

ACCOUNTING POLICY

TOPIC: Section 12 - Travel 1.0	EFFECTIVE DATE: 11/11/85
TITLE: Travel and Lodging Provisions	REVISION DATE: 12/14/11
AUTHORIZED BY: Amy McDowell, Deputy Director	PAGE 1 OF 7

BACKGROUND

The Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JOCER) adopted the 2011-2013 Compensation Plan submitted by the Office of State Employment Relations (OSER). This plan includes the Uniform Travel Schedule Amounts (UTSA). The UTSA establishes the travel rules for reimbursement of state employee travel. The UTSA for 2011-2013 has changes which are effective on January 1, 2012.

In accordance with section 20.916 (8), of the Statutes, OSER has issued *Uniform Travel Schedule Amounts (UTSA)*. This bulletin reflects the travel and lodging provisions for non-represented and represented employees. According to OSER, language in the represented bargaining units contracts allow represented employees the same reimbursement rates as non-represented. These rates become effective January 1, 2012, whether or not the represented contracts have been signed and become effective. Any changes in the final signed and effective bargaining contract could result in subsequent adjustments. Individual contracts should be reviewed for specific language.

POLICIES

Provisions regarding travel, moving expense reimbursement and temporary lodging allowances are contained in the Uniform Travel Schedule Amounts section of the Compensation Plan. Approved travel schedule amounts apply to all non-represented classified and any non-represented unclassified employee whose compensation is established under ss. 20.923 or 230.12, Wisconsin Statutes. These also apply to all represented employees. The effective date of the approved changes will be January 1, 2012.

1. **Mileage Reimbursement** The full rate of reimbursement for the use of a privately owned automobile or airplane, while on official state business and for moving expenses, is \$.485 per mile (effective July 1, 2008). This rate is applied when a state-owned automobile is not available, and the employee has obtained a non-availability slip or approval when required. The non-availability slip or approval needs to be submitted with the travel voucher. See [Section 12-Travel 2.0](#) (Turndown Rates--Business Use of Personal Vehicles).

The policy was clarified to indicate that at 100 miles a nonavailability slip is required to receive the higher mileage rate.

Employee reimbursement to the State for the use of a personally assigned, state-owned automobile is \$.485 per mile, plus sales tax (effective July 1, 2008).

Employees must now meet the Department of Administration (DOA) established Minimum Driving Standards to be reimbursed at the higher (\$.485) mileage rate (effective July 1, 2008). This means that employees that are not allowed to drive a state vehicle because of an unacceptable driving record are reimbursed at the turndown rate (\$.352 became effective December 1, 2011). See the Fleet Driver and Management Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 1, Section 1.1 through 1.5 for DOA's established Minimum Driving Standards.

The rate for use of a specially equipped vehicle was increased from \$.64 to \$.66 per mile (effective July 1, 2008).

2. **Mileage Reimbursement to and from Work Site** When management determines that an employee's vehicle is required for travel to a work site removed from the assigned headquarters, the employee shall be reimbursed for mileage from home to the work site (unless the employee is "allowed" to telecommute then they are not eligible for mileage reimbursement from their home to their assigned headquarters), or from the assigned headquarters to the work site, whichever is closer.
3. **Parking Expenses** Parking charges incurred in the headquarters city are reimbursable if incurred as a result of the job. Home based (headquarters office) parking requires special approval from the Division Administrator.
4. **Car Rentals** Normally, employees shall not rent cars. Exceptions require approval by department head, or designee, and documentation that commercial carrier services are not available, or the cost of car rental is lower than the cost of available commercial carriers. This has been delegated to Division Administrators/Office Directors, who may delegate this authority to Bureau Directors. If the Division Administrator/Office Director further delegates this approval authority, a signed statement identifying the designee must be forwarded to Harlan Olson in the Accounts Payable/Preaudit Section - Bureau of Fiscal Services.

When one employee is traveling alone or when two employees are traveling together, only the reasonable cost of compact models is reimbursable unless non-availability of this size automobile is documented by the car rental agent.

See [Section 12--Travel 2.2](#) (Vehicle Rental Approvals--Mandatory Use Bulletin) regarding the delegation authority and authorized vendors to be used.

5. **Meal Expenses** For the 2011-2013 Compensation Plan there is no change in the in-state or out-of-state meal maximums. The Compensation Plan provides for two separate meal expense reimbursement schedules--one for in-state meals and another for out-of-state meals--as follows:

The maximum amounts for individual meals, including tax and tip are listed as follows (the maximum allowable tip which may be included is 15% of the meal claim):

Special Note: The 15% maximum allowable tip is for individually purchased meals. The Department no longer requires vendors to accept 15% as the maximum gratuity or service charge on group-purchased meals at conferences and/or meetings. For group-

purchased meals, the amount of gratuity or service charge is to be based upon what is negotiated between the vendor and the Department. This amount will be considered the industry normal amount. The meal maximums which include the gratuity still apply.

Special Note 2: The P-Card may be used as an alternative to pay for group-purchased meals in lieu of using a Purchase Requisition. This also includes those situations where the payment is below the Purchase Requisition requirements.

Effective July 1, 2010:

There has been no change in the meal rates prior to July 1, 2010

<u>In-State</u>		<u>Out-of-State</u>	
Breakfast	\$ 8.00	Breakfast	\$10.00
Lunch	9.00	Lunch	10.00
Dinner	17.00	Dinner	20.00

The out-of-state meal maximum rates apply for any out-of-state location. It is no longer necessary to be in a high cost city to be eligible for these rates.

Effective January 1, 2004 the wording was changed to clarify that out-of-state meal maximums include tax and tips. There were no changes in meal rates.

The Compensation Plan provides that when an employee is entitled to reimbursement for two or more consecutive meals in one day, the amount expended for any particular meal is left to the discretion of the employee, but the total reimbursement shall not exceed the total of the eligible individual meal rates for the consecutive meals in a day. The Uniform Travel Schedule Amounts section requires an employee to attach a copy of the meeting or conference brochure to the travel voucher when claiming reimbursement for meal expenses incurred while at a meeting or conference.

Meal rates may be exceeded if written justification is approved by Department Head or delegated designee. This has been delegated to the Division Administrators/Office Directors, who may delegate this further. This may not be delegated further than Bureau Directors. If the Division Administrator/Office Director further delegates this approval authority, a signed statement identifying the designee must be forwarded to Bonnie Parenteau in the Accounts Payable/Preaudit Section - Bureau of Fiscal Services.

Language was added that states, "Meals included in the cost of lodging or registration fees are not reimbursable". In cases where the cost of lodging includes breakfast the appropriate amount of breakfast reimbursement can be added to the lodging rate. The appointing authority or designee may grant individual exceptions if the employee provides written justification.

6. **Hotel and Motel Expenses**

For the 2011-2013 Compensation Plan there is no change in in-state lodging rates. The maximum in-state lodging rate, excluding all applicable taxes, for all lodging for all in-state travel in counties other than Milwaukee, Racine, and Waukesha is:

As of July 1, 2010

\$ 70.00

The maximum permitted amount for Milwaukee, Racine, and Waukesha counties is:

As of July 1, 2010

\$ 80.00

The \$70.00 per night rate shall also apply to out-of-state travel, except for lodging in higher cost cities as determined from information published by OSER. See [Section 12-Travel 1.2](#) (Moving and Lodging Expense Reimbursement Maximums) for high-cost-city information.

a. Lodging at Conference Site

The Department head or delegated designee may permit the employee(s) to stay at a documented conference site where lodging costs exceed the maximum amount specified above on the basis that it enables the employee(s) to gain professional benefits due to interaction with other attendees. This policy delegates this approval authority to Division Administrators/Office Directors, who may delegate this further. This may not be delegated further than Bureau Directors. If the Division Administrator/Office Director further delegates this approval authority, a signed statement identifying the designee must be forwarded to Laurie Olson in the Accounts Payable/Preaudit Section - Bureau of Fiscal Services. No additional statement of justification is required. Employee(s) should include on the training approval a statement such as "I am staying at the conference site and request a lodging rate, including applicable taxes, which exceeds the maximum allowable amount." This information signed by the Division Administrator/Office Director or delegated designee must be attached to the employee(s) travel voucher when it is submitted.

b. Energy Surcharge at Lodging Facilities

Some hotels/motels have been adding an energy surcharge onto their bills. This issue has been discussed with OSER. The energy surcharge is not a tax. Therefore, the surcharge becomes part of the nightly rate. If the combined total of the room rate and surcharge exceeds the lodging maximum, the excess is not reimbursable unless one of the conditions for exceeding the maximum is met. See [Section 12-Travel 1.1](#) (Exceptions to Lodging Cost Limitations) for these conditions.

c. Cost of Booking the Lodging

When booking the lodging there is sometimes an additional fee that is charged (often when using a website to book the lodging). This issue has been discussed with OSER. The cost of lodging that is subject to the Compensation Plan maximum rates (listed above) includes any additional cost of booking the lodging. Therefore, the additional fee that is charged can be paid for, but the State will only pay for the lodging and booking cost up to the maximum rate.

7. Business Telephone or Facsimile A receipt is required when an employee claims reimbursement for non-STC business telephone calls or business-related facsimile charges in excess of \$5.00 per call.

8. Telephone Call Home

The 2011-2013 Compensation Plan has removed the \$5 personal call home effective January 1, 2012.

9. Taxis

The requirement for receipts for taxis was increased from \$15 to \$25 for a one-way trip. Therefore, a receipt is required in order for an employee to be reimbursed for a one-way taxi in excess of \$25.

10. Tips to Hotel Employees

Tips to hotel employees are changed from \$2 per night to \$2 per day of arrival, \$2 per day of departure plus \$2 per night of stay. Therefore, staying two days but one overnight is limited to \$6 (\$2 for day of arrival, \$2 for night of stay and \$2 for day of departure).

11. Luggage Fee

American Airlines announced earlier this week that they would begin charging passengers \$15 for the first checked bag. Most airlines have allowed one checked bag for no fee but charged for any additional checked bags. The airlines have different fees for the additional bags. It is possible that other airlines will follow American Airlines policy change and start charging for the first checked bag.

Several agencies have raised questions on whether the charge for the checked bags is a reimbursable expense and have asked whether receipts are required to document the charges. The Compensation Plan which establishes the state travel guidelines (Section F) is silent on this issue. The Office of State Employment Relations (OSER) is responsible for the Compensation Plan. This issue has been discussed with staff from OSER. They have indicated that the fee for checked bags is a reimbursable expense. However, the number of bags that are checked must be reasonable for the business purpose of the trip. The cost for additional bags can become expensive. It appears that American Airlines policy will be \$15 for the first bag, \$25 for the second and \$100 each for bags 3, 4 and 5. If the employee is combining business with a vacation/personal trip then the reimbursable expense for the additional checked bags must relate to the number of bags necessary for the business portion of the trip and not the vacation/personal portion

of the trip. Employees must also provide receipts to document the cost of the checked bags.

State Procurement has indicated that the fee for the checked bags, for business trips, can be charged to a state procurement card.

12. **Porterage at Airport**

The reimbursement for porterage at airports or bus terminals was revised and a limit of \$1 per piece of luggage was established. Effective January 1, 2004 the requirement to fully explain the porterage cost has been removed. Porterage is still limited to \$1 per piece of luggage.

13. **Parking**

Receipts are required for parking claims in excess of \$25. Also parking charges incurred at the employee's headquarters are not reimbursable. Note that this is "headquarters" not "headquarter city." Parking costs incurred in the headquarter city that are away from the employee's "established work site" (headquarters) can still be reimbursed. Also note that the Compensation Plan still indicates that if conditions of the AG Opinion 61 OAG 210 are met (related to "home base" parking) then parking at the employee's headquarters can be reimbursed.

14. **Fees for Changing Airline Tickets**

Fees charged for changing airline tickets are reimbursable but require "a valid, written business reason for the change" and approval of the appointing authority or designee.

15. **Passports**

The Compensation Plan now clarifies that certain costs associated with obtaining passports and visas are reimbursable.

16. **Travel by Bus**

Effective January 1, 2004 the revised language does not limit travel between cities to Madison, Milwaukee and Chicago. The appointing authority is responsible for determining when it is feasible for employees to travel by bus between any cities or within the headquarter city.

17. **Registration Fees**

- (a) An original paid receipt, a copy of the check, a copy of the credit card statement, or the traveler's customer copy of the credit card receipt must support claims for reimbursement of registration fees over \$25.

Effective January 1, 2004 the sentence requiring a registration form that indicates the amount of the fee and what it includes has been removed. However, it is still required that a brochure is required if meals are being claimed at a conference.

- (b) Expenses of individuals not on official state business (spouse, family members, friend, etc.) that are included in the registration fees are not reimbursable.

18. Motorcycle Reimbursement

The mileage reimbursement rate for business use of a motorcycle was increased from \$.212 to \$.285 per mile (effective December 1, 2007).

REFERENCES

Wisconsin Statutes, sections 20.916(8), 20.923 and 230.12
<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/stats.html>
Office of State Employment Relations (OSER), *Uniform Travel Schedule Amounts (UTSA)*, Section F of the 2009-2011 Compensation Plan
http://oser.state.wi.us/bulletins/bulletin_get.asp?bid=499
DHS APP **Section 12-Travel 1.1** (Exceptions to Lodging Cost Limitations)
DHS APP **Section 12-Travel 1.2** (Maximum Reimbursement for Lodging in High Cost Out-of-State Cities)
DHS APP **Section 12-Travel 2.0** (Turndown Rates--Business Use of Personal Vehicles)
DHS APP **Section 12-Travel 2.2** (Vehicle Rental Approvals--Mandatory Use Bulletin)
Fleet Driver and Management Policies and Procedures Manual
http://www.doa.state.wi.us/docs_view2.asp?docid=3962

CONTACTS

Travel Preaudit, APPA

Section Chief, APPA