 2. Approve El Dorado County Transit Authority Board Policy, Travel D-1 with regard to revisions.**

BACKGROUND

The El Dorado County Transit Authority (El Dorado Transit) reviews its policies and procedures regularly for compliance with current state and federal laws, clarification of current policy language, as well as consideration of new policies and procedures based on industry best practices.

El Dorado Transit's Board Travel Policy addresses authorization and reimbursements of expenses incurred for business travel for Transit employees in and out of El Dorado County.

DISCUSSION

The most notable recommended revisions are noted in the attached document with bold and underline text. There is a strikethrough on items to be deleted. All other changes include formatting updates and grammatical errors. The full El Dorado County Transit Authority Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual document is available for review on our website or at the El Dorado Transit administrative office during normal business hours.

The attached recommendation for El Dorado Transit's Board Travel Policy D-1 includes updated language that incorporates reimbursement amounts based on the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) per diem rates. The GSA rates establish per diem maximum allowances based on region of travel including incidental expenses incurred while on official travel for business.

ARTICLE 3 – EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION AND PROGRESS

3.5 Work Schedules

El Dorado Transit shall fix the hours of work with due regard for the convenience of the public and Federal, State, and local laws. El Dorado Transit will assign employees to a regular work schedule, subject to change at El Dorado Transit's discretion. [El Dorado Transit defines its work week as beginning on Saturday at 12:00 am and ending on Friday at 11:59 pm.](#) El Dorado Transit shall give employees reasonable advance notice of any change in work schedule, when feasible.

ARTICLE 4 – SPECIAL PAYS

4.2 Mileage and Travel Pay

Mileage

An employee who is required to use a personal vehicle for El Dorado Transit business shall be reimbursed at the federal rate, as determined by the Internal Revenue Service. Personal vehicle use shall be approved by the Executive Director or designee prior to travel, if possible.

Travel

The Executive Director or designee must pre-approve all out-of-region travel. "Out-of-region travel" is defined as travel to destinations outside of El Dorado County that are more feasibly reached by means other than automobile.

Payment of travel time away from a non-exempt employee's home (overnight travel) is covered under provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Reimbursement Rates

Employees shall be reimbursed for [individual meals and lodging expenses pursuant to the rates established by the federal General Services Administration \(GSA\) for the region of travel.](#) ~~their actual and necessary expenses based on receipts turned into El Dorado Transit.~~ Actual and necessary expenses do not include alcoholic beverages or gratuities (unless gratuity is included in the quoted price of providing the employee's meals). [Generally, meals for in-county travel are not reimbursable; however, the Executive Director or his/her designee may approve reimbursement if it is determined necessary and reasonable under special circumstances.](#)

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 traveler 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.

Travelers on out-of-County business travel that requires overnight lodging are eligible to 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 traveler 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.

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.

Please see Board Policy D-1: Travel for further details of all in-County and out-of-County travel policies and procedures. ~~Actual costs may be reimbursed according to the rates outlined below. Breakfasts may be reimbursed only if an employee's travel is at least two (2) hours before his/her regular work hours. These rates apply to in-county travel as well.~~

| Maximum Allowable Meal Reimbursement | |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Without Receipt | With Receipt |
| Breakfast \$ 4.00 | \$ 12.00 |
| Lunch \$ 6.00 | \$ 15.00 |
| Dinner \$ 12.00 | \$ 30.00 |

ARTICLE 5 – PAID AND UNPAID LEAVE POLICIES

Kin Care Leave

Full-time and Part-time Regular employees may use up to one-half of their annual allotment of accrued and available sick leave in a calendar year for absences to attend to an illness for specific family members as defined by California law ~~of the employee's child, the child of the employee's registered domestic partner, the employee's parent, registered domestic partner or spouse~~, on the same terms the employee is able to use sick leave benefits for the employee's own illness or injury.

5.14 California Family Rights Act (CFRA)

Under the California Family Rights Act (CFRA) an eligible employee is entitled to up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid family/medical leave within any twelve (12) month period. The total amount of leave taken is twelve (12) workweeks in a twelve (12) month period, unless the employee is qualified for additional time for a disability due to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition. The twelve (12) month period begins with the first day leave is taken. At the leave's conclusion, the employee will be restored to the same or an equivalent position, except as otherwise required by law or policy.

This leave does not run concurrently with leave provided under the California Pregnancy Disability Act. However, this leave may run concurrently with some leaves that qualify under the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act and/or any other leave where permitted by state and federal law.

Eligible Employees

To be eligible for a leave under CFRA the employee must:

1. Have worked for El Dorado Transit for at least twelve (12) months; and
2. Have worked at least 1,250 hours in the last twelve (12) months prior to taking CFRA

Reasons For Leave

The employee may take family/medical leave for any of the following reasons:

1. Birth of the employee's or the employee's registered domestic partner's child , or to care for a newly born child; or
2. Placement of a child with the employee and/or the employee's registered domestic partner for adoption or foster care; or
3. To care for a family member to include spouse, registered domestic partner, child (including adult child), registered domestic partner's child, parent, parent-in law, grandparent, grandchild or sibling with a serious health condition; or

5.16 Paid Family Leave Insurance (PFL)

The State of California may provide partial wage benefits to eligible employees for up to a maximum of ~~six (6) weeks. Beginning July 1, 2020 California will extend the maximum duration of PFL from six (6) weeks to~~ eight (8) weeks.

The PFL program is not a leave right and does not provide job protection such as other state and federal laws. PFL provides ~~a wage replacement~~ benefit payments to workers who take time off from work to care for a seriously ill family member, bond with a new child or to participate in a qualifying event because of a family members military

deployment. A qualifying family member is an ~~iii~~-child, spouse, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling or registered domestic partner, or to bond with a child within one year of birth or placement through foster care or adoption.

The employee is responsible for promptly and accurately filing a claim for family leave insurance benefits and other forms with the Employment Development Department. A claim form may be obtained from the Employment Development Department office or online. All eligibility and benefit determinations are made by the Employment Development Department.

The employee may not be eligible for Paid Family Leave benefits if the employee is receiving State Disability Insurance, Unemployment Compensation Insurance or Workers' Compensation benefits.

5.19 Personal Leave of Absence

El Dorado Transit understands that personal circumstances may necessitate an absence from work that either does not meet the requirements for CFRA/FMLA or extends beyond paid leave balances. If this situation arises, employees may request a paid or unpaid leave of absence not to exceed ninety (90) days, subject to the approval of the Executive Director.

Employees granted a leave of absence without pay must first exhaust any accumulated vacation and sick leave balances.

ARTICLE 6- EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

El Dorado Transit has developed a comprehensive set of employee benefit programs to supplement our employee's regular wages. -El Dorado Transit's Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual describe the current maintained benefit plans. If any conflict exists between this policy and the actual plan documents and summary plan descriptions, the actual plan documents and summary plan descriptions are controlling. El Dorado Transit reserves the right to modify and/or terminate benefits at any time. El Dorado Transit will keep employees informed of changes.

6.1 Holidays

Scheduled Holidays

El Dorado Transit shall provide the following holiday schedule:

- A. The following days shall be the official El Dorado Transit holidays;

January 1 - New Year's Day

January (Third Monday) - Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
February (Third Monday) – President’s Day
May (Last Monday) - Memorial Day
[June 19 - Juneteenth](#)
July 4 - Independence Day
September (First Monday) - Labor Day
November 11 - Veteran's Day
November - Thanksgiving Day
November - Friday after Thanksgiving
December 24 - Christmas Eve
December 25 - Christmas Day

Every day appointed by the President or Governor of California, upon concurrence by El Dorado Transit, for a public fast, Thanksgiving or holiday.

6.13 ~~Education Reimbursement~~ [Tuition Assistance Program](#)

~~To encourage professional development, El Dorado Transit offers a tuition assistance program to eligible employees who complete job-related courses with a grade of “C” or better.~~ [El Dorado Transit encourages all employees to pursue professional development to improve their effectiveness in their job performance and to prepare for future career opportunities within Transit. El Dorado Transit is dedicated to providing tuition assistance to all employees seeking to reach their professional goals.](#)

[El Dorado Transit has established a Tuition Assistance Program, which provides support for personal and professional development opportunities for regular full-time employees. These opportunities may be used to expand job knowledge and upgrade skills, help meet the requirements for a different Transit job, prepare employees for another line of work within Transit, or take courses required to complete a college degree program. Tuition assistance is for courses and degrees related to a specific job, function, or career growth.](#)

A. Eligibility

1. [Employees must be Full-time regular employee status for at least twelve \(12\) continuous months with El Dorado Transit.](#)
2. [Employee must be in active pay status. Employee on non-active status \(full-time disability leave, workers’ compensation leave, military leave, etc.\) are not eligible for assistance or reimbursement.](#)
3. [Employee must still be employed by Transit when final paperwork for reimbursement is submitted.](#)
4. [Employee must have a satisfactory job performance.](#)
5. [Prior to enrolment, the employee must obtain written approval from the employee’s supervisor and the Executive Director to confirm that the subject is job-related. Job related means training directly related to work performed for the department in which the person seeking reimbursement is employed.](#)

A. Criteria and Guidelines

1. Applicability of the degree to the job and/or future position in the agency.
2. Length of service and potential of continued employment
3. Employees class attendance must not interfere with normal departmental operations or create extra work for other employees.
4. Employees GPA
 - a. Undergraduate level courses: Grade of “C” or better (or the numerical equivalent thereof) in each individual course.
 - b. Graduate level courses: Grade of “B” or better (or the numerical equivalent thereof) in each individual course.
 - a.c. Certificate Courses: Valid proof of successful completion of certificate curriculum or grade of “Pass” (or equivalent) for individual courses.
5. Along with submission and application for reimbursement, employees are required to investigate and apply for all alternate sources of tuition support and financial assistance for which they may be eligible. Alternate sources of financial aid include, but are not limited to, agency tuition support programs, Pell Grants, Veterans Administration Educational Benefits (GI Bill), and college stipends. Information about financial assistance programs may be obtained from college/university financial aid offices, or agency staff development resources. ~~shall exhaust all education benefits from the federal and state governments.~~
- 2.6. Employees receiving tuition support or financial assistance from any alternate source must report it and the amount on the application form. This amount will be deducted before calculating the allowable reimbursement. Employees who fail to report alternate sources and amounts of financial aid on the application will be liable for return of the reimbursement award, and face possible exclusion from future reimbursement program eligibility.

B-C. Reimbursement Amount

- ~~1. The maximum amount of reimbursement during any calendar year for courses taken during that year shall be four hundred and seventy dollars (\$470.00) per employee.~~ For pre-approved courses in an accredited educational institution program, eligible employees may receive tuition reimbursement for a maximum of \$2,500 for certificate, Associate, Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programs in one fiscal year (July 1 through June 30).
- ~~2. Reimbursement requests must include original receipts and grade report.~~ Employees will be reimbursed only for the courses necessary to earn one Bachelor’s degree and for the courses necessary to earn one Master’s degree during the total employment period.

2.3. Reimbursement includes the cost of tuition, required books, supplies, parking, mandatory insurance fees, and related fees. Related fees include standard expenses like financial aid fees and lab fees. Cost not covered by this policy include, but are not limited to the following: transportation, recreation fees, and books that are not required for the course.

~~C. — No Release from Work~~

~~All course work in connection with this article must be completed during the employee's personal time, not during scheduled shifts. No release time will be provided.~~

D. Availability of Funding Reimbursable Courses

1. All courses required in pursuit of a certificate or degree at an accredited school that will enhance the employee's current skills and will prepare the employee for other career opportunities within Transit.
2. Courses at an accredited university, college, trade, business, or vocational school (not in pursuit of a degree or certificate) that will enhance skills in current classification or prepare the employee for career opportunities within Transit.
3. Prerequisite courses outside the major course of study (e.g., completion of an undergraduate statistics course in order to allowed to register for the graduate course).
4. College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests, provided that credits will be applied toward an approved college/university program.
- ~~4.5. Challenge exams for certification.~~

~~Reimbursement is dependent upon fund availability in El Dorado Transit's budget.~~

E. Tuition Reimbursement Procedures

1. Employees should complete the Tuition Assistance Application at least two (2) weeks prior to the start of the course in order to eligible for tuition assistance.
2. Completed forms will be reviewed by the Human Resources Department to verify eligibility and criteria requirements. The Human Resources Department will determine if funds are available. Funding for tuition reimbursements will be subject to budgetary limitations. A pre-approved Tuition Assistance Application must be on file with Transit to receive reimbursement.
3. Within 45 days from completion of the course, the applicant must submit legible copies of the following:
 - a. Invoices or statement of fees charged and the amount paid. The invoice must contain the school's name and address. Copies of cancelled checks and credit card receipts will not be accepted.
 - b. Grade card/report indicating the applicant's name, quarter/semester, course name(s) and grade(s) for the term.

~~a. Management employees shall receive education reimbursement set forth by the guidelines in Section 6.12, during any calendar year for courses taken during that year not to exceed \$1,500.00.~~

F. Other Requirements and Restrictions

Ancillary fees that may be required by the educational institution, including but not limited to fees for application, technology, late registration, student activities, student licensing, matriculation, graduation, or diploma are not reimbursable.

Tuition Reimbursement Application with reimbursements of less than \$25.00 will not be accepted. All reimbursements for education assistance under this policy may be subject to Federal and State income tax laws in effect at the time of payment.

All employees receiving reimbursement under this program are obligated to remain in the employ of Transit for a period of one (1) year from the completion date of class or to repay Transit on a pro-rated basis, as described in the tuition reimbursement agreement that is to be signed by each applicant prior to approval of application.

Any exceptions to this policy must be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee.

~~An employee's request for tuition assistance must be made and approved prior to course registration for the.~~

ARTICLE 8 – STANDARD BUSINESS CODE OF CONDUCT

8.4 Workplace Fraternalization

El Dorado Transit strongly believes that a work environment where employees maintain clear boundaries between employee personal and business interactions is necessary for effective operations of agency business. Although this policy does not prevent the development of friendships or romantic relationship between co-workers, it does establish boundaries as to how relationships are conducted during working hours and within the working environment.

Individuals in supervisory or managerial roles and those with authority over other's terms and conditions of employment are subject to more stringent requirements under this policy due to their positions within the agency, their access to sensitive information, and their ability to affect the employment of individuals in subordinate positions.

This policy does not preclude or interfere with the rights of employee protected by the National Labor Relations Act or any other applicable statute concerning the employment relationship.

Procedures:

1. During working time and in working areas, employees are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner that does not interfere with productivity.
2. During nonworking time, such as lunches, breaks, and before and after work periods, employees should observe an appropriate and professional manner.
3. Employees are strictly prohibited from engaging in inappropriate physical contact while anywhere on company premises, whether during working hours or not.
4. Supervisor and manager disclose the romantic or sexual relationships with another co-worker to the individual's immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Manager. El Dorado Transit will review the circumstances to determine whether any conflict of interest exists.

Persons who violate this or any other El Dorado Transit policy are subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.

ARTICLE 9 – DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

9.1 Standards of Conduct

Each employee has an obligation to observe and follow El Dorado Transit's policies and to maintain proper standards of conduct at all times. If an employee's behavior interferes with the orderly and efficient operation of a department, corrective disciplinary measures will be taken.

Disciplinary action may include a verbal warning, written warning, suspension with or without pay, and/or termination. The appropriate disciplinary action imposed will be determined by the Executive Director or his/her designee.

9.2 Discipline

The purpose of this policy is to provide firm guidelines that will ensure uniform application of formal and informal discipline involving El Dorado Transit employees. It is imperative that supervisors recognize that discipline is a legitimate organizational function, which, if exercised prudently, will ensure management control of the work force and encourage continual growth in employee work performance. If applied fairly and consistently, discipline can be a positive, constructive means of bringing about or increasing organizational order and efficiency. Except in cases of suspension or dismissal, where the action taken is obviously punitive, disciplinary action should be taken only to deter employees from duplicating similar performance and behavior.

Disciplinary actions of a formal or informal nature will adhere to the following standards:

- A. Performance and behavioral problems will be discussed with employees in a timely manner following their occurrence.
- B. Whenever unsatisfactory performance or behavior emerges that cannot be corrected through informal discipline, which includes discussion, instruction, training, counseling, admonishment, written warning, or reprimand, then formal disciplinary action must be considered.
- C. Formal disciplinary action (suspension or termination) is to be in writing and documentation should demonstrate unacceptable performance or behavior by the employee.

Probationary employees and extra-help employees are not entitled to the same disciplinary procedures as regular employees. Probationary or extra-help employees may be dismissed at any time without notice and without the right to appeal.

- D. Disciplinary action against any employee shall be for cause, as it may affect work performance and effectiveness within the organization. Cause may include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - 1. Unauthorized absence from duty or willful abuse of leave privileges
 - 2. Excessive absence, unexcused absenteeism or tardiness
 - 3. Sick leave abuse
 - 4. Arrest or conviction of any felony or criminal act involving moral turpitude. If disciplinary action is based on an arrest, El Dorado Transit shall independently establish the facts in support of the arrest prior to taking any disciplinary action. If disciplinary action is based on a conviction, El Dorado Transit may rely upon a plea or a verdict of guilty, or a conviction following a plea of nolo contendere. The term "conviction" does not include imposition of a sentence.
 - 5. Conduct tending to bring El Dorado Transit into disrepute
 - 6. Disorderly or immoral conduct
 - 7. Incompetence, inefficiency or neglect of duty
 - 8. Insubordination, willful disobedience of superiors
 - 9. Being at work under the influence of alcoholic beverages or drugs, carrying onto the premises alcoholic beverages or drugs, or consuming or using

alcoholic beverages or drugs during work hours and/or on El Dorado Transit premises

10. Negligent or willful damage to El Dorado Transit property or misuse of resources, property, equipment, phones, or supplies for personal use or private business
11. Violation of any law or reasonable regulation or order given by a supervisor or manager
12. Failure to comply with El Dorado Transit's Equal Employment Opportunity policies
13. Material and intentional misrepresentation or concealment of any fact in connection with obtaining employment
14. Engaging in outside employment which has a detrimental effect on attendance or ability to perform work
15. Misappropriation of El Dorado Transit funds or property
16. Dishonesty or theft
17. Failure to cooperate reasonably with his/her supervisor or fellow employees
18. Discourteous or abusive treatment of the public, fellow employees or superiors
19. Failure to adequately observe any rule specifically stated in this manual
20. Failure to adequately observe the rules regarding working hours and leave time
21. Sexual abuse, harassment, discrimination, retaliation and conduct contributing to a hostile work environment.
22. Continued poor work performance
23. Possession of a firearm in an El Dorado Transit facility
24. [Violation of the Workplace Fraternization Policy](#)

These examples are not all inclusive. El Dorado Transit emphasizes that termination decisions will be based on an assessment of all relevant factors by the Executive Director.

Responsibility for the administration of discipline rests primarily with the appropriate supervisor. It is a fundamental policy of El Dorado Transit to treat its employees fairly. Therefore, every effort should be made to ascertain facts before discipline is imposed. Further, especially in the case of formal discipline, it is important that the supervisor or his/her designee to provide detailed, documentation of facts.

9.3 Corrective Action Procedures

It is the desire of El Dorado Transit to minimize or eliminate the necessity of taking disciplinary action against its employees. An employee can help reduce disciplinary actions by consulting his/her supervisor when in doubt about any such action that may be in violation of El Dorado Transit rules.

The Executive Director or supervisor of any employee may take disciplinary action against an employee under his/her supervision. All disciplinary actions must be coordinated to ensure uniform adherence to personnel policies and disciplinary procedures. It is not required that these actions be taken in sequence; rather that the nature of the disciplinary action taken will depend on the severity of the infraction. The following are examples of disciplinary actions:

A. Verbal Warning/Counseling Memo

The employee shall be counseled concerning the unsatisfactory areas of work and shall be informed about methods of improvement, or the employee's direct supervisor may issue a verbal warning. Verbal warnings must be documented by the supervisor and placed in the employee's personnel file.

B. Written Warning

In cases where the verbal warning has not been successful or where the infraction of the rules and regulations has been of a serious nature, a written warning shall be issued. Only the Executive Director or a supervisor may issue a written warning. The purpose of the written warning is to call the attention of the employee to serious defects in his/her work. The written warning should include a detailed statement of the problem and a notation that the problem was discussed with the employee. The employee must sign the written warning, acknowledging a copy thereof. A copy of the written warning must be included in the employee's personnel file. The employee may respond to the written warning and such response shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

C. Suspension

An employee may be suspended for up to a period thirty (30) days in order to impress upon the employee that continued failure to improve his/her performance may result in dismissal. All suspensions require the recommendation of the Executive Director or his/her designee. Employees may not use any accrued leave to compensate for the loss of pay in the event of suspension. Employees will not earn vacation leave or sick leave while on suspension.

D. Administrative Leave of Absence with Pay

The appointing authority with approval of the Executive Director may place an employee on leave of absence with pay (suspended pay) ~~for a period not to exceed ten (10) working days. This leave with pay (suspension with pay) shall be used~~ when an employee is under investigation or for other necessary or emergent needs such as when the employee's continued presence at the work site may be hazardous or disruptive.

DRAFT

**EL DORADO COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
RESOLUTION NO. 21-29**

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
EL DORADO COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
UPDATING THE PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

WHEREAS, one of El Dorado County Transit Authority (“El Dorado Transit”) key governance policies is the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual (“Policies”); and

WHEREAS, the last revision to the Policy was on May 6, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Policy includes clarifications and revisions needed to comply with updated laws and regulations and incorporate Board approved policy changes.

WHEREAS, the proposed Policy has been updated to include all federal and state laws; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Policy improves readability and ease of use; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE EL DORADO COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY: The Board adopts the attached revised Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual of the El Dorado County Transit Authority.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE EL DORADO COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY at a regular meeting of the Board held on the 2nd day of December 2021, by the following vote of the Board:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Kara Taylor, Chairperson

ATTEST:

Megan Wilcher, Secretary to the Board

EL DORADO COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

| Subject | Policy Number | Date Proposed |
|---------|---------------|------------------|
| TRAVEL | D-1 | December 2, 2021 |

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 reimbursement of approved expenditures within a reasonable amount of time and 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 reimbursed at per State/Federal rate (see Policies & Procedures ~~13.2.1~~ [4. 4.2](#)). Mileage for travel shall be computed from the employee's designated work-place. If travel begins from the employee's home, mileage shall be calculated from the home or work-place, 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 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 if their assigned activities require them 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 ~~to 2-day-an~~ [activity in South Lake Tahoe](#)). The rate of reimbursement for meals, lodging and mileage shall be [pursuant to the rates established by the General Services Administration \(GSA\)](#), ~~the same as established for travel out of county~~. 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 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 NOT be exceeded due to special circumstances ~~and 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 staff member, 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 a personal credit card, purchase order, or through a travel advance after approval.

- G. Common carrier travel must be in ~~"Coach"~~ "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 GSA. ~~Actual costs may be reimbursed according to the rates shown below.~~ Breakfasts 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 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.

~~Maximum Allowable Meal Reimbursement~~

| | Without Receipts | With Receipts |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Breakfast | \$ 4.00 | \$ 12.00 |
| Lunch | \$ 6.00 | \$ 15.00 |
| Dinner | \$ 12.00 | \$ 30.00 |

2.6 Lodging

~~A.~~ 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.

~~A.B.~~ A.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.~~Lodging charges shall be those charges actual and necessary but not to exceed 109.00 per day, with the exception noted in 2.6B "High Cost Cities". Single rates shall prevail except when the room is occupied by more than one employee. (NOTE: Nothing in this policy shall be construed as to require employees to share sleeping accommodations while conducting EDCTA business. Sharing accommodations may be done on a voluntary basis. EDCTA appreciates employees being cost conscious.)~~ In all travel,

~~employees are expected to secure overnight accommodations as economically as possible.~~

- B. ~~The following cities, or areas immediately contiguous thereto, are considered "high cost" cities. In these areas, lodging per diem shall be established by the GSA, increased to \$159.00 per night or to the amount determined by the hosting agency. High Cost Cities: San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Long Beach, Santa Barbara, Newport Beach, Monterey, Atlanta, San Jose, Palm Springs, New York, Washington D.C.~~
- 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 a 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 COACH 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 ~~over \$2,000.~~

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 ~~traveler~~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 agent~~) are met.

Unused/Voided Airline Tickets

Unused airline tickets or flight coupons must never be discarded or destroyed as these documents may have a 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 ~~traveler~~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 percent (75%), but no less than \$50.00.—The ~~""~~out-of-pocket~~""~~ expenses would include meals, taxi and public transportation, lodging, parking and pre-registration costs.

2.11 Compliance

It is the responsibility of the ~~claimant~~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.~~ ~~A.~~ [Travel Authorization Form \(Attachment A\)](#)

~~A.B.~~ [Mileage Reimbursement Claim Form \(Attachment BA\)](#)

~~CB.~~ Miscellaneous [Travel](#) Reimbursement Claim Form (Attachment ~~CB~~)

~~DC.~~ Purchase Requisition Form (Attachment ~~DC~~)

3.2 Authorization

Travel ~~Authorization~~ and Mileage/Expense reimbursement claim forms must be signed by the ~~individual-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 Supervisor and ~~additional staff member~~ ~~Assistant~~ 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 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 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 ~~Travel Authorization~~ Form

Upon return from approved travel, the employee is to complete the ~~travel authorization section~~ Miscellaneous Travel Reimbursement Claim Form "Actual Expenses", attach all pertinent original receipts, obtain Supervisor approval and submit to the Accounting Department for reimbursement. The employee has thirty (30) days upon return to submit to the Accounting Office 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 Department shall expeditiously review the request for completeness. If the request is found to be incomplete, the Accounting Office will return the request to the claimant noting the areas of deficiency. Upon receipt of a completed request for reimbursement the Accounting Department shall provide reimbursement to the employee.