City of Pinole
Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy for Employees

SUBJECT

To establish guidelines for the basic policies and procedures for travel on City business by all City employees. Everyone who travels on City business - or supervises someone who travels - is responsible for knowing and following these guidelines.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Administrative Regulation is to:

1. Assure the appropriate use of City funds.
2. Adopt guidelines determining reasonable reimbursement to City employees for costs associated with educational and work-related conferences, trips and meetings.
3. Specify procedures for reimbursement to City employees for their expenses while attending conferences, training sessions, meetings, and other official City business.
4. Meet Internal Revenue Service regulations.

POLICY

Unless stated otherwise pursuant to a memorandum of understanding, the travel and expenses of City employees shall be reimbursed as stated in this policy. It is the policy of the City of Pinole to make appropriate use of City funds by paying only reasonable and necessary costs associated with approved travel, training, conferences, organized educational activities, seminars and meetings that are specifically related to the business of the City.

All business travel plans require prior approval by the respective Department Manager. Airline tickets, car rental, hotel reservations, and registrations, should be arranged through each Department. Department Managers may allow employees to make their own arrangements when appropriate. When determining if travel is appropriate, Department Managers should take into consideration:

- If the training, meeting, or conference is necessary to accomplish City goals and objectives;
- The distance of the training
- The number of staff requesting to attend;
- Whether the training, conference, or meeting is available locally; and
- If there is sufficient funding in the appropriate travel budget to cover the costs.

GENERAL STANDARDS

These guidelines do not require you to take a bus, stay in a cheap motel, or eat only in fast food restaurants. A bus or a train may cost less than a plane, but the added time away from work can make these slower options more expensive to the City overall. The meal allowances established in these guidelines allow you to eat in moderately priced restaurants.

In all areas, not just economy, you are responsible for exercising good judgment in requesting, arranging, and making a trip. It should be thoroughly planned, well in advance. Personal business should not be mixed with official business if it will cost the City anything in dollars or lost time, or if it will harm the City's interests in any way.

Airlines, hotels, and rental car companies often make special rates available to state, federal, and local governments. These rates are presumed to be the most economical and reasonable rates for the purposes of this Policy. Those booking travel should consult available resources, such as www.catravelsmart.com to determine the applicable government rates.

These guidelines are not intended to address every issue, exception, or contingency that may arise in the course of City travel. Accordingly, the basic standard that should always prevail is to exercise good judgment in the use and stewardship of the City's resources.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all City employees of the City of Pinole including part-time and temporary (seasonal) employees. The City Manager is authorized to grant exceptions to specific provisions on a case-by-case basis within the intent of the overall policy so long as such exceptions comply with federal, state and local law.

PROCEDURES

Reimbursement for expenses incurred while attending conferences, training sessions, meetings, etc., will be made only for reasonable and necessary expenses when properly authorized and incurred on behalf of the City, while conducting City business in accordance with the following guidelines.

I. Mileage Reimbursement

Reimbursement Rates for mileage will be based on the Internal Revenue Service Mileage Rate, which may vary from year to year. Mileage will be reimbursed for the distance between home and the destination or City Hall and the destination, whichever is less, unless travel to City Hall is required for business purposes.

Monthly vehicle allowances are provided to those individuals that are required to use their personal vehicles on an ongoing basis for City business. For those employees receiving monthly allowances, mileage will not be reimbursed.

II. Transportation

Driving: A City vehicle shall be used when traveling to a conference, organized educational activity, seminar, or meeting that is within 50 miles of the City of Pinole. Within this range, if a City vehicle cannot be made available, the use of a private vehicle may be authorized by the employee's department manager and the City will reimburse the employee at the Internal Revenue Service Mileage Rate.

To drive a City-owned vehicle on City business you must:

- Possess a valid California driver's license.

To drive a privately-owned vehicle on City business you must:

- Possess a valid California driver's license.
- Carry, at employee's expense, liability and property damage insurance at the minimum limits required by law.
- Realize that any damage to the car, needed service, or repair occurring on the trip will be your responsibility, as these costs are included in the City's per mile cost reimbursement.

Air Travel: Outside of 300 miles from the City of Pinole, the City will pay airline coach roundtrip fare. All flights taken must be direct to/from the site, with no side trips or destinations.

The lowest possible governmental fare should be obtained and airline vouchers should be used whenever possible.

If any City employee wishes to drive rather than fly to a destination outside of the normal 300 mile range, he/she may be authorized to do so by the employee's department manager or the City Manager, with the following provisions:

1. The employee shall do so on his/her own time in his/her own car.
2. The City will reimburse the employee the lesser of the mileage rate to and from the site or the amount that the airline coach fare would have been as determined by the Finance Department.

No reimbursement will be made for other mileage or other expenses incurred during the trip.

Ground Transportation: The employee may be reimbursed for the following types of ground transportation:

1. Shuttles
2. Public transportation including buses, rapid or rail transit
3. Taxi
4. Rental cars

Shuttles or other public transportation should be used whenever available, and where more economical than rental cars. Rental cars should only be used if none of the other three is available. Luxury or premium cars shall not be rented on official City travel. Use of rental cars (Form T-4 must be completed) require the approval of the City Manager on a case-by-case basis.

III. Lodging

The City will pay for a single room (including taxes and parking) for as many nights as necessary. The accommodations should be economical but practical, at group or government rates, when available. In general, lodging expenses will be reimbursed at the most reasonably priced accommodations available consistent with the purpose and goals of your travel. Location is important: a hotel close to where you will be conducting business may be slightly more expensive than outlying hotels, but it may be easier to achieve the City's travel goals by staying at the closer location. For lodging in connection with a conference or organized educational activity, such lodging costs shall not exceed the maximum group rate published by the conference or activity sponsor, provided that rate is available at the time of booking. If you have a question about using a particular hotel, obtain concurrence or direction from your department manager before making a reservation. Whenever possible, lodging should be fire sprinklered.

Extended Stay: If you take time away from official business for personal matters, or if you delay your return after completing your business, you will not be reimbursed for expenses incurred during that time. When combining business and personal travel in this manner, department manager approval is required. If this extended period occurs during your regular scheduled work hours, the time will be counted as vacation, comp time (if available), or leave without pay. A City vehicle may not be used when your trip is extended.

IV. Meals

The City will reimburse employees for meals at the maximum allowance provided in Appendix A. Employees will not be reimbursed for meals that are included in registration costs.

A. Meals In Transit. The City will only reimburse for meals while the employee is traveling to a conference site if the employee is unable to eat within two hours of his/her normal mealtime.

B. City employees will not be reimbursed for lunches if the location of the conference is within the City, since the employee could have lunch in the manner they normally choose. Employees will not be reimbursed for meals that are already included in the conference registration fee.

C. A trip of less than 55 miles or within Contra Costa County will not be eligible for a meal reimbursement in transit.

D. The City will not reimburse for the cost of any alcoholic beverages.

V. Types of Occurrences that Qualify for Reimbursement

A. The City will reimburse only direct and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of official duties, including attending training, conferences, organized educational activity, seminars and meetings that are work-related.

B. The City, with proper division or department manager approval, will reimburse only direct and reasonable expenses related to meetings, in or out of town, authorized by the department manager.

C. Only direct and reasonable expenses related to authorized attendance at meetings of associations of which the City is a member or where the employee is a member, the City, with proper division or department manager approval, will reimburse a member representing the City.

VI. Types of Occurrences that do Not Qualify for Reimbursement

A. The City will not reimburse for any costs associated with intra-staff meetings unless approved in advance by the City Manager (e.g. staff lunches and meetings are not reimbursable).

B. The City will not reimburse for optional quasi-social functions such as retirement or testimonial dinners unless approved in advance by the City Manager.

VII. Cash Advances

Generally the City will pay in advance for registration, hotels and airfares. All other expenses will be reimbursed after submittal of a proper "Direct Payment Claim," with the appropriate attachment. The City's default policy will be to reimburse employees for expenses rather than issue advanced per diem funds.

Exceptions to this policy will be made by the City Manager when an extended conference/training would cause financial hardship to the employee. With approval of the City Manager, advances may be given for extended travel.

VIII. Employee Compensation While Traveling

Per FLSA standards, when an employee travels outside of the City of Pinole for training purposes, travel time in excess of the employee's normal commute time will be reimbursed.

IX. Out-Of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis by the City Manager.

X. Prohibited Expenses

City employees shall not be reimbursed for expenses such as alcoholic beverages, spouse or family meals, entertainment expenses such as movie rental fees, theater tickets or sporting event fees, and fines for parking citations.

XI. Other Expenses

All other actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official duties that are not described in this Policy shall not be reimbursed unless approved by the City Manager before the expense is incurred.

APPENDIX A

(1) Rates for mileage will be based on the Internal Revenue Service Mileage Rate. Rates for 2006 are: 44.5 cents per mile for business miles driven; 18 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes; and 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations, other than activities related to Hurricane Katrina relief. The rates for mileage reimbursement may be updated, without formal action by the City Council, to track any mileage updates made by the Internal Revenue Service.

(2) Rates for meal reimbursement will be based on the Internal Revenue Service Per Diem Rate high-low substantiation method. For one-day trips, maximum individual meal reimbursement for 2006 is:

Breakfast	$8.00
Lunch	$12.00
Dinner	$25.00

(3) For overnight stay, Internal Revenue Service Per Diem Rates also apply and the 2006 maximum daily meal reimbursement is $45.00, without regard to the number of meals or caps on individual meals. However, if any meals are included in the conference registration, the daily meal allowance will be reduced accordingly, per the individual meal allowances in (2) above. As with sections (1) and (2) above, the meal reimbursement rates may be updated, without formal action by the City Council, to track any per diem rate updates made by the Internal Revenue Service.

(4) Per diem is intended to cover meals and incidental expenses including tips, gratuities, and snacks.

Form T-1

LOG OF EXPENSES

(Internal Use Only -- to be attached to Direct Payment Claim)

I hereby request reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of official business for the City of Pinole, as follows:

DATE	RECEIPT ATTACHED		NATURE OF OFFICIAL BUSINESS	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT	
	YES	NO		DEPT - PROG - OBJECT - PROJ		
SUBTOTAL BY ACCOUNT:						
TOTAL EXPENSES:					$	
LESS ADVANCES:					$	
NET DUE EMPLOYEE / CITY (Circle One)					$	

CLAIM SUBMITTED BY: _____

Signature _____

Title _____

Date _____

(fformt-1.sav/sbtravel.rep

Form T-2

NO RECEIPT CERTIFICATION

I certify that the following expense was incurred in the course of official business for the City of Pinole:

Date: _____

Amount: _____

Purpose: _____

Reason for no receipt _____
(e.g., group receipt, no receipt given, etc.)

Signature _____

Title _____

Date _____

(fformt-2.sav/sbtravel.rep)

Form T-2

NO RECEIPT CERTIFICATION

I certify that the following expense was incurred in the course of official business for the City of Pinole:

Date: _____

Amount: _____

Purpose: _____

Reason for no receipt _____
(e.g., group receipt, no receipt given, etc.)

Signature _____

Title _____

Date _____

(fformt-2.sav/sbtravel.rep)

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Amount: _____

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(e.g., group receipt, no receipt given, etc.)

Signature _____

Title _____

Date _____

(fformt-2.sav/sbtravel.rep)

Form T-3

REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM DAILY COMMUTING TO TRAINING CONFERENCES

Instructions: When requesting an exemption from the daily commuting requirements for local training conferences, the following form must be completed and submitted with a memo from the employee's department manager stating the reason for the exception. The City Manager will approve all exceptions. Cost savings alone may not be considered adequate justification for an exemption.

Step 1: *Compute the out-of-pocket expenses to the City for the two cases--the employee commutes daily to the conference; the employee is a resident for the conference.*

Costs to City (itemized)	Daily Commuting Costs	Resident Program Costs
Overtime (see Travel Time, pg. 3, for computing this item.)		
Meals • Breakfast $8.00 • Lunch $12.00 • Dinner $25.00		
Lodging Costs (out-of-pocket)		
Travel (mileage x per diem)		
Conference Fee		
Other:□		
Total Out-of-Pocket Expenses to the City		

Step 2: *Calculate the reimbursement to the City for the above costs, if applicable.*

Reimbursement	Commuter	Subsistence
Conference Fee		
Meals (commuter lunch allowance x # of days)		
Overtime (enroute subsistence)		
Lodging (subsistence allowance x # of days)		
Travel (mileage x travel allowance)		
Total Reimbursement		

DIFFERENCE (step 1 minus step 2)		

(fformt-3.sav/sbtravel.rep)

REQUEST FOR RENTAL CAR

Attendee:_____ Course: _____ Course Dates:

Lodging closest to training - # miles.

Training Days _____ Rental car cost/day $_____ Total Cost $

Other transportation available:	**YES**	**NO**	**COST**
• Shuttle	_____	_____	_____
• Taxi	_____	_____	_____
• Public Transportation	_____	_____	_____

If any of the above are available, reason for requesting rental:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Dept. Manager Signature: _____

City Manager Signature: _____ Approved Denied

(frentcar.sav/sbtravel.rep) Form T-4

(Form available in Finance Department.)