



LOS ALAMOS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## STAFF TRAVEL

The District follows the rules of the state of New Mexico and the School Board's Policy/Regulation when reimbursing staff travel expenses. The rules are very specific so please feel free to contact Regina Mertz in the Business Office, 663-2238, [r.mertz@laschools.net](mailto:r.mertz@laschools.net) with questions.

- A [Purchase Order](#) must be in place prior to obligating District funds. This includes registrations and reservations.
- Lodging and meals are reimbursed per diem for each 24 hour period of travel. If per diem is not sufficient, and the supervisor approves, staff may be reimbursed for actual meal and lodging expenses based on maximum amounts allowed by the state of New Mexico. When considering reimbursement for lodging and meals they are either per diem or actual for BOTH lodging and meals. They cannot be separated.
- Air travel is reimbursed on the basis of published economy rates.

### Steps to Obtain Approval for Travel

1. Gather information about the event. There should be information available from the conference website or the organization hosting a training. This should include the event name, location, venue, dates/times, registration fee, **and agenda**.
2. Download the [Travel Request and Reimbursement Request form](#). This form has two sections. Section I of the form is used to document the travel plan, estimate costs and obtain approval prior to travel. Section II is used after travel to document the actual travel and obtain approval for reimbursement of expenses.
3. Complete Section I, attach the event information, sign and submit to the supervisor for approval and signature. Section I requires:
  - a. Staff Name and School/Department.
  - b. Name of the conference or event, dates of the event, and location (both city and state). Attach a copy of the event information obtained in Step 1.
  - c. Expected departure date/time and return date/time. This is used to estimate maximum meal reimbursement OR maximum per diem for lodging/meals.
  - d. Estimated costs for the Conference and Transportation.
    - i. Information from the conference organization should have the fee information.
    - ii. If the travel requires air transportation, obtain an airfare estimate based on economy rates.
    - iii. Ground transportation includes taxi or shuttle required for transportation to/from hotel and event venue.
    - iv. Estimate of any anticipated parking/tolls.
    - v. Private vehicle mileage is reimbursed at \$0.40 per mile based on the [New Mexico city to city mileage chart](#). Exceptions are made when the destination is not on the city to city mileage chart as long as additional documentation is provided. Contact Regina Mertz to discuss possible exceptions. Reimbursements are not made for the purchase of fuel or any other expense related to privately owned vehicles.

- e. Lodging and Meals. Choose EITHER per diem or actual expenses for both lodging and meals.
  - i. Per Diem:
    - 1. In state is \$85 per 24 hour period;
    - 2. Out of state is \$115 per 24 hour period.
  - ii. Actuals:
    - 1. Actual lodging at a reasonable rate for the area, not to exceed \$215/night before tax, is reimbursed with a valid receipt. Anything over \$215/night, before tax, must be pre-approved ;
    - 2. Maximum allowable meal reimbursement with valid receipts for in state travel is \$30 per 24 hour period;
    - 3. Maximum allowable meal reimbursement with valid receipts for out of state travel is \$45 per 24 hour period.
- f. Total estimated cost to submit for approval.
- g. Staff signature.
- h. Supervisor's signature.
- i. Additional approval signatures if needed.

### Steps to Obtain Reimbursement After Travel

1. Proof of attendance is required for reimbursement of travel expenses. This can be the name tag issued at a conference, an agenda that was issued at the event, and/or a certificate of completion/attendance issued by the conference organization.
2. After travel, Complete Section II of the Travel Request and Reimbursement Form. Section II is used for the traveller to request reimbursement of his/her "out of pocket" expenses. it does not include those costs paid for by the District.
  - a. Enter the **actual** departure and return dates and times. This is necessary for determining the number of 24 hour periods (plus additional hours) of travel which is, in turn, used to determine the maximum amount to be reimbursed for meals and lodging (either per diem or actual receipts). The first 24 hour period begins at the date/time staff left for travel. See below for a sample calculation for a trip that began at 8:00 a.m. on July 1 and ended at 4:00 p.m. on July 3. The trip consists of two 24-hour periods and 8 additional hours.

Date/Time	24 Hour Period	Additional Hours
July 1, 8:00 a.m. - July 2, 8:00 a.m.	1	
July 2, 8:00 a.m. - July 3, 8:00 a.m.	1	
July 3, 8:00 a.m. - July 3, 4:00 p.m.	X	8

- b. If **per diem** is chosen in Section 1, determine the amount to be reimbursed based on the 24 hour periods on travel. Per Diem:
  - i. in state is \$85 per 24 hour period;
  - ii. out of state is \$115 per 24 hour period;
  - iii. Additional hours (both in state and out of state)
    1. 2 but less than 6 \$12
    2. 6 but less than 12 \$20
    3. 12 but less than 24 \$30.

- c. If **actual** is chosen in Section I:
- i. Actual lodging, as approved in Section I, is reimbursed with valid receipt. Anything over \$215/night, before tax, must be pre-approved (in Section I). Do not include in Section II if the District paid for the lodging.
  - ii. Maximum allowable meal reimbursement with valid receipts for in state travel is \$30 per 24 hour period and additional hours as shown above;
  - iii. Maximum allowable meal reimbursement with valid receipts for out of state travel is \$45 per 24 hour period and additional hours as shown above.
- d. Conference fee to be reimbursed, receipt required. Do not include in Section II if the District paid the fee.
- e. Airfare to be reimbursed, receipt required. Do not include in Section II if the District paid the airfare.
- f. Ground Transportation, Parking, Tolls, etc. Provide receipts.
- g. No receipt required for miscellaneous expenses reported, such as tips (other than meals), parking, or transportation. However an explanation of each expense must be provided. These expenses are reimbursed up to \$6.00 per day or \$30 per entire trip.
- h. Private vehicle mileage is reimbursed at \$0.40 per mile based on the [New Mexico city to city mileage chart](#). Exceptions are made when the destination is not on the city to city mileage chart as long as additional documentation is provided. Please contact Regina Mertz to discuss possible exceptions.

**The original completed signed travel form is submitted to the site secretary/bookkeeper along with proof of attendance and all necessary receipts. A payment authorization is then prepared and all are submitted to Accounts Payable.**

## What You Need to Know About Your Reimbursement

Staff are encouraged to utilize Direct Deposit for reimbursements. Download the [Direct Deposit Authorization Form](#). Once completed and signed, it should be submitted to Karyn Murphy or Warapha Prime in Purchasing / Accounts Payable. This is a separate authorization from the one staff may have in place with Payroll. Accounts Payable cannot use the Payroll authorization.

## What You Need to Know About Approvals

- Overnight travel within the state of New Mexico requires the supervisor's approval 30 days in advance.
- Out-of-state travel requires approval of the superintendent or his designee in addition to the supervisor. Approval must be obtained 60 days prior to out-of-state travel.
- If another department is paying for the travel, obtain approval of BOTH the supervisor and the administrator of the other department whose budget is used.

## What You Need to Know About Receipts

- When receipts are required, staff should provide the original and keep a copy for their records. Receipts must:
  - be clear and legible (do not alter them by cutting or otherwise blocking view of items)
  - include the vendor name
  - include what is purchased - e.g. lodging for July 1, and 2, 2018
  - date
  - indicate the amount paid by staff
- When receipts are required for meal reimbursement, the receipt must be original, clear, unaltered and legible. Meal receipts must include the following:
  - restaurant name
  - date and time of meal
  - itemized detail of meal items purchased, e.g. 1 iced tea; one chopped salad; one brownie
  - total

A common mistake is to only submit the credit card receipt which in most cases does not show the itemized list. If using a credit card for meals, it is best to submit both the itemized bill and signed receipt with tip. This allows staff to be reimbursed accurately for the meal and tip.

**If staff loses a meal receipt, an [Affidavit of Lost Receipts](#) may be completed, signed and approved by the supervisor to submit in place of the lost receipt.**

**The District will not reimburse for alcohol purchases, meals for other individuals, or tips in excess of 20%.** Staff are asked to request **separate receipts** to submit for reimbursement in the event the meal included any items considered non reimbursable.

## What You Need to Know About Private Vehicle Mileage Reimbursement

The District will reimburse staff \$0.40 per mile when the use of staff private vehicle is approved prior to travel. As always, a Purchase Order for reimbursement must be in place prior to the travel. The District does not reimburse staff for fuel purchased for their vehicle.

In District:

- Staff are encouraged to utilize District vehicles when available. Please contact your supervisor to determine if your site has a vehicle for staff use.
- When approved by the supervisor, staff may request mileage reimbursement for use of a private vehicle, for travel between sites in the District. Refer to the [District Mileage Chart](#) and use the [Mileage Log](#). The mileage log is to be signed by your supervisor and submitted to your site/department secretary or bookkeeper who handles payment authorizations.

Out of District:

- Staff are encouraged to utilize District vehicles when available. Please contact your supervisor to determine if your site has a vehicle for staff use. Staff may also contact the Transportation Department to request use of a District vehicle for travel.
- When approved by the supervisor, staff may request mileage reimbursement for travel outside the District. The request is typically part of a travel approval request for either overnight travel or same day travel.
- Refer to the [New Mexico city to city mileage chart](#). In the event the appropriate city is not on the chart, additional documentation will be required. The best documentation of mileage in that case is a printout from Google Maps, Rand McNally, or MapQuest.

## What You Need to Know About Lodging

There are several options for lodging. In all cases, the person travelling researches the hotel availability and pricing and in most cases makes the reservation once travel is approved and a [Purchase Order is issued](#). The preferred options are:

- staff accepts per diem for lodging and meals - no receipts required or
- staff pays for lodging and submits the receipt for reimbursement after travel is complete or
- staff makes the reservation with a hotel that accepts the District's Purchase Order and will invoice the District or
- staff makes the reservation with a hotel that will accept a District check when staff arrive to check in at the hotel.

In the event, the above payment options are not possible, the District purchasing card may be used:

- staff requests the Purchase Order be made to the Bank of America purchasing card, researches the hotel and brings information to the Business Services Office where the hotel website is accessed with the Chief Procurement Officer (CPO)
- Staff makes the reservation online and the CPO provides the purchasing card information to the hotel in order to hold the reservation **OR** to actually make the payment. In some cases, the hotel website will allow the reservation to be made with the purchasing card but not actually apply the charge to the card. They will then expect the card to be presented upon check-in. In that case, staff asks the hotel to provide a credit card authorization form to Regina Mertz, [r.mertz@laschools.net](mailto:r.mertz@laschools.net). This is the most cumbersome and least preferred option.

The District will not directly pay for lodging at Airbnb or similar services. If staff wish to use these, the District may reimburse based on valid receipts after travel.

## What You Need to Know About Travel Agencies and Online Travel Services

The District does not utilize Travel Agency services for staff travel. The District will not purchase air travel or lodging through online travel services such as AirBNB or Travelocity but will instead purchase directly from the airline or hotel. However, if staff choose to make the purchase they may request reimbursement with a valid receipt.

## What You Need to Know About Personal Travel

When personal and business travel overlap staff are asked to provide additional documentation to determine which expenses can and cannot be reimbursed. See below for examples of some situations and how they are handled. Please contact Regina Mertz with specific questions.

- Meal receipts should only be for the individual's meal(s) and should not include others who are travelling with staff.
- If staff travel includes airfare for travel prior or after the work-related event, the District reimburses for the lesser of: estimated airfare if staff had travelled only for the work-related event or the actual airfare.
- If staff travel out of state and choose to drive rather than fly in order to include personal/family plans, staff are reimbursed the lesser of: estimated economy airfare for staff from Albuquerque to the destination city, or \$0.40 per mile with documentation of distance between Los Alamos and the destination city.

## What You need to Know About Overnight Travel

Overnight travel must be at least 35 miles from Los Alamos when leaving from work or 35 miles from the individual's home if leaving from home.

## What You Need to Know About Same Day Travel

Download the [\\_Less Than Overnight Travel\\_](#) form. It is a simplified version of the Travel Request and Reimbursement form used for overnight travel. Complete the Before Travel section, sign and obtain the supervisor's signature. After travel, complete the bottom section to request reimbursement of expenses. Staff may be reimbursed for the conference fee, mileage, and other transportation/parking costs.

Please note that **per diem** for same day travel is paid through payroll, per the following chart. This amount is submitted to Payroll and shows on the paystub. It is not reimbursed through Accounts Payable.

<b># Hours Beyond the Normal Workday</b>	
2 hours but less than 6	\$12
6 hours but less than 12	\$20
12 hours but less than 24	\$30

### **Document Checklist**

- **TRAVEL REQUEST AND REIMBURSEMENT FORM**
- **EVENT DOCUMENTATION - CONFERENCE FLYER, REGISTRATION FORM OR INFO FROM WEBSITE**
- **DOCUMENTATION OF MILEAGE (ONLY NEEDED IF MILEAGE REQUESTED IS NOT FROM THE "CITY TO CITY MILEAGE CHART")**
- **COMPARISON OF MILEAGE TO AIRFARE (ONLY NEEDED IF DRIVING OUT OF STATE VS FLYING)**
- **RECEIPTS FOR ANY EXPENSES TO BE REIMBURSED**
- **AFFIDAVIT OF LOST RECEIPTS, IF NEEDED**
- **PROOF OF ATTENDANCE**
  - ◆ **CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE OR**
  - ◆ **AGENDA PROVIDED AT THE CONFERENCE OR**
  - ◆ **NAME TAG**