

New wording/ Added

Suggested removal

Rewritten



## Town of Bladensburg Travel Regulations

The Town of Bladensburg takes its stewardship over the use of public resources seriously and is committed to the ethic that public resources should be used when there is an identifiable benefit to the Town and the Community.

This policy documents the parameters pursuant to which the Town will expend funds for Mayor, Council and staff's actual expenses incurred in the performance of official Town travel.

This policy recognizes that regional, state and national travel is often the best opportunity for more extensive, focused and uninterrupted education, training, and facilitated communication between other communities on issues related to the Town's policies, programs, and professional development of its officials and employees.

### Purpose

The purpose of this regulation is to set forth the Town of Bladensburg's uniform procedures and guidelines necessary to regulate the cost for travel, training and related business expenditures incurred by public officials and Town employees **and other authorized persons (traveler) as directed by the Town Administrator consistent with the administration and requirements of standing grant programs** in the performance of Town business. The provisions of this policy must be applied consistently to all travel expenses incurred by all travelers.

The Town of Bladensburg's travel expense regulation meets the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) definition of an accountable plan. As a result, expenses and reimbursements that conform to this policy are not reported as taxable income to the traveler.

The Town will reimburse individuals traveling on official Town business for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred. When planning and paying for travel, economy, prudence and necessity are of primary concern.

It is the policy of the Town of Bladensburg to limit travel costs to **only those expenses that are necessary for providing essential services to the Town's citizens.** Further, travelers must seek ways to reduce the cost of essential travel. Town travel is limited to public officials, Town employees and other authorized persons as determined by the in the performance of Town business. **The use of Town funds to accommodate personal comfort, convenience, and taste beyond the standard approved spending limit is not permitted.**

## Travel Planning

Business travel expenses will be paid by the Town only if they are reasonable, necessary and in accordance with this policy. Before making any travel arrangements, Mayor and Council Travel will present all known or anticipated costs and must receive approval by a majority vote of the Council during a public meeting prior to travel. Any traveler requesting an appeal of the Town Administrator's decision must obtain a super majority vote of the Council. Staff Travel must be approved by the Town Administrator. The staff member requesting travel shall will present all known or anticipated costs to the Town Administrator who will review the costs and must receive approval from the Town Administrator to expend the cost prior to travel. The Town Administrator's travel will be approved by the Mayor in the similar fashion that all staff travel is approved. To ensure adequate planning and identification of costs, the Town Treasurer will prepare a cost analysis of the lodging, transportation, meals, conference registration, and any other travel costs or course fees. This cost analysis will serve as the maximum amount allowable for travel. **Travelers who choose to deviate from this plan** (by electing to use another mode of transportation, rent a car for personal use, upgrade flight or hotel accommodations) **will bear the additional expenses personally.** Any additional expenses must be repaid to the Town within five (5) business days upon returning from travel. Any unpaid balance will result in a suspension of travel and will be deducted from the traveler's paycheck until such amount is fully repaid to the Town.

The traveler is responsible for submitting all receipts for lodging, airfare and any other expenses \$25 or greater within 5 business 10 calendar days following his or her return from travel.

All travel requires approval and authorization from the Town Administrator at least 30 days prior to traveling.

## Town Issued Credit Cards & Town Pre-Approved Travel

The use of Town issued credit cards may only be used for pre-approved travel for the person indicated on the card. Use of Town issued credit cards for accompanying family members, other persons, non-preapproved travel expenses or non-allowable expenses incurred during travel is **not allowable.** Charges resulting in the unauthorized use of Town issued credit cards will result in the termination of Town issued credit card accounts and the reporting of non-allowable expenses as taxable income to the IRS if not reimbursed to the Town in a timely manner.

## Transportation

### Ground Transportation

For local travel, Town vehicles will be used whenever possible. If a private vehicle is used, the traveler shall be reimbursed on the actual driving distance by the most direct route using the General Services Administration (GSA) web site of privately owned reimbursement rate. The traveler will utilize an appropriate software program such as Mapquest.com or the FDOT Official Highway Mileage found on the internet for determining miles between specific locations. For reimbursement purposes, mileage will be calculated from the employee's place of work. Employees traveling outside the metropolitan area shall utilize the least costly, quickest and most convenient means of transportation as determined by the Town Treasurer's cost analysis.

In addition to the standard mileage allowance, necessary and reasonable charges for the following automobile related expenses are allowed: tolls, parking, bridges and tunnels.

### Air Fare

Travelers must purchase the lowest priced airline tickets available. Travelers should make reservations as soon as travel plans are finalized to obtain advance purchase discounts.

While Town travel reimbursement is limited to **only** public officials and Town employees and other authorized persons in the performance of Town business. the Town Administrator may grant authorization for family members to accompany the traveler. If approved by the Town Administrator, Any additional costs incurred by family members joining Town officials for this travel (airline tickets, hotel accommodations above the standard room rate) must be repaid within five (5) business days upon returning from travel, if charged to the Town. **In the event that additional charges occur due to the accommodation of an unauthorized traveler, the additional charges must be resolved between the charging entity and the authorized traveler or repaid within five business days. If the charges are not resolved or repaid within five (5) business days, future travel will be suspended for that traveler and the traveler's paycheck will be reduced until the balance is fully repaid.**

### **Airport Parking**

**Travelers are expected to utilize the most economical form of transportation to and from the airport and consider whether the costs of mileage reimbursement, shuttle service, or public transportation is more economical than parking a vehicle at the airport for the duration of travel**

## Car Rental

As a general practice, rental cars will not be approved if the traveler is staying at or near proximity of the conference hotel or meeting location unless its use is as part of specific program activities of the conference hosts. Before renting a car, the traveler should consider shuttle services and taxis, particularly for transportation between airport and lodging. **The cost for the rental car must be disclosed in the cost work-up prior to the approval of travel.** If the vehicle is approved, the Town will reimburse the traveler for the cost of renting a compact size car. In these cases, mileage is not reimbursable for rental cars, however the cost of gasoline may be reimbursed.

## Lodging

**The Town's reimbursement rate for domestic travel is based on the General Services Administration maintained web site of per diems by geographic area. Consult that site for the per diem rate of the destination city or region. Lodging per diem may be claimed for each night away from your home.** A traveler will be reimbursed for allowable lodging expenses incurred during overnight travel. The Town of Bladensburg will reimburse lodging expenses based on the **General Services Administration** per diem rate for the geographic region where the expense is incurred **unless the conference hotel site lodging is above the GSA rate. In this case, the Town will reimburse for the lowest cost room/ tier available that is within the conference site.**

## Meals and Incidentals

The Town will reimburse meal and incidental expenses based on the per diem rate for the geographic region where the expenses incurred. The Town's reimbursement rate for travel is based on the federal governments General Services Administration maintained web site of per diems by geographic area.

When meals are included with registration or lodging expense, including continental breakfast or receptions, the per diem amount will be reduced by the appropriate allowance amount. **If a per diem is given in advance, then no allowances will be made for additional meal item charges.**

**Per Diem and Travel Days:** When travel covers a partial day as in the first or last day, then per diem will only cover meals for that part of the day. For example, if air travel is scheduled for 4:00 PM on the first day of travel, then only dinner will be covered for that travel day.

**Per Diem and Event Included Meals:** When meals are included in the cost of the travel event, such as at a conference, then Per Diem shall not apply to those meals. Example, if lunch is provided as part of activities of a conference day, then Per Diem will not apply for that lunch.

**Per Diem Advances:** Advanced Per Diem funds not expended shall be returned to the Town along with all documented meal receipts within 10 calendar days.

## Receipts

Receipts for lodging are **ALWAYS** required. All other expenses require dated, original receipts only when each expense is \$25 or greater. These receipts must be submitted within five (5) business 10 calendar days of returning from travel. Failure to submit receipts within five (5) business 10 calendar days from travel will result in a suspension of future travel.

## Travel Expense Report

A Travel Expense Report will be submitted to the Town Treasurer within 10 calendar days of returning from any Town funded travel. All receipts and any agenda or informative handouts will be submitted with the report.

## One Day Travel

In general, trips of less than 50 miles one way do not qualify for reimbursement for an overnight stay. The Town, following Internal Revenue Service regulations, does not allow travel meal expense for one day travel. Per-diem rates may not be used for one day travel.

## Non-Reimbursable Expenses

The following expenses are not allowable for reimbursement:

- Personal grooming services, such as barbers, hairdressers and shoe shines
- Insurance costs such as life insurance, flight insurance, personal automobile insurance and baggage insurance
- Laundry or valet service
- Excess baggage charge
- Car rental insurance
- Towing charges
- Expenses for children, spouses, and companions while on travel
- Dues to private clubs
- Gym and recreational fees, including massages and saunas
- Alcoholic beverages, snacks, excess meals and hotel mini bar charges
- Entertainment (pay tv, internet\*\*, video rental, movies, nightclubs, bowling, golf, theatre productions, sporting events or other social events) \*\**The use of the Internet is approved for business (email and correspondence with Town employees for Town business).*\*\*

- “No-show” charges for hotel and rental car reservations
- Parking tickets or traffic violations
- Loss of funds or personal belongings while traveling
- Personal automobile repairs
- Personal telephone charges
- Pet care
- Upgrades (air, hotel, car, etc.)

The above list is not all-inclusive. Travelers should use prudent judgment and remember that all travel expenses are open to the public and must be able to sustain the test of public review.

Any hotel upgrades, car rental upgrades, unauthorized charges, including any service charges will be the sole responsibility of the traveler. These charges must be repaid to the Town within 5 business days upon returning from travel. The Finance Director is authorized to deduct any remaining balance due from the traveler’s paycheck until such amount is fully repaid to the Town.



# Town of Bladensburg Travel Expense Report

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date Advance Needed: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Department Head Advance Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Advance Requested: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Department Head Expense Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

From Date	Departed From/ Arrived At	Time	Auto		Air/ Rail Cost Round Trip	Car Rental	Taxi, Parking Tolls, Etc.	Lodging	Meals or Per Diem	Misc Expenses		
			Start Miles	Mileage Re- imburse						Description	\$	
To Date			End Miles	Yes								
				No								
<b>Totals</b>												

<u><b>Taxable Travel - Meals Only</b></u>	<b>Submit This Form to the Office of Finance</b>	<b>TOTAL TRAVEL</b>
Financial Travel Notes:		<b>EXPENSE LESS:</b>
		<b>Travel Advance</b>
		<b>Total Due To (Owed By) Employee</b>

Be sure to attach receipts for **all** expenditures.

Submitted by: _____	
Signed _____	Date _____





Community Suggestion	Process/ Practice	Proposed Policy	N/A (travel)	Staff/ Reviewer Comments	Date Submitted	Community Member	Email Contact
<b>ADVANCE NOTICE OF TRAVEL EXPENSES:</b> town administrator or the treasurer fill out a form with the best hotel room rates, acceptable rates will be given to the traveler before making any purchases or reservations.	1				1/9/2015 10:24	Wieżt	dot2steve@aol.com
<b>The Council Member (not Staff) fill out an expense report</b> with airline cost, hotel room rate and total expenses for how many days stay in hotel, rental car fees, conference registration fees and any other expected expenses.	1				1/10/2015 10:24	Wieżt	dot2steve@aol.com
<b>NO last minute town council votes to approve a council member going to a conference and missing out on early registration rates.</b>				There is a question of what if this is unavoidable? Perhaps the then could be, if notice was known, then any overages past the early fee that the traveler will foot the bill? NOT INCLUDED, POLICY IS FOR ALL NOT SPECIAL GROUP	1/10/2015 10:24	Wieżt	dot2steve@aol.com
the final expense report is turned in with all receipts. All receipts must be readable and itemized to explain the purchase.		1		Already in Policy	1/10/2015 10:24	Wieżt	dot2steve@aol.com
<b>Failure to turn in receipts will result in those expenses not being paid or reimbursed by the town.</b> Any spending beyond the pre approved rates should be paid back to the town by payroll deductions		1		Already in Policy	1/10/2015 10:24	Wieżt	dot2steve@aol.com
<b>At the beginning of every year the council member should sign a form stating they have read, understand and agree</b> to follow all spending policies and procedures. It is the responsibility of the traveler to make sure the traveler complies with and follows all expense policies and procedures.	1				1/10/2015 10:24	Wieżt	dot2steve@aol.com
<b>The traveler to provide written report of all itemized workshops, classes etc and meetings</b> they attended including the dates attended. A written report should be given on what information has been received and how it helps our town.		1		Already in Policy	1/10/2015 10:24	Wieżt	dot2steve@aol.com
<b>Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner should have individual amounts which total a day's per diem meal rate.</b> (i.e. Breakfast=\$9, Lunch=\$11, Dinner=\$25 = \$45)		1		Already in Policy	1/9/2015 16:03	Leona F Peterson Naude	leona@umd.edu
<b>A traveler should not automatically receive a full day payment of per diem</b> , if there is not a full day of travel. If a flight is at 4:00 in the afternoon, they would be eligible for Dinner, but not breakfast and lunch.		1		Already in Policy (could add within GSA guidelines)	1/9/2015 16:03	Leona F Peterson Naude	leona@umd.edu
<b>ALL receipts should be turned in.</b>		1		Already in Policy	1/12/2015 12:03	Virginia Lockmuller	vlockmuller@legacyforhealth.org
<b>"no alcohol paid for by Bladensburg taxpayers"</b>		1		Already in Policy and stipulated in personnel law	1/9/2015 16:03	Leona F Peterson Naude	leona@umd.edu
ALL receipts should be turned in on an <b>EXPENSE REPORT</b> that is completed when the traveler returns home, itemizing all expenditures. Including if they need reimbursement for expenses perhaps not originally accounted for. (i.e. an additional night hotel stay due to weather or flight cancellation.)		1		Already in Policy	1/9/2015 16:03	Leona F Peterson Naude	leona@umd.edu
<b>Meal Hosting</b>			1	Different Policy, but need to consider if Council does this for travel.	1/9/2015 16:03	Leona F Peterson Naude	leona@umd.edu
Meal hosting is defined as providing meals to those in residence of the host. Government guidelines regarding meal receipts which also includes "meal hosting" requires that the "purpose" and "names of those in attendance" are required for determining "allowable" expenses. The reasoning for this is to discern that the purpose of the meeting is "business" and not "entertainment" (as indicated by non-business related individuals, such as family members at a meal).			1	Different Policy, but need to consider if Council does this for travel.	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
<b>Internet: Should allow for business purposes</b>				Request by Ficklin to include internet	1/12/2015	Ficklin	wficklin@bladensburg.net
<b>Mayor and Council Travel must be presented with TOTAL projected costs</b> and receive approval by a majority vote of the Council during a public meeting prior to travel.				Partial in policy but must add total amount that is conceivably know at the time (page#2)	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
<b>FORM: ADD a line for the "Signature" and "Date" to Page 1 AND Page 2 of the form (the form only indicates the name), ADD a "date" to the lower left corner "footer" of each page to date the version of the form.</b>				Need to add.	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
The use of Town issued credit cards may only be used for pre-approved travel for the person indicated on the card. Use of Town issued credit cards for accompanying family members, other persons, non-preapproved travel expenses or non-allowable expenses incurred during travel is <b>NOT ALLOWABLE</b> .				Need to add	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
The submission of <b>receipts for all Town funded travel should be required</b> , to comply with IRS documentation guidelines, all receipts submitted for reimbursement or as documentation of credit card charges shall have the following information DOCUMENTED ON THE RECEIPT by the elected official, staff, or authorized person traveling: Name & SIGNATURE Date Applicable Dollar Amount Purpose: (i.e. Breakfast, Lunch, Taxi, Toll, Parking) Event		1		Included already	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
<b>recommended that Per Diem rates and guidelines for meals</b> follow the Government Services Administration guidelines and tier rates for Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner for the city of destination and travel dates. Costs overage of the GSA rate for a specific class of meal shall not be covered by the Town. Example: If the per diem lunch rate is \$15, but an individual expends \$18 for lunch, the \$3 over the Per Diem rate will not be covered by Town funding.		1		Included already	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
<b>Per Diem and Travel Days:</b> When travel covers a partial day as in the first or last day, then per diem will only cover meals for that part of the day.		1		Included already	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
<b>Per Diem Advances:</b> Advanced Per Diem funds not expended shall be returned to the Town along with all documented meal receipts within 10 calendar days or at the close of the next pay period cycle which ever is sooner.				ADD	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
<b>CAR RENTAL:</b> The use of rental cars funded by the Town shall only be approved in advance for use as part of specific program activities of the conference hosts. The Town will not fund the use of car rental for personal convenience, use for accompanying family members, or use with other non-Town funded travelers. (The use of shuttle service, taxis, or public transportation is more cost effective than the associated costs of car rental, vehicle insurance, hotel parking, gasoline, etc.)		1		REWRITE	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
<b>AIRPORT PARKING:</b> Travelers are expected to utilize the most economical form of transportation to and from the airport and consider whether the costs of mileage reimbursement, shuttle service, or public transportation is more economical than parking a vehicle at the airport for the duration of travel.				Consider public transportation Adding	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
<b>MILEAGE REPORTS:</b> The Town currently administers and potentially will administer grants subject to programmatic monitoring/auditing by funders. Said monitoring will include documentation of program services and expenses charged to the grant			1	Not Applicable for travel policy	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
<b>DRIVER'S LICENSE &amp; PROOF OF INSURANCE:</b> Town employees, contractors, etc. using their personal vehicles to conduct Town business will supply proof of a valid Driver's license and proof of current vehicle insurance.			1	Not Applicable for travel policy	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com
<b>"Other Authorized Persons"</b> (traveler): Recommend that this term be left in the policy as it may be possible in the future that the <b>Town be the fiscal agent on grants</b> with program activities/fiscal agent activities to include travel for contractors, sub-grantees, volunteers, or clients.				Need to consider /add	1/12/2015	Melendez	acmraefinds@yahoo.com

Totals = 3 12 4

Need to Add = 6