

Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative (EPIC)

Travel and Travel Reimbursement Policy

Effective July 1, 2018

Revised June 6, 2023

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for travel and travel reimbursements for all employees of the Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative (EPIC).

2. APPLICABILITY:

Procedures apply to all employees of EPIC.

3. DEFINITIONS:

“Travel” means an event or occurrence approved by an employee’s immediate supervisor or designee that is necessary for an employee to work in another location other than the primary work location.

4. PROCEDURES:

- a. Travel may be authorized only for official business and only if EPIC has the financial resources to reimburse the traveler for travel expenses. Any travel that has not been previously approved by a supervisor or designee will not be eligible for reimbursement.
- b. Prior to traveling for EPIC related business, each employee must submit a travel request form to the EPIC Administrator. This form is located on the EPIC website at [www.epicresa8.org](http://www.epicresa8.org). Attach an agenda, if one has been provided, to the request form.
- c. Requests for travel reimbursements must be signed by the employee and immediate supervisor prior to submittal for payment.
- d. Approval to travel shall be secured in advance by the employee. Under no circumstances should an employee travel without proper approval.
- e. Employees are responsible for submitting a travel expense account settlement form, with all required attachments, to their supervisor for signature no later than the end of the month they traveled.
- f. It will not be the policy of EPIC to pay travel that is held for more than 1 month at a time. Travel must be submitted at the end of each month unless you have prior approval from the EPIC Administrator.

- g. Reimbursement of travel expenses paid from federal, state, and private grants shall be governed by the terms and conditions of the grant if they differ from those contained in this policy; otherwise, this policy shall govern such reimbursement.
- h. Consultants, Contractors and non-employees are not required to use these rules and regulations, at EPIC's discretion. All consultant and contractor travel should be included as part of the consulting/contractor fee agreement.

## 5. MODES OF TRANSPORTATION:

### a. Air Transportation

- i. Allowable reimbursement for commercial airline travel shall include the actual expense or cost for the least expensive logical fare via the most direct route, or a reasonable alternative route if it results in lower fare. Travelers may not specify a particular airline to accumulate mileage or promotional plans, such as frequent flyer programs, if it results in a higher airfare.
- ii. In order to receive reimbursement, the traveler must submit the original invoice along with itinerary or other proof of travel with expense form.
- iii. If a change in the cost of airfare is incurred, the charge is reimbursable if the traveler is directed by EPIC to change his or her travel plans, or if other extenuating circumstances arise. Increased or extra charges incurred due to the traveler's negligence will be considered a personal expense of the traveler and shall not be reimbursed.
- iv. Deliberately causing increased costs or delays to obtain personal gratuities, such as denied boarding compensation, frequent flier points or mileage, or similar benefits, is prohibited. In addition, conversion of airline tickets for personal benefit, such as downgrading tickets, return unused tickets for cash, credit, or personal airline tickets, or similar actions, is prohibited. Any credits, rebates or refunds resulting from these actions must be returned to EPIC.

### b. Ground Transportation

- i. The traveler may use an EPIC-owned vehicle, rental vehicle or a privately-owned vehicle for ground transportation. When using a privately-owned vehicle for travel it must be pre-approved by the EPIC Administrator by submitting the appropriate travel request form. There must also be funds to support the travel in the designated budget.
- ii. The operator (traveler) of a vehicle must possess a valid operator's license. The operator is personally responsible for any fines and/or penalties resulting from citations, charges, or warrants attributable to operator negligence. Such fines and/or penalties shall not be a reimbursable expense.
- iii. In cases where a traveler chooses to drive rather than fly while on business, reimbursement will be based on actual in transit expenses (mileage, hotels, parking, meals, etc.), not to exceed the lowest available

commercial airfare plus local transportation, and parking (where required) to and from the airport.

c. EPIC-owned Vehicles

- i. Use of an EPIC-owned vehicle must be requested through the appropriate channels. They are for “official business use” only and must be operated by an employee of EPIC.

d. Privately-Owned Vehicles

- i. The reimbursement rate for the use of a privately-owned vehicle shall be the federally approved reimbursement rate and can be found at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel-resources> and then selecting “POV Mileage.”
- ii. Privately-owned vehicles may be used when traveling on EPIC business and pre-approved by the EPIC Administrator. Reimbursement will be made at the current standard rate per mile, excluding normal daily commuting mileage, for actual miles traveled using the shortest practicable route to the point of arrival at the traveler’s destination. This rate is intended to cover all operating costs of the vehicle (including fuel, maintenance, depreciation, insurance, etc.), and no additional reimbursement will be made.
- iii. Receipts are not required for reimbursement of mileage for using privately-owned vehicles. However, a completed travel reimbursement request must be completed and signed by the individual claiming reimbursement and their immediate supervisor.
- iv. When a privately-owned vehicle is used for travel purposes, the traveler cannot turn in receipts for fuel purchased during the trip. The mileage reimbursement that is paid to the traveler includes the cost of any fuel purchased.

6. LODGING:

a. Reimbursement

- i. Reimbursement for a single occupancy shall be at the least expensive single room rate available.
- ii. Charges incurred due to the failure of the traveler to timely cancel the facility will be considered the personal expense of the traveler and not eligible for reimbursement.
- iii. Lodging may be paid for using a p-card, EPIC check (if a purchase order is done in advance and check printed), personal credit card (then reimbursed).
- iv. Overnight lodging costs will be limited to time required for meetings. Any extended stay, either prior to or after a meeting, will be the sole responsibility of the traveler.

b. Receipts

- i. Receipts and meeting agendas are required for lodging reimbursement and shall be attached to the request for reimbursement. The hotel/motel invoice or folio shall be the official document utilized for reimbursement to the traveler.

7. MEALS/TRAVEL and EXPENSE ACCOUNT - DOCUMENTATION: When an expense account is submitted for payment after a trip, the following documentation is necessary:

- a. Receipts for hotel bills.
- b. Receipts for public conveyance.
- c. Mileage from office to point of destination at the rate paid per mile by the State of WV.
- d. Mileage from point of destination on return trip at the rate paid per mile by the State of WV.
- e. Cab fare, if cab is used.
- f. Toll receipts, if traveling toll road or bridge.
- g. Cost of necessary business phone calls (this is generally on your hotel bill.)
- h. Registration fee receipts, if there is a fee.
- i. Parking receipts.
- j. When using a rental car, receipts for the vehicle and gasoline receipts must be turned in.
- k. Meals and incidentals (receipts are NOT required) will be reimbursed based upon the Federal Per diem rates. The General Services Administration (GSA) establishes per diem rates for destinations within the lower 48 Continental United States (CONUS). There are 319 Non-Standard Areas (NSAs) that have per diem rates higher than the standard CONUS rate. Here is the website to see what your rate would be for your destination: [www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates](http://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates) When you are on the site, you put in the current fiscal year, the state/city or zip. You will scroll down to Meals & Incidentals rates and breakdown. For your first and last day of travel you will put the amount listed for that day. The days in-between you will use the M&IE total for each day.

8. REGISTRATION FEES:

- a. Fees or charges for attendance at conferences, meetings, seminars, and/or workshops, as well as event-related materials, are reimbursable expenses to the traveler. Reimbursement for registration fees at meetings or conferences are allowable and must be supported by a receipt. Employees should verify acceptable payment methods before the conference. If approved, the registration can be direct billed. A purchase order shall be issued.
- b. Receipts are required for reimbursement. The receipt documentation provided by the event sponsor shall be sufficient for reimbursement.

9. OTHER EXPENSES

- a. Travelers may incur miscellaneous business-related expenses for which reimbursement may be made, if appropriate. Receipts are required. Such expenses and reimbursement may include, but are not limited to: baggage handling, tolls, and parking fees.

## 10. EXCEPTIONS

- a. Any exceptions to this policy must be requested by the traveler and approved by the EPIC Administrator.