

# **Santa Maria Joint Union HSD**

## **Administrative Regulation**

### **Travel Expenses**

AR 3350

#### **Business and Noninstructional Operations**

##### **In-District Travel**

Travel within district boundaries shall be considered "in-district" travel. Reimbursement for use of a private vehicle for in-district travel shall be submitted on the Mileage Reimbursement Claim Form and shall be paid at the current IRS-approved rate in effect at the time of travel. The district will not reimburse hotel expenses for "in-district" travel. Mileage Reimbursement Claim Forms may be submitted at the end of each semester or when the cumulative reimbursement amount reaches \$20.00. Meals associated with in-district travel are not normally allowed unless part of a specific meeting or conference. Prior approval by the appropriate Assistant Superintendent is required.

##### **Out-of-District Travel**

Prior to registering for a conference or beginning any out-of-district travel that involves overnight lodging, transportation by commercial carrier (air, rail, bus, etc.) and/or rental vehicle, the Request For Prior Approval For Conference Attendance Form must be completed with all authorizing signatures and forwarded to the Business Office - Attention: Fiscal Technician. Authorizing signatures include the immediate supervisor and the Superintendent or designee. The request must be received at least ten business days in advance of departure for any trip or conference.

Travel not approved in advance by the supervisor and Superintendent/designee may not be reimbursed, at the district's discretion. All out-of-state travel for which reimbursement will be claimed shall be approved in advance by the Board.

After the Prior Approval for Conference form has been approved, the district may prepay for conference registration, airfare (at economy fare rates), and hotel accommodations. Prepayments may be made by using a district credit card, requesting an advance check for payment, or in limited circumstances by an authorized purchase order. If a prepayment is desired, the choice should be indicated where available on the Prior Approval for Conference Form. In addition to pre-approval for prepayment using a district credit card for airfare a written statement must also be received from the traveler that states, in the event they cancel the trip they agree to reimburse the District for the entire cost of the flight and any prepaid fees that are non-refundable such as baggage fees. This is necessary due to airline ticket purchases being non-refundable and non-transferrable.

Advances for other expenses will be made only if approved by the Assistant Superintendent of

Business Services, under special circumstances. Advances will not be made for non-employees such as parents or community members.

Completed travel claims and all accompanying receipts must be approved by the supervisor and filed with the Business Office - Attention: Fiscal Technician within 10 days of completion of travel.

#### Allowable Expenditures

Allowable reimbursable expenses for out-of-district travel are limited to reasonable and necessary actual expenditures and may include:

- \* Conference registration fees
- \* Hotel accommodations
- \* Transportation expenses (private vehicle, rental vehicle, airfare)
- \* Meals at Per Diem rates equal to the maximum federal per diem meal and incidental expenses (M&IE) rate established by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). Said maximums include taxes and gratuities. According to the IRS, specified "high-cost localities" may be reimbursed at a higher rate.
- \* Other reasonable and necessary expenses related to district business such as purchase of conference materials, fax expenses, or internet access.

Expenses such as entertainment, transportation to and from entertainment, leisure tours, alcoholic beverages, gifts, personal telephone calls, or expenses for guests/spouses/friends are not reimbursable.

All travel expenses claimed must be accompanied by a receipt or other documentation. Any expenses paid with a personal credit card must be substantiated by a detailed itemized receipt or they will not be reimbursed.

1. Hotel accommodations at the single occupancy rate will be allowed if an overnight stay is necessary, subject to the following restrictions and limitations:
  - a. Room sharing is encouraged when more than one district employee is attending the same meeting.
  - b. If the destination is more than 150 miles one way from the District's Support Services Center, or more than three hours' driving time one way, the employee is entitled to reserve a hotel for the night prior to the conference start date. Travel may commence after lunch.
  - c. If the conference terminates after 5:00 pm and the location is more than 150 miles one way from the District's Support Services Center, the employee may remain overnight and

commence travel the following morning no later than 8:00 a.m. The employee must return to work that day or shall request a vacation day.

d. If the conference is more than 80 miles away and the duration is more than one day, the nights between each conference day may be spent in the immediate vicinity of the conference and the employee entitled to reserve a hotel.

e. For out-of-state or out-of-county travel otherwise entitled to accommodations, a room upgrade at the request of the employee may be permitted, for sharing with a non-district employee or family member. However, the additional cost of the room shall be the sole responsibility of the employee.

2. Transportation expenses will be allowed based on the lowest total cost alternative and consideration of required travel time.

a. Airfare is restricted to economy fare rates unless approved by the Superintendent. Total air travel costs include mileage to and from the departure airport, tolls, parking, and the lowest cost alternative shuttle service from the destination airport to the meeting location.

b. District vehicles may be reserved through the Transportation Department with costs charged back to the user's budget. Bridge tolls and parking fees will be reimbursed.

c. Rental vehicles are allowable in the economy to standard classification or, if the number of district passengers warrants, a van. In no case will the district pay the additional cost for premium, luxury or sport/utility vehicle rentals. The "loss damage waiver" must be purchased and will be considered a reimbursable cost.

d. Private vehicle use will be reimbursed at the current IRS-approved mileage rate along with bridge tolls and parking fees.

e. When more than one employee is attending the same conference or event, use of a district vehicle, rental vehicle, or carpooling shall be used in order to minimize costs. The Superintendent/designee may not allow reimbursement of mileage claims from multiple employees who attend the same conference.

3. Meal reimbursements shall be based on reasonable, actual and necessary meal costs including gratuities. If a meal is not taken, no amount may be claimed. If a meal is included in conference registration (e.g. breakfast and/or lunch), then no reimbursement for meal expense is allowed. Meal reimbursements shall be limited to the actual cost but not-to-exceed Per Diem amounts established by the IRS, no receipts are required. Per Diem rates cover other incidental charges throughout the day such as tips and snacks. In order to qualify for meal reimbursement, travel times must occur during specified time periods. See the following schedule:

Breakfast

Travel Starts: before 7:00 AM

Ends After: 9:00 AM

#### Lunch

Travel Starts: before 11:00 AM

Ends After: 2:00 PM

#### Dinner

Travel Starts: before 4:00 PM

Ends After: 7:00 PM

4. Miscellaneous expenses such as purchase of conference materials, telephone, internet access or fax expenses may be reimbursed, if necessary, for official district business and approved by the supervisor.

#### Non-Reimbursable Expenses

Personal expenses such as entertainment, transportation to and from entertainment, leisure tours, alcoholic beverages, gifts, personal telephone calls, or expenses for guests/spouses/friends are not reimbursable. Additional expenses that arise from coordination of employee vacations or leaves, with conference attendance or official district business travel are not reimbursable. Non-mileage personal vehicle expenses including fuel, repairs, insurance, traffic citations, and penalties for late payment of tolls are not reimbursable. Personal losses of property incurred while on district business are not reimbursable.

#### Completion of Travel

When travel is complete, the original Prior Approval for Conference Form shall be completed with the actual expenses for the trip, required receipts provided, and forwarded to the Business Office Attention: Fiscal Technician, for processing of expense reimbursement. All expenses claimed shall be substantiated by original itemized receipts. Reimbursement will be made in the legal name of the employee as shown in the official payroll records of the district. Warrants will be addressed to the employee's work site except during the summer months, when they will be mailed to the employee's address on file with the district. Additional requirements are as follows:

1. Conference description - include a copy of the flyer or other documentation describing the conference.
2. Accommodations - include the original itemized receipt from the hotel. Personal expenses will not be reimbursed. These include but are not limited to: in-room movies, dry cleaning, room service fees, and personal telephone calls.
3. Meals -Per Diem allowance for meal costs incurred while traveling on district business based on the location and hours of travel. Per Diem rate shall be equal to the maximum federal per diem meal and incidental expenses (M&IE) rate established by the GSA. Said maximums include taxes and gratuities. Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

4. Private vehicle use - include a MapQuest printout to substantiate the mileage distance traveled. Mileage is calculated from the assigned office to destination and return distance to the office.

Qualifying Meals for Meetings - Itemized Receipts Required:

\* Meals or refreshments may be served in conjunction with meetings where it is to the benefit of the district to keep all participants together and no have them disperse for meals. A meeting is defined as a formal training, conference, seminar, workshop, staff or Board meeting. All meeting meal expenses must be supported by an agenda and or meeting flyer and attendee sign in sheet.

\* Business Meals - District employees are reimbursed for meal expenses incurred during meetings with district and non-district employees to discuss district business, inside or outside the County. All business meal expenses must be supported by a receipt, business purpose of the meeting and names of the individuals in attendance. This policy has been designed to provide flexibility and discretion on the part of the Assistant Superintendent of Business Services. Alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed.

\* Business meals and per diem may not be claimed for the same meal.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4131.5 - Professional Growth)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

(cf. 9240 - Board Development)

(cf. 9250 - Remuneration, Reimbursement, and Other Benefits)

Management Resources:

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE PUBLICATIONS

Per Diem Rates (For Travel Within the Continental United States), Publication 1542

Regulation SANTA MARIA JOINT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

approved: June 11, 2019 Santa Maria, California