

VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

**ADMINISTRATIVE
REGULATION NO. 3540**

ADOPTED: 2/24/97

CLASSIFICATION: Business and Noninstructional Operations REVISED: 12/24/97

SUBJECT: Travel Expenses

DEFINITIONS:

HEADQUARTERS - The headquarters of the Superintendent and staff members is the main office of the Superintendent. The Superintendent may establish an alternate location as headquarters for designated staff members if these individuals are required to spend more than fifty (50) percent of their time at an alternate location.

Headquarters shall be established for each staff member whose duties require travel, and each staff member's residence shall be noted.

Personnel will be assigned a headquarters work location(s). This will be the work site(s) the employee will report to on a routine basis. Travel reimbursement is allowed from the headquarters to subsequent job location(s). If the employee reports directly to or returns from the job location without reporting to the headquarters, and the distance traveled exceeds the commute distance from home to headquarters, travel is allowed **ONLY** for the number of miles in excess of the normal commute, if any.

Board - Headquarters for Board Members shall be the Board Member's home.

REASONABLE ACTUAL AND NECESSARY - The concept of this policy is to **reimburse** employees for expenses incurred as a result of travel required in performance of job duties. When the selection of the hotel and/or restaurant are within the control of the employee, employees are expected to select moderately priced establishments.

LEAST EXPENSIVE MODE OF TRANSPORTATION - When determining **least expensive mode of transportation** consideration will be given to total cost involved with a particular mode of travel, i.e., additional lodging and meal costs, transportation that may be required upon arrival at the destination (travel for personal purposes or entertainment are not reimbursable, nor are they considered in determination of "least expensive mode.") Standard "economy" fare will be utilized as the air fare rate when determining "least expensive mode"; however, employees are expected to take advantage of any "special" fares that may be available at the time reservations are made.

When a rental car is utilized for business travel the actual cost of the rental, plus gasoline used on the trip (receipts are required for both the car and gasoline) may be claimed, up to the amount that would have been paid for least expensive mode of travel. If a rental car is used for personal and local business related travel, mileage may be claimed up to the total costs of the car rental and gasoline as long as the vehicle is rented in the name of the employee or a member of the employee's household (i.e., when the employee's vehicle is being repaired).

VEHICLE OWNER - This policy provides that "only a vehicle owner may submit a claim for mileage reimbursement." For purposes of this policy, an employee may be considered the vehicle owner if the vehicle is registered in the name of the employee or an individual residing in the same household as the employee; provided, the vehicle is listed on the Declaration of Insurance Coverage on file in the VCOE Business Office. **NO MILEAGE MAY BE CLAIMED AND NO EMPLOYEE MAY USE A VEHICLE FOR VCOE BUSINESS RELATED PURPOSES UNLESS THE VEHICLE IS INSURED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.** The Declaration of Insurance Coverage shall be accepted as verification of appropriate insurance. Use of an uninsured vehicle for VCOE related business is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

CONDITIONS OF PAYMENT

The Superintendent may pay from funds under his or her control travel expenses incurred by the Superintendent and designated staff members if the following conditions are met:

1. A claim has been filed in accordance with this article.
2. The travel expenses were actual and necessary.
3. The expenses are authorized under Sections 1080(b), 1081, 1200, 1201 and 1942 of the Education Code.
4. No public funds may be expended on the purchase of alcoholic beverages.
5. Expenditure of these funds shall not exceed the total amount authorized by the Board for this purpose in conjunction with the approval of the budget, and any subsidiary limitations set by the Board, such as a ceiling on per diem expenditures.

Employees are to exercise good judgment and incur travel expenses including meal costs which are reasonable for the area of travel. The Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services, will adjust claims which exceed the standard of reasonableness utilized by a "prudent person."

CLAIMS FOR TRAVEL EXPENSE

A claim for travel expenses shall be submitted in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Board pursuant to Sections 1040 and 1042 of the Education Code. The following minimum requirements shall apply:

1. The purpose of the trip is shown.
2. Specific destination.
3. Date and time of departure and return for each business purpose.
4. Other information as may be required by the Internal Revenue Services and other agencies.
5. Sufficient detail is provided to establish that the expenses incurred were reasonable, actual and necessary to accomplish the purpose of the travel.
6. The claim is approved by an officer designated by the Superintendent.
7. Accompanying the claim are copies of meeting, workshop or conference notices and receipts or vouchers except for the following:
 - a. Fares and tolls paid for public transit, ferries, and bridges.
 - b. Long distance telephone or telegraph charges under \$2.50.
 - c. All legal expenditures of \$1.00 or less.
 - d. Parking fees less than \$3.00.
8. Any claim shall be disapproved which does not comply with the minimum provisions set forth in this section.
9. Any claim shall be disapproved if the purpose of the trip was for political purposes, e.g., lobbying or campaigning.

All claims for reimbursement of reasonable, actual and necessary travel expense shall be submitted on forms provided by the Office. Said claims shall contain all information required by law and these Board Regulations prior to processing for payment.

MEAL AND LODGING EXPENSE

Meal(s) and lodging expense may be claimed pursuant to this section.

1. IN-STATE TRAVEL - Education Code Sections 1080(b), 1081 and 1942 provide that actual and necessary travel expenses may be paid to a Superintendent and designated staff members in accordance with regulations established by the Board subject to the following requirements:

- a. The Board shall adopt regulations providing for no greater than the actual and necessary travel expenses of the Superintendent and designated staff members.

- (1) MEAL AND LODGING EXPENSES Actual meal expenses, up to the meal allowance as defined for the area of travel by Internal Revenue Service regulation, are authorized when the employee is attending an authorized meeting which includes meals as a part of the meeting; when it is unreasonable to expect an employee to eat lunch separate from other attendees of the meeting; or when circumstances of travel are such that the traveler can reasonably be expected to incur meal expenses beyond that which would be incurred if the employee were not traveling or attending the conference/meeting. Travel of this nature would generally include, but not be limited to, short term travel (less than 30 days) in areas not frequently covered in the course of normal business activities. Receipts are required for meal expenses. In addition, reimbursement of the actual cost of the hotel or motel may be claimed when the length or distance of travel requires overnight accommodations. Receipts from the hotel or motel must be presented. Employees are to exercise good judgment and select food and lodging establishments that are reasonably priced, when selection is within their jurisdiction.

2. OUT OF STATE TRAVEL - Out of state travel shall be reimbursed under the same provisions as applicable for in-state travel.
3. OVERTIME MEAL ALLOWANCE - When an employee is required by a supervisor to work out of the County more than two hours past the normal quitting time (which requires working more than 10 hours) and it is unreasonable to expect the employee to return to his or her residence for meals, reimbursement may be allowed for actual cost of a meal not to exceed \$12.00 for the evening meal, \$8.00 for lunch and \$6.00 for breakfast. A receipt for meal expenses incurred is required. An additional meal allowance may be allowed for each additional six hours worked; a total of up to three overtime meal allowances in any 24-hour period may be allowed.

TRANSPORTATION ALLOWANCES

Except as provided in collective bargaining agreements:

1. No more than the actual fare on any transportation service, in accordance with the latest tariffs at the time the trip was made, shall be allowed. Special rates and round-trip rates shall be used whenever possible.
2. The least expensive mode of transportation shall be used. If the traveler chooses a more expensive mode of transportation, reimbursement shall be at the rate of the least expensive mode.

3. Established charges for handling or transportation of necessary personal or official baggage assessed by common carriers or terminal stations shall be allowed.
4. The criteria for payment of costs incurred on various modes of transportation are as follows:
 - a. AIRPLANE AND HELICOPTER.
 - (1) "NO SHOW" charges may not be claimed.
 - (2) The least expensive class available shall be used. First class travel requires a full explanation of the need.
 - b. TRAINS, RAPID TRANSIT OR BUSES.
 - (1) Claims shall conform to the latest published tariffs.
 - c. PRIVATELY OWNED AUTOMOBILES.
 - (1) The maximum mileage reimbursement rate shall be the IRS allowable rate. If travel is related to a grant or contract that further restricts the reimbursement rate, the reimbursement rate shall not exceed the rates authorized in the grant or contract.
 - (2) Mileage is allowed for authorized travel only. Mileage may be claimed for official trips after working hours from home to destination and return. Such trips shall be for official purposes outside of the regular working hours.
 - (3) When two or more employees are traveling to the same destination car-pooling shall be used to the extent practical.
 - (4) In addition to the mileage allowance, claims are allowed for:
 - (a) Ferry fares.
 - (b) Bridge tolls.
 - (c) Parking.
 - (5) Only an **owner** may submit a claim for mileage reimbursement.
 - (6) Automobile must be covered by property damage and personal liability insurance in accordance with laws of the State of California. A Declaration of Insurance Coverage (VCOE BS-1130) must be on file in the Business Office of the VCOE.
5. **AUTHORIZATION TO BE ABSENT FROM THE COUNTY** - In order that written approval will be available to insurance investigators in the event of an accident, each employee who finds it necessary to leave the County on official business must complete the form "Request for Authorization to be Absent from the County on Official Business" (VCOE GN-1002), and submit it to the Superintendent or Associate Superintendents for approval. This approval shall be requested prior to departure. Travel reimbursement may be denied when the appropriate approvals have not been received prior to departure. (See Board Policy 3540 and Superintendent Policies 4133 and 4233)