

Guidelines for Official Travel/Reimbursement for the Church of the Ascension

PURPOSE

The purpose of travel guidelines is to promote responsible use of, and accountability for, funds entrusted to the church for its governance and mission.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Requests for reimbursement must be submitted immediately, or no later than fourteen (14) calendar days following completion of a trip or after incurring other travel and entertainment expenses. Processing may be delayed or denied for requests postmarked more than 14 days after a trip or expense or for requests lacking the necessary documentation. No Reimbursement will be made for expenses submitted more than sixty (60) days after a trip is completed.
- All requests for reimbursement must be filed on the Travel and Expense Report and must be accompanied by original receipts or e-invoices for ALL expenses other than tips. Summary credit card statements and other copies are not acceptable.
- For control and audit purposes, exceptions to any policy relating to reimbursement may be approved only by the Rector/Senior Warden.
- All ground transportation requires a receipt from a licensed transportation service (including bus, taxi or limousine service).
- All requests for reimbursement must clearly identify the dates, destination and the business purpose of the trip, meeting or expense.
- SPECIAL NOTE

Expenses that are generally subject to reimbursement

The following are usually accepted for reimbursement: transportation, lodging, meals, and certain miscellaneous expenses. Details are provided in these Guidelines.

Guidelines for Official Travel

Expenses that are not subject to reimbursement

Any expenses not specifically addressed in these Guidelines as reimbursable must have prior written explanation and approval of Rector/Senior Warden. Non-reimbursable expenses include but are not limited to the following:

- Spouse's travel expenses
- Dependent care, pet care
- supply clergy to substitute for clergy on official business, lost pay
- Use of frequent-flyer miles, additional travel insurance
- Luggage purchase or replacement
- Unofficial (personal) entertainment, in-room movies, barber and beauty services, newspapers and magazines, sightseeing
- Medical services
- Motor vehicle fines
- "no show" charges for hotels, car rental and limousines
- Charge card late fees and expenses
- Alcoholic beverages (exceptions may be made for alcoholic beverages for official entertainment)
- Travel from home to Church and return

MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

When you are traveling on official business outside of the local area, you should travel by the most expeditious route, which will usually be by air. However, you may travel by personal automobile, train or bus when the situation warrants.

Requests for rental or owned auto travel must be submitted in writing or by e-mail to, and be approved by, the Rector/Senior Warden. All travel for which reimbursement is sought must be provided through licensed commercial carrier or your own vehicle.

AIR TRAVEL

Fare

Reservations should be booked as early as possible to take advantage of advance purchase discounts. All trips should be booked as coach fares, unless approved in advance by the Rector/Senior Warden. The Church will reimburse for one checked bag, if the airline charges for the first checked bag. The Church will not reimburse for additional baggage fees.

Charges incurred for itinerary changes made outside of these Guidelines or for the convenience of the traveler will not be reimbursed.

TRAIN TRAVEL

All travel on Amtrak should be booked as coach fares on regional trains

AUTOMOBILE TRAVEL

Allowances for travelers own vehicle

- The rate of reimbursement is the current IRS rate plus tolls and parking fees. Receipts for tolls and parking fees must accompany requests for reimbursement (regardless of the dollar amount).
- Gasoline and oil are not reimbursable expenses in addition to this per-mile reimbursement; rather, they are a part of it.
- Total reimbursement shall not exceed the sum of direct airfare plus rebated ground transportation, except in situations where the use of an automobile, in lieu of another means of transportation, can be justified.
- Reimbursement is not allowed from home to the office and return. All travel starts from church.

LODGING

The allowance for lodging will generally be equal to the standard business rate (determined by locality) at a moderately priced hotel.

Length of Hotel Stay

The Church will reimburse travelers for hotel rooms during the period of a scheduled meeting/event and any additional night required to accommodate public transportation schedules. A traveler may be reimbursed for an extended stay to the extent that the traveler can document that the savings in transportation costs exceed the additional expense of extended lodging (e.g., the reduced fare for a weekend flight exceeds the additional hotel room charge).

MEALS

Allowance

Travelers will be reimbursed for the actual amount spent for meals, not to exceed the U.S. Government's per diem rate for the area.

If the traveler is in a particular location for less than a day the per diem rate does not apply. In that case, meal reimbursement will not exceed \$15 for breakfast, \$20 for lunch, and \$40 for dinner.

Reimbursement will not be made for alcoholic beverages.

Original receipts for all individual meals must be provided. You may submit for reimbursement only your expenses. Please see Miscellaneous Expenses, below, for guidelines related to guests.

Reimbursement

Requests for reimbursement for each meal must be accompanied by a bill specifying as separate items food, alcohol, and tax. This is a requirement of the Internal Revenue Code.

- No reimbursement will be made for meals, which are provided as part of the group arrangements for a meeting.
- When full or continental breakfast is included in the hotel rate, no reimbursement will be made for room service breakfast.

MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

Transfers

Reimbursement may be denied for taxi fares when shuttle service is provided by a hotel or conference center.

Host/Hostess Gift

For a meal, or hospitality in lieu of hotel accommodations, a gift is permitted provided that its cost does not exceed that of a local restaurant (for a meal) or one night's hotel rate (for hospitality). For reimbursement, you must submit a receipt for the gift and note on it the name of the recipient.

Laundry and Valet Services

On trips of five (5) or more days, the cost of necessary laundry and valet services is reimbursable.

Business Entertainment

The traveler may be reimbursed for entertaining a guest or employee of the Church if such entertainment is for business purposes and is pre-approved by Rector/

Senior Warden. Reimbursement for meals included in entertainment expenses must be within the guidelines for individual meals.

Telecommunications

Essential personal telephone calls (e.g., to your home) and Internet access charges are reimbursable on a reasonable basis.

Other Miscellaneous Expenses

When an in-hotel health facility is not included in the base hotel room charge, reimbursement will be payable up to \$10 per day. The separate charge must be clearly identifiable.

Modest incidental tips for service do not require receipts.

Items not covered above must be submitted as a reimbursement and the same requirements for documentation apply.

TRAVEL ADVANCES

Policy

Advances for official travel are available to all employees

Obtaining a travel advance

You should submit to the Rector/Senior Warden an invoice or statement for an advance to cover reasonable expenses such as ground travel, lodging, and meals.

You should allow ten (10) working days for processing; therefore, all requests should be submitted as early as possible.

Accounting for a travel advance

Immediately, or no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after your trip, you must submit the Travel and Expense Report (specifying the amount of reimbursement due or the unused funds being returned) with the following attachments:

- A receipted hotel bill. (If you elect not to stay at the official hotel designated for a meeting, you should submit a bill from your hotel; however, you will be reimbursed only for an amount equal to the group rate at the designated official hotel).
- Receipts for all reimbursable meals, transportation, entertainment and miscellaneous expenses other than tips.

Subsequent travel advances

Subsequent requests for travel advances will not be processed until proper accounting is received for all previous advances.

REIMBURSEMENT

All receipts must include the name of the vendor, date and dollar amount.

Documentation for Reimbursement

Travelers seeking reimbursement must submit the following documentation along with their expense report:

Air/Rail

E-invoice from travel agency for air or rail.

Lodging

Complete hotel folio showing proof of payment

Car Rental

Rental car agreement including proof of payment

Meals/Entertainment

Charge/credit card receipt or cash register receipt (no restaurant tear tabs); or note indicating "\$x.00 for airplane meal" or for similar modest-priced meals when no receipt is given.

- You may charge and be reimbursed only for your own official travel. You will not be reimbursed for travel, lodging or meal expenses of a group or any other person(s).
- Because all travel reimbursement guidelines comply with the Internal Revenue Code, reimbursed out-of-pocket expenses for official travel will not be reported to the IRS as income.