



## 2-7 POLICY ON BUSINESS EXPENSES

### Policy Governing Reimbursement of Employee and Officer Travel, Meal and Lodging Expenses

#### A. **Purpose.**

The Board of Commissioners of the Sycamore Park District will reimburse employee and officer travel, meal, and lodging expenses incurred in connection with pre-approved travel, meal, and lodging expenses incurred on behalf of the Park District. Employees and officers are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses for official business as a prudent person would in spending personal funds.

#### B. **Definitions.**

"Entertainment" includes, but is not limited to, shows, amusements, theaters, circuses, sporting events, or any other place of public or private entertainment or amusement, unless ancillary to the purpose of the program or event.

"Travel" means any expenditure directly incident to official travel by employees and officers of the Park District or by wards or charges of the Park District involving reimbursement to travelers or direct payment to private agencies providing transportation or related services.

#### C. **Authorized Types of Official Business.**

Travel, meal, and lodging expenses shall be reimbursed for employees and officers of Park District only for purposes of official business conducted on behalf of the Park District, which includes but is not limited to off-site or out-of-town meetings related to official business and pre-approved seminars, conferences and other educational events related to the employee's or officer's official duties. If you are unsure whether an expense is reimbursable, please contact the Executive Director.

#### D. **Categories of Expenses.**

1. **Airfare** – Travelers are expected to obtain the lowest available airfare that reasonably meets business travel needs. Travelers are encouraged to book flights at least thirty (30) days in advance to avoid premium airfare pricing. Only coach or economy tickets will be paid or reimbursed. The traveler will pay for the difference between higher priced tickets and coach or economy tickets with his or her personal funds.
2. **Personal Automobiles** – Mileage reimbursement will be based on mileage from the work location office to the off-site location of the official business, not from the employee's or officer's residence. When attending a training event or other off-site official business directly from



an employee's or officer's residence, no reimbursement will be made if the distance is less than the mileage of a normal commute to the workplace. If the distance is higher than the employee's or officer's normal commute, reimbursement will be paid based on the differential of the commute less the mileage of a normal commute to the workplace. An employee or officer will be reimbursed at the prevailing IRS mileage rate. The traveler will only be reimbursed up to the price of a coach airfare ticket if they drive to a location for which airfare would have been less expensive.

3. **Automobile Rentals** – Travelers will be reimbursed for the cost of renting an automobile including gasoline expense only as provided in this section. Travelers using rental cars to conduct official business are required to purchase insurance through the rental agency. Car rental insurance will cover the vehicle during personal use, e.g., using the vehicle after the conference has ended. Compact or mid-size cars are required for two or fewer employees or officers traveling together and a full-size vehicle may be used for three or more travelers. The traveler must refuel the vehicle before returning it to the rental company.
4. **Public Transportation** – In the case of local training or official business where an employee or officer chooses to use public transportation, reimbursement for use of public transportation is based on mileage from the agency office to the training site (not from the traveler's residence), regardless of the transportation method chosen. When attending training or business directly from an employee's or officer's residence, no reimbursement will be made if the distance is less than the mileage of a normal commute to the workplace. If the distance is higher than the traveler's normal commute, reimbursement will pay at the differential of the commute less the mileage of a normal commute to the workplace.
5. **Other Transportation** – The traveler should utilize hotel shuttle service or other shuttle services, if available. If none are offered, the use of the most economic transportation is encouraged.
6. **Hotel/Motel Accommodations** – The traveler will be reimbursed for a standard single-room at locations convenient to the business activity. Hotel/motel accommodations are to be reserved and secured at a moderate or conference rate. Reimbursement for lodging shall be limited to the number of nights required to conduct the assigned Park District business. If a conference, for example, opens on a Sunday evening and closes Thursday noon, reimbursement for Sunday through Wednesday night would be allowed. In the event of a change in plans or a cancellation, the traveler must cancel the hotel/motel reservation so as not to incur cancellation charges. Cancellation charges will not be reimbursed by the Park District unless approved by a vote of the Board of Commissioners.



7. **Meals**—Meal reimbursement is limited to the current U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) regulations in place at the time the expense is occurred. Prior approval by the Board of Commissioners and submission of receipts are required for per diem allowances. Meals provided by the conference or seminar should be deducted from the per diem allowance. Partial reimbursement may be made for departure and return days based on time. Meals during in-state travel that is not an overnight stay will be reimbursed for actual cost not to exceed the GSA regulations.
  8. **Vacation in Conjunction with Business Travel** – In cases where vacation time is added to a business trip, any cost variance in airfare, car rental, lodging and/or any other expenses must be clearly identified on the Travel, Meal, and Lodging Expense Report form and paid by the traveler.
  9. **Accompanied Travel** – Family members may accompany the traveler when traveling on official Park District business. However, no expenses attributable to any family member will be reimbursable. All expenses will be calculated as if the traveler were traveling alone, using the minimum costs to the Park District for lodging, meals, and transportation.
  10. **Parking** – Parking fees at a hotel/motel will be reimbursed only with a receipt.
  11. **Entertainment Expenses** - No employee or officer of the Park District shall be reimbursed for any entertainment expense, unless ancillary to the purpose of the program, event, or other official business.
- E. **Approval of Expenses.**
1. **Expenses for Members of the Board of Commissioners.** Travel, meal, and lodging expenses incurred by any member of the Board of Commissioners must be approved by roll call vote at an open meeting of the governing board or corporate authorities of the local public agency.
  2. **Expenses for Officials or Employees Other than Members of the Board of Trustees.** Travel, meal, and lodging expenses incurred by any official or employee not covered by paragraph 1 (member of the Board of Commissioners) more than five-hundred dollars (\$500.00) must be previously approved in an open meeting by a majority roll-call vote of the Board of Commissioners.
  3. **Advanced Expenses.** Travel, meal, and lodging expenses advanced as a per diem to any employee or official of the Park District must be approved by roll call vote at an open meeting of the Board of Commissioners prior to payment. Documentation of expenses must be provided in accordance with Sections C, D and F of this policy, and any excess from the per diem must be repaid.



4. **Other Expenses.** All other expenses that do not fall within paragraphs E.1, E.2, or E.3 are subject to the Executive Director's approval.

**F. Documentation of Expenses.**

Before an expense for travel, meals, or lodging may be approved under Section E of this Policy, the following minimum documentation must first be submitted, in writing, to the Executive Director on a Travel, Meal, and Lodging Expense form:

- (1) an estimate of the cost of travel, meals, or lodging if expenses have not been incurred or a receipt of the cost of the travel, meals, or lodging if the expenses have already been incurred.
- (2) the name of the individual who received or is requesting the travel, meal, or lodging expense.
- (3) the job title or office of the individual who received or is requesting the travel, meal, or lodging expense; and
- (4) the date or dates and nature of the official business for which the travel, meal, or lodging expense was or will be expended.

All documents and information submitted under this Section are public records subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

**G. Travel, Meal, and Lodging Expense Report Form.**

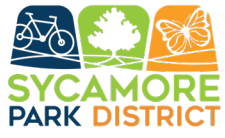
The Park District hereby adopts as its official standardized form for the submission of travel, meal, and lodging expenses the Travel, Meal, and Lodging Expense Report form attached hereto and incorporated herein as Attachment 1.

Adopted on:

Revised on:

October 2016

November 2021



**Attachment 1 and 2**