

RESOLUTION NO. 453

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF UNIVERSITY PLACE, WASHINGTON, AMENDING TRAVEL POLICIES AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES INCURRED WHILE ON OFFICIAL CITY BUSINESS.**

WHEREAS, officers and employees of the City of University Place are eligible to receive reimbursement or payment of expenses incurred while on official business for the City; and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive travel and reimbursement policy was adopted by Resolution No. 171 and amended by Resolution No. 276, 314 and 445; and

WHEREAS, changes are now being made to the travel and reimbursement policy to amend the individual meal allowance rates, and to make other minor changes; NOW THEREFORE,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF UNIVERSITY PLACE, WASHINGTON, AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. Amend Travel Policies and Procedures. Travel Policies and Procedures for reimbursement for expenses incurred while on official City business are hereby amended and attached as Exhibit A. Amendments have been made to Section 1 and Section 8.

Section 2. Effective Date. This resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption.

**PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL ON JULY 19, 2004.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ken Grassi, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Catrina Craig, City Clerk

**RESOLUTION NO. 453 EXHIBIT A  
TRAVEL EXPENSE POLICY**

**Section 1. Purpose and Policy Objectives.** To provide for payment or reimbursement of authorized expenditures lawfully incurred by public officials, employees, and others while on official City business. These expenditures shall include, but are not limited to transportation, lodging, meals, parking, and other expenses related to official City business.

Persons filing claims for reimbursement are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the City's policies regarding authorized expenditures and documentation requirements. Claimants also are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to assure that authorized travel-related costs are of the least cost to the City (e.g., lowest available airfare, single - not double - room rates, early conference registration, etc.). Claimants should demonstrate due care in avoiding any expenditures not directly and reasonably related to official City business. All exceptions to this policy must be approved by the City Manager.

**Section 2. Documentation.** In accordance with RCW 42.24.080, claims for reimbursement will be paid when accompanied by a bona fide vendor's receipt. The receipt should reflect the date, a description of the purchase, vendor identification, and the amount paid. When a receipt is not available (e.g., meter parking, etc.), a hand-written signed receipt will be accepted, upon approval of the Department Director, for the actual cost not exceeding the designated daily allowance.

Claims for reimbursement shall contain the following minimum information:

1. The name of the person who consumed the goods or used the service for which reimbursement is requested.
2. A description of the event, occasion, or circumstances related to the claim and the public policy or public purpose served.

**Section 3. Volunteers and Non-City Employees.** Non-city employees are entitled to reimbursement of expenditures only under the following conditions:

Recruiting Costs: Upon the written approval of the City Manager, candidates for an employment position who receive a written invitation to visit the City for a personal interview are eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses per this policy. After the City Manager's approval, the written invitation for interview and arrangements for transportation and lodging will be made by the Human Resources Division. The written invitation shall specify that expenses be documented and turned over to the recruiting official who will prepare the reimbursement claim.

Official City Business: Non-city employees are eligible for reimbursement of certain travel expenses if the City Manager or designee approves the payment request. The request must identify the name(s) of the individual(s), the individual's official title or capacity as it relates to City business, the nature of the topic(s) discussed, and the reason why the expenditure is appropriate. Individuals who are employees of other local governments must certify that they are not being reimbursed for their meal or travel expenditures by the other government.

**Section 4. Travel Authorization.**

4.1 Overnight or Out-of-State Travel. To be eligible for any City reimbursement for overnight and/or out-of-state travel expense, the one-way travel distance must be greater than 50 miles from the City. Exceptions may be approved by the City Manager.

4.2 Employees and Non-Elected Officials. The employee shall request prior written authorization for overnight travel from his or her supervisor. The City Manager shall provide prior written authorization for Department Director travel and secondary approval for employee out-of-state travel. For travel that does not include an overnight stay, the travel will be authorized through the payment or reimbursement request.

4.3 Elected Officials. Except where specifically budgeted, the Mayor shall provide prior written authorization for overnight or out-of-state travel of elected officials of the City. In the case of overnight or out-of-state travel by the Mayor, two council members shall provide prior written approval. For non-overnight travel, the same approvals are required through the payment or reimbursement request.

4.4 Overnight/Out-of-State Travel Request Form. Written travel authorization shall be on the approved Overnight/Out-of-State Travel Request Form. Supervisory approval is required for overnight travel, with secondary approval by the City Manager required for all out-of-state travel. Employees will attach a copy of the relevant registration form or itinerary with the travel request. This form will also be used to request travel advances (see Section 5). In those cases where travel advance money is not being requested, the "Total Amount of Request" portion of the form should be filled out with "zero dollars". The form is to be completed and approved using the above guidelines, and a copy must accompany any reimbursement or payment request.

**Section 5. Travel Advances.** In accordance with RCW 42.24.130, the City has established an Advance Travel Revolving Fund. An employee traveling on official City business may request a travel advance for a reasonable amount of funds pertaining to the approved travel. Requests for travel advances shall be made using the Overnight/Out-of-State Travel Request Form. Employees will itemize anticipated expenditures and obtain supervisory approval signatures (see Section 4).

To ensure adequate time for processing, travel request forms need to be submitted to Finance by the Accounts Payable due date established for vendor payments. Requests for travel advances submitted after this time may not be processed due to time constraints. Advances will be made under the appropriate rules and regulations prescribed by the State Auditor's Office.

5.1 Provision to Assure Repayment. To protect the City from any losses on account of travel advances, the City shall have a prior lien against and a right to withhold any and all funds payable, or to become payable, by the City to such officer or employee to whom such advance has been made up to the amount of such advance and interest at a rate of 10% per annum, until such time as repayment or justification has been made. No advance of any kind may be made to any officer or employee at any time that he/she is delinquent in accounting for or repaying a prior advance under this section. (RCW 42.24.140)

5.2 Travel Expense Voucher. On or before the 10th day following the close of the authorized travel period for which expenses have been advanced to any officer or employee, he/she shall submit to the Finance Division a fully itemized travel expense voucher for all reimbursable items legally expended, accompanied by the unexpended portion of such advance, if any. Any advance made for this purpose or any portion thereof not repaid or accounted for in the time and manner specified herein shall bear interest at the rate of 10% per annum from the date of default until paid. (RCW 42.24.150)

5.3 Purpose of Advance - Not a Personal Loan. An advance made under this section shall be considered to have been made to such officer or employee to be expended by him as an agent of the City of University Place for the City's purposes only and specifically to defray necessary costs while performing his/her official duties. No such advance shall be considered or used as a personal loan to such officer or employee, and any expenditures thereof other than for official business purposes shall be considered a misappropriation of public funds. (RCW 42.24.160)

**Section 6. Prepayment of Travel Expenses.** Registration fees, airline tickets, hotel reservations, and certain meals that are included in a registration fee are eligible for prepayment, usually by purchase order.

Before prepayment can occur, the approved travel authorization form and accompanying documentation must be included with the payment request.

**Section 7. Vehicle Use.** Reimbursement for reasonable costs of official City business travel is authorized. Employees driving a City, personal, or rental vehicle must possess a valid Washington State driver's license and current automobile liability insurance. The guidelines listed below apply:

7.1 City Vehicle. Out of the area costs of vehicle operation are authorized, such as gas, oil, and necessary repairs.

7.2 Personal Vehicle. A City pool vehicle should be used whenever practicable for approved official travel. When a City vehicle is not available or when the use of a pool vehicle is not practical, an employee may use a personal vehicle. When using a personal vehicle, employees will be reimbursed for mileage on official City business travel at a rate not to exceed the current maximum rate allowed by the Internal Revenue Service. Should more than one employee travel in the same vehicle, only the employee owning the vehicle shall be eligible for mileage reimbursement.

The employee must carry liability insurance on the personal vehicle used on City business.

7.3 Automobile Allowance. City employees who receive an automobile allowance shall not be entitled to further reimbursement for surface transportation costs within a 50-mile radius of the City. Incidental travel costs such as parking, ferry, or bridge tolls are reimbursable as they would be if a City vehicle was provided.

7.4 Lowest Cost Transportation. Employees traveling beyond a 300-mile radius should make every attempt to secure the most reasonable, lowest cost transportation. An employee who elects higher cost transportation will be responsible for paying the difference.

7.5 Rental Vehicle. Vehicle rental is considered an exception to the travel policy. Employees must justify their request in writing and submit it with the Overnight/Out of State Travel Request Form. After approval by their supervisor, the renter is responsible for informing Finance two days prior to the rental to ensure the vehicle is added to WCIA's auto physical damage program.

**Section 8. Meals.** Meal reimbursement is limited only to those meals consumed while conducting City business that could not occur at any time other than mealtimes. Meal costs must be incurred directly by the claimant; a claimant is prohibited from directing a restaurant to bill the City, unless it is done by an authorized City credit card. Gratuities (tips for meal service) are considered a reasonable and necessary cost associated with meals, but shall not exceed 15% of the cost of the meal.

8.1 Per Diem Meal Allowance on Travel Status An employee shall be deemed on travel status where the travel includes reimbursable lodging. Employees on travel status are eligible for advance funding for meals based on the IRS, US Department of Treasury, PUB. 1542 per diem rates for U.S. travel. These per diem amounts include tips. No receipts are required for meals not exceeding per diem rates. However, this amount will be reduced by any meals provided through conference registration, seminars, etc. (with the exception of continental breakfasts). The employee is expected to use the cash advance provided to pay for meals. No additional amount will be reimbursed by the City. The Finance Department will provide assistance in determining the eligible per diem rate for the City where travel is occurring.

8.2 Individual Meal Allowance Schedule (non-travel status) The maximum individual meal reimbursement for all City employees claiming reimbursement according to City policy shall be:

*Meal Allowance Schedule:  
(Includes tax and maximum 15% gratuity)*

Breakfast:	\$10.00
Lunch:	\$15.00
Dinner:	<u>\$25.00</u>

The total of all individual meal allowance reimbursements shall not exceed the current per diem rate for the Tacoma – Pierce County region (as stated in Section 8.1). Receipts are required, and a per diem allowance in lieu of itemized expenses is not authorized.

### 8.3 Per Diem Meal Allowance Schedule (non-travel status)

When on official City business for the entire day (before 7:30 a.m. and after 5:30 p.m.), the employee will be subject to the provisions of Section 8.1 pertaining to per diem rates. The employee may allocate the daily meal allowance as he or she chooses, as long as the daily meal allowance for that day is not exceeded. However, receipts are required, and a per diem allowance in lieu of itemized expenses is not authorized.

The Finance Director or his/her designee is authorized to review the meal allowance and update as necessary using the meal schedule issued annually by the Internal Revenue Service.

8.4 Conference/Seminar Meals. A higher cost meal may be claimed if it is included in an approved convention, conference, or seminar. A copy of the event registration must be included in the request for reimbursement. Whether or not the employee or official partakes of the meal, if the City pays for a meal as part of the registration process (with the exception of continental breakfasts), an employee shall not be able to claim the meal allowance for that meal.

8.5 Non-Allowable Meal Costs. Unauthorized expenditures include, but are not limited to, liquor and expenses of a spouse or other persons not authorized to receive reimbursement under this policy.

**Section 9. Lodging**. Reimbursement for lodging shall be for single room rates only, and determined by using the current State of Washington Lodging Survey or the Internal Revenue Service daily lodging rates if travel involves out-of-state accommodations.

9.1 Conference/Seminar Lodging Rates. Reimbursement for lodging shall not be limited by the aforementioned amounts if an official or employee attends a conference, training, or seminar at a hotel that does not offer these rates. In this case, the lodging shall be limited to the least costly room available based on the government or conference rate offered by the host hotel. Employees and officials still are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to assure that lodging rates are of the least cost to the City.

The City Manager may provide written authorization for an extra day's stay at a hotel if doing so would significantly reduce airfare beyond the extra day's lodging and meal costs.

### **Section 10. Other Travel and Incidental Expenses**

10.1 Other Travel Expenses. Miscellaneous travel costs such as bus, taxi, bridge or ferry tolls, parking, porter, bell service and the like (not including maid service) are authorized. Payment of a reasonable amount for porter or bell service is considered to be a necessary, reimbursable payment. A vendor's receipt will be required only when the single item cost of this type of expense exceeds \$10.00.

10.2 Allowable Incidental Expenses. Allowable incidental expenses include laundry expenses, if away from home for 4 or more calendar days; baggage checking; and business telephone and postage expenses. One personal, 10-minute telephone call home per day (if away from home for more than 24 hours) is an allowable expense. The employee will reimburse to the City charges for

personal telephone calls exceeding 10 minutes. The expense of converting travel advance money to traveler's checks also is allowed.

**10.3 Non-Allowable Incidental Expenses.** Non-allowable incidental expenses include theft; loss or damage to personal property; personal entertainment (e.g., movie rentals, etc.); expenses of a spouse, family, or other persons not authorized to receive reimbursement under this policy; barber or beauty parlor services; airline and other trip insurance; personal postage, reading material, personal telephone calls; and personal toilet articles. Non-allowable expenses that are charged to the City shall be immediately reimbursed.

UNOFFICIAL DOCUMENT