

Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative (EPIC)

Travel and Travel Reimbursement Policy

Effective July 1, 2018

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:

- a. Meal expense reimbursement is limited to actual expenses for food not to exceed the Authorized Daily Rates as established by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). Specifically excluded are alcoholic beverages and entertainment expenses. Meal reimbursement is allowed when lodging is listed as “gratis” or “no charge.”
- b. Itemized receipts are required for meal reimbursement and must accompany travel reimbursement form.
- c. Travelers will be reimbursed the actual cost of meals when there is a reimbursable overnight stay. Travelers will be reimbursed actual costs not to exceed the established GSA meal rates.
- d. When meals are provided for a traveler, the traveler’s maximum daily rate as established by the GSA shall be reduced by the appropriate amount. To determine the amount of deductions for meals, allowances for meal expenses shall be deducted accordingly:
  - Breakfast 20% of the maximum daily rate established by GSA
  - Lunch 20% of the maximum daily rate established by GSA
  - Dinner 60% of the maximum daily rate established by GSA
- e. On the first and last days of travel of an overnight trip when no meals are provided, the maximum allowable reimbursement is based on 75% of the GSA per diem rate for the specific city. Departure or arrival times are not considered. If a meal(s) is provided gratis or included within a registration fee of the business travel, the per diem rate must be reduced by the appropriate amount from the 75% of the GSA Authorized Daily Rates.
- f. Meal expenses for single day travel are not reimbursable. Single day travel is travel without an approved overnight stay. Travel without an overnight stay will not qualify a traveler as being away from home for purposes of receiving non-taxable meal reimbursement.

#### 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.