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Agency Travel Policy

1. **GENERAL:** While engaging in official agency business, it may become necessary for an employee to travel from their official station to another location. Employees may be reimbursed for eligible expenses incurred during their travel.
2. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the agency's travel policy to ensure all employee travel is conducted within state travel rules and regulations while doing so in a cost effective manner.

STATE TRAVEL POLICY

Overview

The state's travel policy applicable to officers and employees within Arkansas state government shall provide the minimum mandatory framework for the agency's travel policy.

Employees can familiarize themselves with the rules and regulations that are required of all state entities to better understand the overall travel process by reviewing the policy published on the Department of Finance and Administration's website at <http://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/offices/accounting/Documents/travelRegs.pdf>



AGENCY TRAVEL POLICY

Overview

Whereas the state travel rules and regulations provide the mandatory minimum guidelines for a travel policy, the agency policy shall expand on certain rules to provide enhanced internal control and fiscally conservative measures that are in the best interest of the state.

The sections below shall outline specific components of the agency travel policy that employees will be required to familiarize themselves with and adhere to as they travel while conducting agency business.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

When an employee identifies the need to travel from their “official station” and expects to incur reimbursable expenses he or she must to obtain prior authorization before traveling.

The agency has developed an electronic form to assist the employee in obtaining authorization for travel. For instate travel, the Travel Authorization Form shall be completed by the employee, approved by the employees Site Manager/Division Director and verified by fiscal staff to be considered complete. All out of state travel will need to be routed directly to the agency director for approval.

The employee is required to provide a clear written justification for the travel on the authorization form so that it may stand on its own in documenting the purpose of the trip. A reasonable estimate of the costs expected to be incurred on the trip shall be documented on the form as well (Based upon federal GSA rates for the destination of the travel).

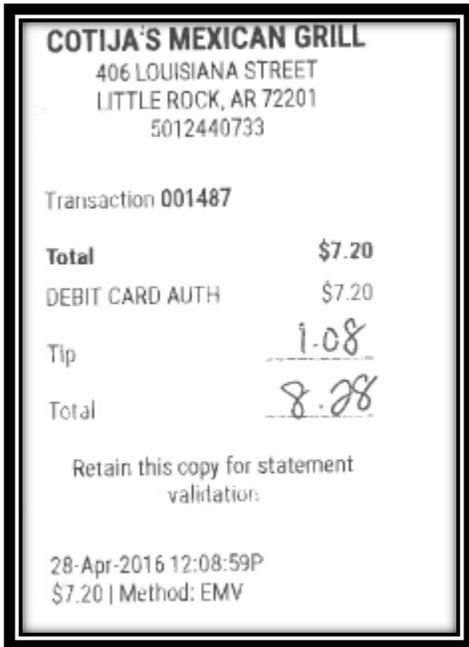
Further information on the use of this form is documented in the “FORMS” section below.

MEALS REIMBURSEMENT

Sufficient Documentation Required

Employees shall only be reimbursed for meals for which they have provided sufficient documentation and only up to the maximum GSA allowable rate. A receipt which

documents the date, vendor, item(s) purchased and total dollar amount (including the amount left for gratuity) will be considered sufficient documentation.



1 – Insufficient receipt for meals reimbursement (Lack of itemization) 2 – Acceptable receipt for meals reimbursement

Employees should verify the GSA allowable rates for meals at the destination they are traveling to. Meals will only be reimbursed for travel that involves an overnight stay and that when traveling the first and last days of the trip the traveler will only be reimbursed for up to 75% of the allowable GSA per diem.

LODGING

Limited to GSA Rate

When an employee’s travel requires an overnight stay, the employee must seek lodging where the room rate is at or below the GSA rate for the destination. Employees seeking lodging at hotels where the single room rate is in excess of the allowable GSA rate must A) document in writing why it is in the best interest of the agency/state to stay at the location with a higher rate B) receive written preapproval from the agency director approving payment of the higher rate.

National Guard Lodging Requirement

The agency has a memorandum of agreement with the Arkansas National Guard to provide lodging to employees at National Guard installations with billeting offices across the state. Currently, employees traveling to the following towns **must** book their stay with the local billeting office:

- ★ Little Rock, AR/North Little Rock, AR Camp Robinson Billeting - <http://www.arguard.org/ISU/billet.html>
- ★ Fort Smith , AR Fort Chaffee Billeting - <http://www.arguard.org/cmtc/documents/billeting.pdf>

In the event there are no vacancies for the travel dates at the billeting office, then the employee may choose alternate accommodations. The employee must explain in writing why the billeting office was not utilized if traveling to one of the above towns.

PERSONAL VEHICLE USE

State Vehicle Utilization Requirement

Employees are eligible for reimbursement for the mileage driven while engaged in official travel at the rate established in the states travel policy.

It is the agency policy that employees working at locations where a state vehicle is stationed are required to make use of the vehicle for their travel. Employees at these locations requesting mileage for personal use of their vehicle for travel must document why an agency vehicle was not utilized. This can be documented on the TR-1 form and confirmed by the travel supervisor in order for the employee to receive personal mileage reimbursement.

TRAVEL RELATED FORMS

In order an employee to receive reimbursement for eligible travel costs, sufficient documentation is required to document A) approved authorization to travel B) detail costs incurred for the travel.

TRAVEL REQUEST/AUTHORIZATION FORM

This form is required to be completed by the employee PRIOR to engaging in any travel activities. Employees will not receive reimbursement for travel costs unless

this form is presented with the travel reimbursement form (TR-1). This is a three step form where:

- 1) The employees presents the information to their manager regarding the details of the trip.
- 2) If the manager approves the trip they then forward the form to the fiscal department for budget verification.
- 3) Finally, if fiscal verifies the travel is within the agency’s budget the completed form is returned to the traveler to include with their TR-1 when seeking reimbursement.

**Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs
Travel Preauthorization Worksheet**

1. Trip Details

Request Manager Approval **3**

1 Select from dropdown

I do not have an agency travel card and require assistance booking this trip on the agency travel card. **2**

1 Employee(s) Traveling:

2 Division:

3 Official Station:

Please provide details of anticipated trip below.

Destination (Physical Address)	Trip Classification	Explanation/Purpose for travel	Leave Date	Return Date
1				

Please provide estimated costs for the travel below.

Estimated Mileage	Estimated GSA Lodging Rate (Daily)	Estimated GSA Meal Rate (Daily)	Estimated Airfare	Estimated Other travel costs	Provide explanation supporting other travel costs
2					

3 Cost Estimate: **4**

All costs provided are "good faith" estimates, any costs incurred by the state/agency/traveler as a result of this travel that greatly exceed this estimate will require further explanation/documentation.

Example 1 - Travel Authorization Form

1. Select your manager from the dropdown list in this section. If your manager is not on the list by default, you may add them by typing their name in the first available row in column A of the “REF” worksheet and their e-mail address right next to it in column B of the “REF” worksheet.

Note: You must select the agency director for authorization for all out of state travel.

2. If you need fiscal's assistance to book the travel, selecting this option will make sure the request is routed to fiscal for processing after all approvals have been completed.
3. After you have completed all trip details, clicking this button will route the form to your manager for approval.

Note: You must have Microsoft Outlook installed and open for the form to route to the manager of your choice.

4. This field will auto-calculate based upon the information you enter about the trip details above (Leave/Return dates, mileage, lodging rate, etc)
5. Enter the travel costs for the expenses you expect to incur for the travel.

Note: The rates for Lodging/Meals are to be entered at the daily rate, do not enter an amount for the entire length of the stay.

After this form has been approved by your manager and verified by fiscal, you will receive a response email from the fiscal staff indicating you are authorized for travel. Attached to this email will be a completed version of the authorized form which you will need to include with the **TR-1 Travel Reimbursement Form** when you submit your expenses for reimbursement.

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT FORM

When you have returned from the trip, you will need to complete state form TR-1 (Travel Reimbursement) in order to receive reimbursement for eligible expenses incurred during travel.

TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT FORM, TR-1															
DEPARTMENT 0385 AR Department of Veterans Affairs						OFFICIAL DUTY STATION									
NAME OF PAYEE/TRAVELER						AASIS PERSONNEL #				PRIVATE VEHICLE LICENSE NO.					
HOME ADDRESS:															
PURPOSE OF TRIP:		1													
DETAILED EXPENDITURES OTHER THAN MILEAGE										MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT					
DATE	NAME OF TOWN VISITED	AIRFARE	HOTEL ROOM DAILY RATE (PRE-TAX)	HOTEL TAXES	MEALS (EXCLUDING TIP)	TIPS (15% MAX)	Taxi/Ground Transport	INCIDENTALS*	OTHER (ATTACH EXPLANATION)	DAILY TOTAL	FROM LOCATION	TO LOCATION	MILEAGE DRIVEN (ATTACH GOOGLE MAP)	RATE PER MILE	AMOUNT CLAIMED
						2							3	0.42	
SUB-TOTALS										MILEAGE TOTALS					
INCIDENTALS (1) Parking Fee (2) Registration Fee (3) Toll Fee (4) Airline Luggage Fee (5) Other (explain)										SUMMARY:					
Approved _____ Travel Supervisor Signature/ Name / Title						_____ 6 Signature of Traveler				DETAILED EXP _____ MILEAGE _____					
Fund: _____ Cost Center: _____ 5						_____ 6 Title of Traveler				TOTAL EXPENSES _____					

Example 2 - Travel Reimbursement Form

1. Provide a clear description of the purpose of the travel.
2. Supporting receipts/documentation are required for expenses you are claiming reimbursement for. Refer to the example above of clear, concise documentation that will be accepted for reimbursement purposes. Nondescript, undetailed receipts will not be considered sufficient documentation.
3. Use Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com>) to calculate the total mileage between your official station and the destination. A printed copy of the map indicating the direction/route and total mileage must be included with the TR-1 to receive reimbursement for the travel. Refer to the state travel guidelines for the current reimbursement rate per mile for personal vehicle usage.

Note: You may also use your home address as the starting point for your trip if A) You actually started the travel at your home B) The overall mileage is less than if you would have left from your official station. If it is a greater distance leaving from your home than your official station, you must use your official station as the beginning point.

4. You must obtain your manager's written approval for TR-1 before submitting the complete paperwork to fiscal for processing.
5. Refer to the fund/cost center on your travel authorization form. If you are unsure of the appropriate fund/cost center you may contact fiscal for assistance.

Note: The cost center can vary depending on the purpose of the trip. In general, an employee's cost center will be specific to their division, but if the purpose of the trip is primarily for the benefit of another

