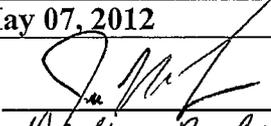


700
EMPLOYEE TRAVEL POLICY

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PURPOSE

Travel by County officers and employees may become necessary to accomplish County business. It can be expensive and abused. Excessive costs, such as, luxury services or accommodations are not acceptable. Care must be exercised to minimize travel to only that which is necessary and to hold down expenditures to only that which is prudent. Meticulous accounting is expected. Failure to comply with these conditions can lead to discipline, up to and including termination, and may lead to charges against an employee for misusing public funds.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all officers and employees of Uintah County who have need to travel on County business. It outlines the procedures to follow for authorization, expenditures, and for reimbursement.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Authorization - Judgment is required in determining the necessity of travel. While not absolutely necessary or practical, preauthorization for out-of-county travel by an employee's superior is recommended. Without such approval, an employee runs the risk of having his or her travel expenditures not accepted for payment or reimbursement, in which case it would be the employee's obligation to pay.
2. County Credit Card Use
 - A. County credit cards are issued by the Clerk/Auditor strictly for the convenience of elected officials and Department Heads who frequently travel out of the County, or for personnel who must make regular purchases in the performance of their duties - use is a privilege not to be abused.
 - B. The Clerk/Auditor shall also be responsible for monitoring all credit card use.
 - C. County credit cards are not to be used for personal expenses. They are to be used strictly for County business. Misuse may result in termination of employment and prosecution under the law by the County Attorney.
 - D. The Clerk/Auditor may revoke a card at anytime if it is misused or used so infrequently that possession is no longer warranted.

- E. Personnel who are issued a County credit card should use it for all travel related charges with the exception of gasoline and the per diem meal allowance. For gasoline charges involving County-owned vehicles (COV's) the employee must use the County gas credit card issued by the vehicle key custodian when picking up the keys to the car. The gas credit card allows the County substantial savings. If the employee uses his personal vehicle, he will be reimbursed for mileage. Therefore, he must pay for gasoline himself. In those few cases where credit cards cannot be used, cash receipts must be obtained in order to receive reimbursement of expenditures.

3. Travel Expenses

- A. Travel Arrangements - Individuals will be responsible for making their own travel arrangements. The most economical or practical form of transportation is to be used. When purchasing economy fares which are non-refundable, the employee must be certain enough about the trip that nothing short of an emergency, or an unforeseen event, will cause cancellation.
- B. Per Diem Allowance – For either in-state or out-of-state travel, Uintah County follows the federal government per diem rates found at www.gsa.gov (look for “per diem rates”). An itinerary should be submitted with the reimbursement purchase requisition. If the training, seminar, or event includes a full meal, the relative amount should be discounted from the per diem allowance. If an employee is out of the County for part of the day and must purchase a meal or two while traveling, the meal rate shall be reimbursed as follows:

Breakfast: \$10
Lunch: \$12
Dinner: \$18

Employees may be authorized to receive a cash advance to cover travel meal expenses. Such advances must be requested at least two (2) weeks prior to the anticipated trip. A Uintah County Purchase Requisition form is to be used for this purpose and must be approved by the Elected Official/Department Head. Such a request must include an itinerary. When proper approval has been obtained, the County Auditor will be authorized to issue a per diem prior to travel.

- C. Reimbursement for Expenses Other Than Meals
 - i. For approval, all travel charges must have a credit card slip. In those few cases where credit cards cannot be used, cash receipts must be obtained in order to receive reimbursement for expenditures.
 - ii. All receipts, whether for cash or credit, to be acceptable must include the name of the establishment, the date, items purchased, and the business purpose served by the travel.

- iii. A complete accounting of travel expenditures must be made within one week after returning to work. Receipts, or copies of receipts, must be enclosed for all expenses incurred. In the event that a receipt is not obtainable, a complete explanation of the reimbursable expenditure is to be made on the expense report. In the unusual event that an employee loses some or all of the receipts, every effort must be made to reconstruct the actual expenditures. Gross estimations will not be accepted.
- iv. It is the responsibility of the County Attorney to determine the legality of travel expenses submitted by County Commissioners.

D. Lodging Expenses – Employees are encouraged to seek the most economical accommodation as well as take advantage of state government rates. It is recommended that an employee obtain a check from the Clerk/Auditor’s office prior to utilizing a hotel accommodation. The employee may then present the check at the time of check-in or out, depending on the establishment’s procedures.

- i. If the hotel provides either a continental breakfast or a full breakfast, the employee will not be eligible for reimbursement of the breakfast meal expense.
- ii. If an employee can make overnight accommodation arrangements with a family member or friend within 30 miles of the event, the employee may submit for a \$20 per night reimbursement.

4. The Assignment of a County Owned Vehicle to Various Personnel

- A. Whenever possible, any County official or employee traveling on official business shall do so by using one of the County-owned vehicles (COV’s) provided for that purpose. The Department Secretary or “key custodian” shall have control of all keys and shall be responsible for the scheduling of all COV’s.
- B. Employees are encouraged to use a COV at all times, however, the Elected Official/Department Head may approve the use of a privately owned vehicle and authorize payment for the round trip mileage. The mileage reimbursement rate shall be equal to the IRS standard mileage reimbursement rate. Mileage reimbursement shall be calculated based on information from www.expedia.com, www.mapquest.com, or another mapping source defining the actual mileage from point “A” to point “B”. A print out of this statement shall be submitted with the reimbursement request. Mileage allowance will not be allowed without prior approval.
- C. In the event that two or more staff members are traveling to the same destination, an effort must be made to “pool” rides within the same vehicle, whether a personal vehicle or a COV is used.

- D. Upon the termination of any trip, the staff member using a COV shall be responsible for seeing that the fuel tank is full (and charged to his or her department), that odometer readings are recorded on the forms provided, and that the keys are returned to the key custodian.
- E. For insurance purposes, an employee is encouraged to use a COV for County business. If the employee uses a personal vehicle, he/she will be reimbursed for the mileage at the current reimbursement rate found at www.gsa.gov.
- F. While traveling on County business in a COV it may be advantageous to conduct a minimal amount of personal business. The amount of personal use shall be limited and sporadic.
- G. Employees and passengers shall not smoke in any COV at any time.

5. Travel with Dependents

- A. Commissioners and other Elected Officials are encouraged to take their spouses with them when traveling on County business and to receive reimbursement for some of the expenses incurred on their behalf. Allowable expenses include lodging differentials, registration fees for conferences or seminars, and meals.
- B. Department Heads wishing to take their spouses with them on County business may do so. In such cases, the County will only reimburse for those expenditures which the employee would normally incur when traveling alone. An allowable expense will be ceremonial meals to which the spouses are invited.
- C. County employees using COV's when traveling with their spouses are responsible for the operation of that vehicle. The employee must accompany the vehicle at all times when persons not employed by Uintah County are driving the vehicle. Minors shall not operate COV's at any time.