

# Fresno Unified Administrative Regulations (AR) 4133.1, 4233.1, 4333.1

## Travel Reimbursement

### Procedures Governing Travel Expenses and Advances

#### 1. Types of travel claims

- a. When mileage is the only travel expense this expense is to be claimed on a monthly mileage form signed by the employee and their immediate supervisor. In lieu of filing a monthly mileage form, with the approval of their immediate supervisor, an employee may receive a monthly stipend as reimbursement for local travel expenses.
- b. All other travel requires the use of the Travel/Conference Approval and Expense Claim Form (C-1). [https://fusd.sharepoint.com/sites/dept\\_fiscal/Accounting/TravelForm.pdf](https://fusd.sharepoint.com/sites/dept_fiscal/Accounting/TravelForm.pdf)

#### 2. Approval deadlines and eligibility for reimbursement

- a. When attending conferences and trainings, staff is expected to attend and participate to the fullest extent possible.
- b. Travel expenses limited to mileage and parking do not require approval in advance.
- c. The Travel/Conference Approval and Expense Claim Form, properly completed, shall be submitted for approval no less than 10 days before departure and travel should be booked as early as possible to increase the likelihood of an economical rate (completion of the Travel / Conference Approval and Expense Claim form, it's approval, and bookings are preferred 4 weeks prior to the departure date).
- d. Expenses may be reimbursed only if incurred while the employee is on "travel status," meaning that the travel has been properly approved pursuant to district regulations. Reimbursement may not be claimed for additional expenses that arise from the coordination of employee vacation or sick leave with travel on district business.
- e. For travel paid with grant funds, costs must be reasonable and consistent with the District's travel policy.
- f. It is the responsibility of the approving administrator to monitor the number of out-of- state trips for their staff.

#### 3. Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

- a. Lodging
  - i. In all cases, receipts for lodging expenditures are required.
  - ii. In all cases, lodging shall be reimbursed at the actual cost for single occupancy.
  - iii. In case of conference travel, reimbursable lodging cost shall not exceed the single occupancy rate offered by the headquarter hotel or motel.
  - iv. Reservations and payment for lodging may be made through the purchasing department or individual other lodging reservations may be made through discount online websites.
    1. When utilizing online websites, it is the responsibility of the approving administrator to ensure the employee has obtained two (2) complete lists of available hotel rooms from different websites, indicating the cost. The listings must be attached to the reimbursement request.

b. Meals

- i. Reimbursement for meals is allowable when travel precludes eating at home. In addition, the IRS has ruled that in order for meal-related expenses to be excludable from income, a taxpayer must travel “away from home” (interpreted by the Supreme Court as requiring an overnight stay). IRC Section 162(a)
- ii. No reimbursements will be made for alcoholic beverages, entertainment, laundry, expenses of any family member traveling with an employee, personal losses, or traffic violation fees incurred while on district business.
- iii. Meal reimbursement will include tax and gratuities and shall be limited to the lower of the actual cost or the maximum daily rates allowed by U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). No receipts are necessary if travelers are claiming the per diem rates. Reimbursement rates can be found at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>
- iv. If a meal is included as a formal part of the program of a conference or meeting, any actual cost in excess of the conference fee will be reimbursed. If the cost of the meal is fully covered by the conference fee, no additional reimbursement may be claimed unless the participant is pulled away from the conference or meeting to execute district business.
- v. Travel meal expenses may be claimed if travel begins before or ends after the following times:

Before 7:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m. -Breakfast

7:00 a.m. 2:00 p.m. -Breakfast and Lunch

Before 10:00 a.m. 2:00 p.m. -Lunch

10:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m. -Lunch and Dinner

Before 5:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. -Dinner

7:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m. -Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

- vii. If the trip begins or ends outside of the established work hours, travel status will begin or end when the employee departs from or returns to their residence.
- viii. If the trips begin or end during established work hours, travel status will begin or end when the employee departs from or returns to their place of employment.

c. Other Travel Allowances

- i. While traveling on official district business, the following expenses are also reimbursable with receipts at actual cost:
  1. Necessary taxicab, airport shuttles, rideshare services, or public transportation including gratuities
  2. Registration fees
  3. Car storage fees
  4. Rental car charges
  5. Toll bridge fees
  6. Other justifiable expenses may be approved based on a review of special circumstances
  7. Airplane Wi-Fi expenses needed to conduct district business will not be reimbursed unless authorized by the Superintendent or their designee.

d. Transportation

- i. Transportation options should be the most reasonable means available taking into consideration requirements for reimbursement of meals and lodging and employee time devoted to travel at the expense of performance of other duties.
- ii. Air or Train Transportation
  1. Reservations and payment for transportation by common carrier may be made through the purchasing department or individual reservations may be made through discount online websites.
  2. When utilizing online websites, it is the responsibility of the approving supervisor to ensure the employee has obtained two (2) complete lists of available airfares from different websites, indicating the departing and destination cities, as well as the cost of the airline ticket. The listings must be attached to the reimbursement request.
  3. Air Coach will be used for air travel unless otherwise specifically authorized. Air coach, per industry definition, is defined as anything other than business or first class (for example, economy plus qualifies as air coach). Receipts are required for air travel.
  4. In all cases, itinerary, destination, time, routing, etc. changes made while in travel status and other changes incurring an additional expense to the district shall be documented in writing and submitted with the Travel/Conference Approval and Expense Claim Form when requesting reimbursement. Changes not deemed necessary for conducting business will be made at the expense of the employee.
  5. Transportations arrangements should be made as far in advance as possible, to ensure an economical rate (completion of the Travel / Conference Approval and Expense Claim form, it's approval, and bookings are preferred 4 weeks prior to the departure date).
- iii. Travel by Private Vehicle
  1. Authorized travel will be reimbursed at IRS per mile rate in place at the time of the travel.
  2. The cost of authorized travel will not exceed the cost of the air coach fare from Fresno to the destination.
  3. When it has been established that travel by private vehicle is the most appropriate and economical means of transportation, reimbursement for actual mileage traveled by private vehicle will be approved.
  4. Whenever possible, carpooling is encouraged. In such cases, only the employee whose automobile is used shall claim reimbursement.
- iv. Travel by Rental Vehicle
  1. For travelers requiring the use of a rental car, an economy or compact sized car should be requested unless a larger vehicle is required for multiple travelers.
  2. The collision Damage Waiver offered by the car rental companies is to be declined.

e. Fresno Conferences

- i. Registration expenses will be allowed for conferences held in Fresno.
- 4. Travel Advances
  - a. Travel advances may be requested by furnishing the appropriate information at the time of initial approval of the Travel/Conference Approval and Expense Claim Form.
  - b. Travel advances will be made upon approval of the administrator authorizing the travel.
  - c. Travel advances will be limited to no more than 80% of the expenses anticipated to be borne by the employee.
  - d. When an advance is requested, the properly approved Travel/Conference Approval and Expense Claim Form must be submitted to the Accounting Office at least 10 working days before the advance is required.
  - e. Responsibility of Persons Drawing Travel Advances
    - i. Every person who draws a travel advance will furnish signed receipts and a claim form to account for expenses against the advance.
    - ii. Within five business days an individual returning from a trip for which they have drawn, an advance will furnish a Travel/Conference Approval and Expense Claim Form to the Accounting Office.
    - iii. If the travel advance exceeds the actual reimbursable travel expenses, a check for the difference must accompany the Travel/Conference Approval and Expense Claim Form when it is returned to the Accounting Office. If funds are due back to the District upon completion of a trip, or if a claim form is not submitted within 60 days of a trip, a payroll deduction may be processed in the amount owed.
- 5. Promotional Items Received from Official Travel
  - a. Transportation for official business shall not be arranged on a carrier solely to obtain points, free tickets or any other amenities or gifts.
  - b. Free upgrade to first class, airline mileage or trip accumulation programs, executive club membership and check-cashing privileges may be retained and shall not be turned over to the district. Unsolicited promotional materials of nominal intrinsic value (pens, pencils, note pads, calendars, etc.) may be retained by the officer or employee.
  - c. If the receipt of any promotional item received from official travel results in the loss of work/duty time, the employee shall either
    - i. report the additional time as vacation, or
    - ii. retain use of the promotional item for future official district business by the employee.
- 6. Authority to Override Limits or Restrictions
  - a. Except as provided in b. below, the Superintendent or their designee by their signature on a memo attached to the request form has the authority to override any of the above limits and restrictions when special circumstances justify such action.
  - b. For travel by the Superintendent and all members of the Governing Board except the Board President, the Board President shall grant exemptions as set forth in paragraph a. above.
  - c. For travel by the Board President the Board Clerk shall grant exemptions as set forth in paragraph a. above.

*Fresno Unified School District prohibits discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying based on actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, ancestry, age, creed, religion, political affiliation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, mental or physical disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy or parental status, medical information, military veteran status, or association with a person or a group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any other basis protected by law or regulation, in its educational program(s) or employment.*

Regulation FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

approved: June 25, 1992 Fresno, California

revised: August 24, 1995

revised: April 28, 1999

revised: December 10, 2019

*Policy Section: 4000 Personnel*