

**RESOLUTION NO. 582**

**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, 445 and 453; and


WHEREAS, changes are now being made to the travel and reimbursement policy to amend the individual meal allowance rates, add guidelines for air travel and taxi/shuttle service, update rental car guidelines, and to make other minor changes; NOW THEREFORE,

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

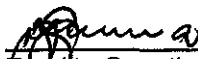
Section 1. Amend Travel Policies and Procedures. Travel Policies and Procedures for reimbursement for expenses incurred while on official City business are hereby amended and attached as Exhibit A. Amendments have been made to Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

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

**ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL ON MAY 5, 2008.**

  
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Linda Bird, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
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Evetta Genetia, City Clerk

**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.

**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 or Mayor Pro-tem 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 Advance Requested" 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 Final Travel Reconciliation. On or before the 15th 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 reconciliation for all reimbursable items legally

expended, accompanied by the unexpended portion of such advance, if any. Attach any receipts to this reconciliation. 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, by purchase order or city credit card. Before prepayment can occur, the approved travel authorization form and accompanying documentation must be included with the payment request.

**Section 7. Transportation.** Reimbursement for reasonable costs of official City business travel is authorized. 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.

The guidelines listed below apply:

7.1 Air Travel. Arrangements for air travel for official City business shall be made by the department whose employee is involved in the travel as outlined below:

- (a) Whenever feasible, air travel arrangements should be requested through the normal purchasing process in advance of the departure date.
- (b) The authorized purchaser will arrange for air travel based on the lowest available airfare for a regularly scheduled flight which reasonably accommodates the time of travel requested. In addition to calling the airline directly, a travel agency or online travel website may be used. All tickets purchased must be in coach.
- (c) If changes in travel plans occur that are the result of City business (e.g., delays in departure, cancellations, extended stays, or revised itinerary), any associated costs shall be paid by the City. However, all increases in cost of travel due to changes for personal convenience will be borne by the employee.
- (d) If personal travel is combined with business travel, the traveler shall be responsible for paying the increase in airfare, if any, necessary to accommodate the personal part of the flight.
- (e) Employees who obtain airline tickets on their own will be reimbursed through the accounts payable process.

7.2 City Vehicle. A City pool vehicle should be used whenever practicable for approved official travel. Out of the area costs of vehicle operation are authorized, such as gas, oil, and necessary repairs. Employees driving a City vehicle must possess a valid Washington State driver's license and current automobile liability insurance. Whenever feasible, multiple staff going to the same location should carpool.

7.3 Personal Vehicle. When a City vehicle is not available or when the use of a pool vehicle is not practicable, 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. Each employee using a private vehicle must claim actual distances by providing odometer readings or presumptive distances calculated using an online mapping source. If more than one employee travels in the same vehicle, only the employee owning the vehicle shall be eligible for mileage reimbursement. Employees driving a personal vehicle on City business must possess a valid Washington State driver's license and current automobile liability insurance. Whenever feasible, multiple staff go to the same location should carpool.

Mileage is calculated from the employee's work location, except in cases where the employee's home is closer to a meeting destination. The employee can proceed directly from their home and use their home as the official start point for mileage.

City employees who receive an automobile allowance shall not be entitled to further reimbursement for surface transportation costs for travel within the Puget Sound Region (Bremerton to Snoqualmie Pass and Everett to Olympia) as outlined in personnel policy 6.13. Incidental travel costs such as parking, ferry, or bridge tolls are reimbursable as they would be if a City vehicle was provided.

7.4 Rental Vehicle. Vehicle rental is considered an exception to the travel policy and should only be used when no less costly alternative exists. Employees must justify their request in writing and submit it with the Overnight/Out of State Travel Request Form for approval. Employees should rent a compact sized vehicle unless the number of passengers traveling necessitates a larger vehicle. Employees driving a rental vehicle must possess a valid Washington State driver's license and current automobile liability insurance

7.5 Taxi/Shuttle Service. Reasonable costs for transportation will be reimbursed when clearly identified that they were required to conduct official City business.

7.6 Parking. The cost for parking while conducting official City business will be reimbursed with sufficient receipts. If parking costs were paid in a lot which does not offer receipts, those costs must be documented.

**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. The employee is expected to use the cash advance provided to pay for meals. No additional amount will be reimbursed by the City. If an employee chooses not to receive the Per Diem allowance in advance then they are considered to be using an "Actual Expense Method" and are required to submit receipts for reimbursement of the actual cost of meals, not to exceed the current Per Diem rate based on IRS Pub. 1542. 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 computed according to locality, as specified in IRS, US Department of Treasury, PUB. 1542:

<u>Breakfast</u>	<u>20% of Per Diem Meal Amount</u>
<u>Lunch</u>	<u>30% of Per Diem Meal Amount</u>
<u>Dinner</u>	<u>50% of Per Diem Meal Amount</u>

(a) To be paid for breakfast, the recipient must leave Pierce County before 7am and not have returned before 10am. The City will pay 20% of the per diem meal amount.

(b) To be paid for lunch, the recipient must have left Pierce County before 11am and not have returned before 2pm. The City will pay 30% of the per diem meal amount.

(c) To be paid for dinner, the recipient must have left Pierce County before 5pm and not have returned before 7pm. The City will pay 50% of the per diem amount.

For example, if the daily meal allowance per IRS Pub. 1542 for Tacoma is \$59, the breakdown would be \$11.80 for breakfast, \$17.70 for lunch and \$29.50 for dinner.

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 an advanced per diem allowance in lieu of itemized expenses is not authorized.

Meals with a business purpose (not regularly-scheduled-official business is conducted during the meal time) are not taxable and will be reimbursed through Accounts Payable using the Mileage/Expense Reimbursement form. Meals without a business purpose (no official business is conducted/meal is on your own) are taxable and must be reimbursed through the payroll system by attaching receipts and making a note of the reimbursement request on the bottom of the timecard.

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

When on official City business for the entire day (leaving Pierce County before 7:30 a.m. and returning to Pierce County 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. Receipts are required, and an advanced 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, 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.

The following chart is intended to provide examples for implementation of the Meals policy:

An employee attends a one day training in Seattle (out of Pierce County) and lunch is not included in the registration fee	Payroll Reimbursed/ Taxable Meal
An employee or elected official travels to Bellevue (out of Pierce County) for a work-related meeting which extends into a meal period and returns on the same day.	Payroll Reimbursed/ Taxable Meal
An employee attends training at UW Tacoma (within Pierce County) and lunch is not included in the registration fee.	Ineligible Meal
Council has a <u>non-regular</u> , early work session at 5:30 pm prior to a 7pm Council meeting. Participating staff are invited to order dinner to be delivered for the meeting.	A/P Reimbursed/ Tax Free
There is a <u>regularly</u> scheduled early morning committee meeting and breakfast is ordered for staff and officials (regardless of location).	Ineligible Meal
An employee attends training out of town which includes an overnight stay and a meal is not included in the registration fee.	A/P Reimbursed/ Tax Free
Department Director asks an employee to fill in for him/her at a local breakfast, lunch or dinner meeting (same day notice, no advance notice given).	A/P Reimbursed/ Tax Free
An employee attends a not-regularly-scheduled-business meeting on behalf of the City during breakfast, lunch or dinner. The meeting is held locally and the meal is consumed by meeting participants as part of the meeting.	A/P Reimbursed/ Tax Free
An intergovernmental agency calls a <u>special meeting</u> in Olympia to discuss regional issues. Lunch is purchased by University Place staff and officials attending and is consumed while the meeting is conducted.	A/P Reimbursed/ Tax Free
A meal is provided by the conference or special event (regardless of location) organizers, whether or not it is included in the registration fee or in addition to, for which the meal has a business purpose such as a keynote speaker. (This meal is not subject to the per diem limits referenced in 8.1.)	A/P Reimbursed/ Tax Free

**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, train, bridge or ferry tolls, 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 by the employee incurring such expense.