

# Natalia Independent School District

## TRAVEL MANUAL



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>CONTACT INFORMATION .....</b>                   | <b>2</b>  |
| Campus Personnel .....                             | 2         |
| Travel Personnel.....                              | 2         |
| <b>TRAVEL MANUAL OVERVIEW .....</b>                | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>PLAN AHEAD.....</b>                             | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>LODGING .....</b>                               | <b>3</b>  |
| General Information .....                          | 3         |
| Conference/Convention Hotels .....                 | 4         |
| <b>MEALS.....</b>                                  | <b>5</b>  |
| General Information .....                          | 5         |
| <b>TRANSPORTATION.....</b>                         | <b>7</b>  |
| District Vehicle .....                             | 7         |
| Mileage (Privately owned vehicle):.....            | 7         |
| <b>REGISTRATION .....</b>                          | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES .....</b>                | <b>10</b> |
| <b>CHAPERONE TRAVEL .....</b>                      | <b>10</b> |
| <b>TRAVEL EXPENDITURES WITH FEDERAL FUNDS.....</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <b>TRAVEL CHECKLIST .....</b>                      | <b>12</b> |

# CONTACT INFORMATION

## Campus Personnel

*Please direct questions to your campus Administrative Assistant*

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# TRAVEL MANUAL OVERVIEW

School Board Policy DEE (LOCAL) states: Expenses for meals associated with authorized overnight travel not related to a state or federal grant shall be paid to employees on a per diem basis. No receipts shall be required for expenses paid on a per diem basis. For any allowable expense incurred, the employee shall submit a statement, with receipts to the extent feasible, documenting actual expenses.

Employees authorized to travel for business and educational purposes on behalf of the District shall be reimbursed for all usual and customary travel-related expenses made on behalf and in connection with District business according to District rates and state law. The processes established herein have been developed on the premise that employees will use good judgment and prudence in the expenditure of District funds when traveling. Travelers are expected to select the most economical and practical accommodations, arrangements and services in accordance with the needs of the trip. All travelers, as well as supervisors approving travel, are responsible for compliance with the provisions of the District's travel policies. Requests for exceptions to these regulations must be made in writing prior to taking a trip and signed by the Superintendent of Schools or his designee.

## PLAN AHEAD

Prior approval is **required** for all travel, including prepaid expenses, before any payments or reimbursement can be made. Employees must secure written approval for travel on the appropriate district travel request form. Work with your campus administrative assistant to ensure that approved purchase orders are in place for all aspects of travel; hotel stay, meals, parking, gasoline or district vehicle, and any other approved costs.

## LODGING

### General Information

1. Refer to the GSA's federal [Domestic Maximum Per Diem Rates](#) If the city is not listed, but the county is listed, use the daily rate of the county. For locations not listed the daily rate for lodging in-state is \$107.
2. Administrative assistants (or Directors if no Admin exists) are responsible for making their own travel & lodging reservations. The cost from a commercial hotel, motel, or other commercial lodging establishment can be reserved with the NISD credit card (American Express).

3. Use of employee's personal credit card to reserve your hotel stay can be used at their own risk, however, the district will *not* reimburse the employee if the hotel charges your personal credit card the first nights room+tax. Your personal credit card should be submitted when you check into your hotel to cover "personal incidental" charges, if applicable.
4. A check will be issued to the hotel covering the room rate, applicable city tax and any additional required parking.
5. The district will not pay for room service, movies, personal telephone calls, or other types of personal service.
6. State taxes for hotel stays will not be reimbursed. "Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate" form is available at the Business Office and a copy will be included with the hotel check. This should be presented to the hotel at registration - failure to present the form results in the hotel charging state tax which would be the traveler's responsibility to pay.
7. Rooms will be shared, except when other arrangements are approved by the Superintendent.

## **Conference/Convention Hotels**

1. A conference/convention hotel is a hotel specifically designated by the conference/convention host. Conference/convention host has negotiated special hotel rates for the attendees to the conference.
2. If travel is in conjunction with a conference/convention, documentation must be provided with the Travel Request form sustaining designation of conference/convention hotel.
3. If rooms at the conference/convention negotiated rate are no longer available, and the traveler decides to stay at the conference/convention hotel at the hotel's standard rate, the traveler will only be reimbursed at the conference/convention negotiated rate.

# MEALS

|                          |   |             |             |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
|--------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Meal Calculation:</b> |   |             |             |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| <b>Instructions:</b>     | 1) Look up the meal per diem on the GSA Schedule.   |             |             |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
|                          | 2) Determine the meal allowance on the day of departure and return (refer to schedule below)  |             |             |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
|                          | 3) If all days will be full meals, enter the # of days and GSA rate on the Travel Form  |             |             |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
|                          | 4) If some or all days are either partial days or include an event-provided meal, use the table below to calculate your adjusted meal per diem. |             |             |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
|                          | 5) Enter the adjusted meal per diem on the Travel Request Form  |             |             |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| <b>STAFF:</b>            |   |             |             |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| <b>Per Diem</b>          |   |             |             | <b>Day 1</b> | <b>Day 2</b> | <b>Day 3</b> | <b>Day 4</b> | <b>Day 5</b> | <b>Day 6</b> | <b>Total</b> |
| <b>Breakfast</b>         | \$13  | \$14        | \$16        |              |              |              |              |              |              | 0            |
| <b>Lunch</b>             | \$15  | \$16        | \$17        |              |              |              |              |              |              | 0            |
| <b>Dinner</b>            | \$26  | \$29        | \$31        |              |              |              |              |              |              | 0            |
|                          | <b>\$54</b>   | <b>\$59</b> | <b>\$64</b> | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| <b>STUDENTS:</b>         |   |             |             |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| <b>Per Diem</b>          |   |             |             | <b>Day 1</b> | <b>Day 2</b> | <b>Day 3</b> | <b>Day 4</b> | <b>Day 5</b> | <b>Day 6</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|                          | <b>In-State</b>   |             |             |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| <b>Breakfast</b>         |   | \$12        |             |              |              |              |              |              |              | 0            |
| <b>Lunch</b>             |   | \$12        |             |              |              |              |              |              |              | 0            |
| <b>Dinner</b>            |   | \$12        |             |              |              |              |              |              |              | 0            |
|                          |   | <b>\$36</b> |             | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |

## General Information

1. Student Meals: Attach a list of students to support the number of meals requested for co-curricular or extra-curricular events, as applicable. Refer to the district reimbursement rates for in-state students. A detailed receipt for the student meals must be submitted with the Travel Settlement form. Current rates: \$36 per day in-state.
2. Refer to the GSA's federal [Domestic Maximum Per Diem Rates](#) If the city is not listed, but the county is listed, use the daily rate of the county. For locations not listed the daily rate for meals in-state are \$59.
3. An employee will receive a per diem for meals only to the maximum amounts established below for approved travel or school- related business on behalf of the district.

4. Travelers must be away from their official work station for more than 12 hours to receive 75% of the prescribed meals and incidental expenses.
5. No meal reimbursement will be made for travel to events for which the employee receives a salary stipend, unless students are also fed.
6. Gratuity/tips or alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed by Natalia ISD.
7. Meal allowances are determined as follows: 75% of the meal per diem rate on the travel days (leaving and returning days); 100% of the meal per diem rate for days at the travel destination.
8. Meals provided as part of the professional activity of the event, will be allowed at their actual cost; the meal per diem rate shall be reduced based on the following percentages: 20% for breakfast, 30% for lunch and 50% for dinner.
9. Reimbursement for meals within the San Antonio or non-overnight business trips requires prior approval by Administrator and the Superintendent.

# TRANSPORTATION

## District Vehicle

*A district vehicle must be requested for all out- of- district travel.*

1. When two or more employees of the District with the same itinerary on the same dates are required to travel for the same purpose, the following rules apply:  
When using a district vehicle, the minimum number of vehicles required based on their seating capacity will be used.
2. If a district vehicle is requested and offered, but the employee prefers to travel in their private vehicle, then transportation expenses will not be reimbursed

## Mileage (Privately owned vehicle):

1. If no district vehicle is available, and a privately owned vehicle is used, reimbursement will be made on the basis of the rates established in the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. The rate is .67 cents per mile.
2. Travel must be made by the most direct route. Mileage claims will be based upon the shortest distance from start (Natalia ISD) to the destination and back as calculated by the Google mapping service ([maps.google.com](https://maps.google.com)). If the traveler's residence is closer, the residence can be used as the starting point.
3. Expenses in the operation of a privately owned vehicle that are reimbursable include: toll charges and reasonable parking charges.
4. The District assumes no responsibility for privately owned vehicles used for company business
5. When two or more employees travel in a single private vehicle, only one will receive a transportation allowance. When travel reimbursement for mileage in a personal car is claimed, mileage reimbursement will be claimed and allowed for only one of the employees except as provided hereafter. If more than four employees attend a meeting or conference in more than one car, full mileage reimbursement will be allowed for one car for each four employees and for any fraction in excess of a multiple of four employees. If, in any instance, it is not feasible for these employees to travel in the same car, prior official approval must be obtained and will be considered as authorization and as the basis for reimbursement for travel for each person authorized to use his or her personal car in such travel.



6. For travel within Medina county, an employee of the District shall be reimbursed for mileage incurred while performing duties related to the job, only if such travel is at the request of and authorized by the employee's immediate supervisor. An employee shall use the District's mileage reimbursement log (if applicable) to request mileage reimbursement as well as any local parking fees and tolls. Mileage reports shall be submitted monthly for timely reimbursement to the District's Accounts Payable Department.

# REGISTRATION

1. A PO shall be used for payment of registration. The PO/Req number must be indicated on the Travel Request form next to Registration.
2. The PO shall be processed in a timely manner necessary to take advantage of early registration discounts.
3. Use budget (object) code # 6411 (employees), 6412 (students) or 6419 (non-District employees).
4. If the registration fee has to be paid in advance, the employee must indicate in the long description "prepay" on the PO. If the registration fee will be invoiced to the District, the employee must indicate "invoice" on the PO.
5. The PO must include the name of the traveler(s), the dates, name of the conference or event, location, and a breakdown of the registration charges (i.e. registration, courses, membership fees, banquets, luncheons, etc.). The original registration form must be attached to the PO.
6. A copy of the registration form and documentation verifying the conference/convention, etc., must be attached to the Request Travel form and sent to the Business office.
7. Personal tours, side trips, and any "extras" will not be reimbursed by the District even though the total amount may be included in the registration. However, a personal check for such expenses may be attached to the registration, and it shall be mailed at the same time the registration fee is paid.

## MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

1. The District will reimburse an employee for other miscellaneous expenses when the employee documents those expenses and presents receipts, to the extent feasible with Administrator's prior approval.
2. The District will not pay the travel expenses of spouses and other persons who have no responsibilities or duties to perform for the District when they accompany a District employee.
3. Parking fees can be reimbursed upon presentation of itemized receipts. Receipts must indicate, at minimum, amount, date and location. When checking into hotels, please have them include parking charges to the final bill.

## CHAPERONE TRAVEL

- The District does not pay for chaperones travel. Chaperones must pay their own travel and undergo the same background checks as volunteers.

## TRAVEL EXPENDITURES WITH FEDERAL FUNDS

- The district may use federal grant funds for travel costs. All travel-related expenditures from grant funds shall comply with the allowable federal cost principles, the State of Texas -Travel Guidelines, School Board Policy and the district's travel guidelines. The allowable rates of reimbursement shall be the lesser of the federal rates or local rates.
- The travel-related expenditures with grant funds shall fall within the grant period, unless a specific exception is allowable by the granting agency.
- The following guidelines shall apply to the expenditure of grant funds for staff, student and/or parent travel, as appropriate.
  - ♣ A completed Travel Authorization/Settlement form for all travel
  - ♣ Registration fees – registration fees shall be allowable if the event is related to grant activities. Registration fees may be paid from the current grant period for an event during the next grant period only if there is an absolute deadline to register for the event. Early registration deadlines shall not apply. Recreational or social events subject to an additional fee, above and beyond the registration fee, shall not be allowed with grant funds.

- ♣ Meals – meal expenses for overnight travel (in accordance with local travel guidelines) shall be allowed for district employees and students. Non-overnight travel meals expenses shall not be allowed. The district shall reimburse meal expenses, subject to the GSA limits, on an accountable per diem basis only. The traveler shall submit a Travel Reimbursement Form with the actual meal costs for work-related meals. The signed Travel Form shall be required in lieu of actual receipts. The meal per diems shall be adjusted in accordance with IRS regulations regarding the day of departure/return and meals provided without cost as part of the registration fee.
- ♣ Lodging – lodging expenses for overnight travel (in accordance with local travel guidelines) shall be allowed. The district shall pay for lodging expenses up to the GSA limits. Receipts shall be required for all lodging expenses. Recreational or personal services such as gyms, spas, etc. shall not be allowed with grant funds.
- ♣ Transportation – transportation expenses shall be allowed for reasonable expenses such as flight, rental car, taxi, shuttle, mileage reimbursement, etc. (in accordance with local travel guidelines). Receipts shall be required for all transportation expenses to the extent that a receipt is available. Transportation expenses shall be reasonable and limited to the guidance in the cost principles. State and Federal Programs Administrative Procedures Manual 53
- No grant funds shall be used for travel expenditures of non-district staff such as spouses. The district shall not allow any “family-friendly” travel expenditures, such as dependent care travel costs, with federal grant funds.
- The Grant Director shall review and approve all travel-related expenditures paid with federal grant funds.

The Grant Director review shall consist of the following:

- 1) All original, detailed receipts include an itemized list of what was purchased
- 2) The traveler has documented a valid reason for the travel which is consistent with the grant guidelines and purpose
- 3) The travel expenditures meet the allowable cost time and principles
- 4) The travel is not for the Superintendent or other individual (non-employee such as family member, School Board, etc.).
- 5) The travel is for students during an educational field trip or other approved activity in accordance with grant guidelines and purpose

- 6) The travel is not for a contractor or consultant for their professional development
- 7) The travel was approved by the granting agency, as appropriate (for example: out-of-the country travel)

## TRAVEL CHECKLIST

To ensure compliance with this Board Policy, the following checklist has been developed to aid the traveler. All travel resources are available on the district website labeled Travel Documents.

### **Preparation:**

- Obtain Natalia ISD Travel Request Form
- Review Natalia ISD travel policy & procedures
- Check per diem rates for Meals & Incidental Expenses: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel-resources>
- Obtain copy of training/conference brochure to verify registration fee and deadline(s)
- Verify that funds exist in your campus and/or department budget:

### **Before the Trip (as applicable):**

- Submit Natalia ISD Travel Request Form with the following information to your supervisor:
  - Traveler information
  - Estimated expenses
  - Conference/training information
  - Hotel reservation
  - Taxi, shuttle, other
  - Request for district vehicle/bus
  - Parking, tolls
  - Mileage (Google maps is accepted)
  - Employees meals
  - Student meals
  - Other
  - Traveler signature

**NOTE: You must have copies of all estimated traveling expenses.**

- Submit an on-line Ascender requisition for all anticipated travel expenditures **(Campus administrative assistants shall complete for campus-based travelers.)**
  - A separate requisition is required for each vendor.
  - Registration, flight, and lodging requisitions may be submitted for multiple travelers attending the same event. The name of each traveler must appear on the requisition.
  - All requisitions must reflect the event, city of travel, date(s) of travel, traveler(s) and budget code.

- Supervisors should sign the form and forward to the Superintendent for final approval.
- After Superintendent approval, all purchase orders will be processed by the accounts payable for payment of a travel advance or issuance of a travel card.

**NOTE: All Pre-Trip activities must be completed before a travel card can be issued by accounts payable. Please plan ahead to ensure that all deadlines are met.**

**During the Trip:**

- If a Purchase card was issued, present the card at any approved merchants: hotel, taxi/shuttle, etc. The travel card shall not be used for expenditures at a non-travel merchant such as supplies, services, etc.
- In the event that the trip is extended due to extenuating circumstances such as weather or other delays, contact your immediate supervisor and accounts payable to request additional funds and an extension in the authorized travel dates.

**Local Fund Trip:**

- Attach receipts for all transportation, hotel receipt, and registration receipt
- Submit any requests for reimbursements along with receipts for travel expenditures that could not be made with the travel card, or were unanticipated. A check will be issued to the traveler after review and approval of the Reimbursement Expense form.
  - Supervisors should review and sign the Reimbursement Expense form and forward all supporting receipts to accounts payable for verification and approval to ensure that the traveler complied with the district travel guidelines prior to approval of the Reimbursement Expense form