



**Health Services**  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Los Angeles County  
Board of Supervisors

November 25, 2015

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Deputy Director, Strategy and Operations

TO: Executive Staff

FROM: Mitchell H. Katz, M.D.  
Director

SUBJECT: **TRAVEL/TRAINING CONTROLS - UPDATED**

This is a summary and a follow up to previous Travel/Training controls memos to re-emphasize the current guidelines and controls and share new requirements. Please refer to the attached revised Travel and Training (T&T) Guidelines. We have summarized below the guidelines:

- Travel and Training (T&T) approval requests must be submitted to DHS Finance Administration office at least **two weeks prior** to the training date and must include proper justification, complete answers to the questions on the form, complete cost sheet estimate along with all related brochures. All forms must be approved by the respective Facility CEO and CFO as noted on the form. If a T&T request includes registration advance, it must be submitted at least **30 working days** prior to the event to allow sufficient time for a warrant to be issued by the Auditor-Controller (A-C).
- T&T forms and instructions are located on the DHS website under Forms/Department of Health Services/Finance
- Air Travel - The County will **only** reimburse air travel that is booked through a County-approved travel service agency CONCUR (the Agency) via the self-serve online system or by calling during normal hours @ (877) 454-8785 or after hours @ (800) 639-9368. If you require any last minute flight changes, please contact the Agency. The Agency bills charges for air directly to the County's Business Travel Account (BTA). If you require access to CONCUR, please speak with your facility travel coordinator.
- Travel Reservations - **All** County-related business travel (lodging, rail, bus and car rental) should be arranged through the Agency. The Agency bills charges for air, lodging, rail, bus and car rental directly to the County's BTA.
- Lodging - **All** hotel reservations must be made through the Agency except if the lodging expense is bundled up into the conference or training fee and if the rate available through the event is more economical than those attainable through the Agency. Proof of such saving must be attached to your request and clearly noted in the paperwork for consideration. Traveler shall be reimbursed up to the maximum rate allowable in the annual Travel Memo. Reservations for lodging through the Agency require the use of the employee's personal credit card and will be reimbursed when an expense claim is submitted timely. We highly discourage employees to book any accommodations prior to the receipt of an approved T&T request.

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*To ensure access to high-quality, patient-centered, cost-effective health care to Los Angeles County residents through direct services at DHS facilities and through collaboration with community and university partners.*



### **Meal Reimbursements**

- Meals – itemized **original** receipts will be required for reimbursement of approved meals, not to exceed the current rate per meal as established by Auditor-Controller. Tips on meals are not allowable and itemized receipts need to be submitted with the Expense claim. The original T&T request must also accompany your expense claim to support the reimbursement being requested.
- Expense Claim - Expense Claim forms should only reflect the cost incurred for each item (lodging, meals, capital city allowance, etc.) up to the maximum allowance and must be in line with approved T&T. A traveler must file the expense claim to their managers as soon as possible, but **no later than 2 weeks** after completing each trip. Employees must attach the approved T&T request to their expense claim to expedite review and reimbursement. It is the responsibility of the traveler to submit the claim timely and follow through to ensure approved claim is received by the respective facility office for processing.
- Mileage - Travel in Los Angeles County and the neighboring counties of Kern, Orange, San Bernardino, and Ventura will be reimbursed at the current rate as established by Auditor-Controller. All other destinations such as **San Diego, Riverside, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo** will be reimbursed at the rate of **\$0.06** per mile.
- Mileage and/or parking fees claim must be submitted to respective facility Finance within **three months** following the month in which the claim was incurred. It is the responsibility of the permittee to submit claims timely and follow through to ensure request is received by the Finance office for processing.
- Salary Only Training – If the training is to be held within LA County and/or adjacent county, approval by the DHS Finance Administration and Deputy Director Administration of Operations is not required. All training requests for Salary Only must be submitted to the responsible administrator's approval.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Manal Dudar at (213) 240-7875 or [mdudar@dhs.lacounty.gov](mailto:mdudar@dhs.lacounty.gov).

Thank you for your cooperation, assistance and diligence in complying with these policies and procedures.

MHK:ANW:md

Attachment

- c: Chief Financial Officers  
Chief Information Officers  
Chief Medical Officers  
Chief Nursing Officers  
Chief Operating Officers  
Expenditure Managers



## TRAVEL AND TRAINING GUIDELINES

### SUBMISSION OF TRAINING/TRAVEL REQUEST

All training and travel requests must be approved by the respective Facility CEO and routed to DHS Administration at least **2 weeks** prior to the event. When a travel or training request includes **Registration Advance**, it must be submitted at least **30 working days** prior to the event to allow sufficient time for a warrant to be issued by the Auditor-Controller (A-C). The Training/Travel Approval Request and Training/Travel Cost Estimate fillable forms with instructions are available on the DHS website.

### INCOMPLETE AND INACCURATE REQUESTS

Training/Travel Approval Request must be complete and include brochures related to training or meeting agenda/invitation to support the travel request. The responsible Facility CFO should ensure that the computation of all costs associated with the event is correct and that current allowable rates for lodging and meals are used. Meals which are part of the registration fees should not be included in the cost estimate. The current allowable rates can be obtained from your respective finance unit and is also available on county travel website at <http://travel.auditor.lacounty.gov/Home>.

### MULTIPLE STAFF

Careful consideration should be given when assessing the need for multiple people to attend the same event. Perhaps fewer people could represent the organization, and then share their experience and training with other staff. In addition, coordination with other DHS budget units should be facilitated whenever possible to limit the total number of DHS employees attending the same event. This will decrease Department's expenses and may also result in discounts of registration fees if registrations are coordinated and submitted as a group.

### VENDOR SPONSORED EVENTS

Considerable caution should be exercised when requesting approval to attend vendor sponsored events, especially when the vendor is willing to pay for travel, lodging and meals. Although many of these events provide useful information or training to our employees, vendors often provide these events to promote their products and services. Based on the specific costs being subsidized by the vendor, careful consideration should be given as to who should attend these events. Employees who are in a position to influence the award of contracts or Purchase Orders to vendors **must not** accept free travel, lodging or meals from these vendors.

Given the high potential for conflict of interest that could occur as the result of vendor sponsored events, all such requests must be reviewed and cleared in advance by DHS Audit and Compliance (A&C), County Counsel and, if required, the Board of Supervisors. Early submission of these requests will allow sufficient time for A&C to submit them for review by County Counsel.

Requests to attend vendor sponsored events **will not be approved retroactively**. Employees attending vendor sponsored events without approval may be required to reimburse the vendors. Employees may also be required to use their own time for the event, based on the review by DHS A&C.

## **GRANT FUNDED EVENTS**

Trips should not be taken simply because they will be reimbursed by State or Federal grant funding. All such requests should be carefully evaluated and the number of people attending should be kept to a minimum. Regardless of the funding source, all business travels should be booked through CONCUR (the Agency) or an agent from CalTravelStore.

## **OVERTIME ASSOCIATED WITH TRAVEL AND TRAINING**

Overtime that may occur as a result of traveling to or attending training sessions on a Saturday, Sunday, holiday or Regular Day Off requires prior approval in accordance with the DHS Overtime Policy. Questions regarding overtime for exempt and non-exempt employees should be addressed to your Human Resources Manager.

## **TRAINING WITHIN LOS ANGELES AND ADJACENT COUNTIES- SALARY ONLY**

For SALARY ONLY training requests, if the training is to be held within Los Angeles County and/or adjacent counties, approval by the DHS Finance Administration or the Deputy Director Administration Operations is not required. All training requests, for SALARY ONLY, must be submitted to the responsible Facility CEO. The employee shall receive **no** other reimbursement for such travel.

## **TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE CONTINENTAL U.S.**

Travel outside the Continental U.S., even if the request is for SALARY ONLY, is not allowed unless approved in advance by the Director of Health Services. Any such request must provide the intended itinerary and a justification as to the purpose and necessity of the trip. The justification should, at a minimum, explain how the Department will benefit from the trip.

## **TRAVEL RESERVATIONS**

On November 01, 2011, the Board of Supervisors mandated that all County-related business travel be arranged through a County-approved travel service agency.

Departments must ensure that travelers have an **approved Training/Travel Request** before making a reservation. Travelers should use the self-service online system (the Agency) to make travel reservations whenever possible. To access the online system, traveler should have a profile set up by the Facility Travel Administrator. Live Travel Store agents are available for assistance on complex travel arrangements and can be reached during normal business hours @ 877-454-8785, and after-hours for emergency assistance @ 800-639-9368 but for higher transaction fees.

## **AIR TRAVEL**

The county will only reimburse air travel that is booked through the Agency. Should an airline delay necessitate an overnight stay, the traveler must attempt to secure complimentary lodging from the airline. Traveler must notify the Agency if they need to cancel travel reservations. The Agency will refund the cost of refundable tickets, and may be able to obtain a partial refund or change non-refundable tickets for use by another traveler. To ensure proper credit is issued, travelers must notify the A-C of any cancellations at [CountyTravelManager@auditor.lacounty.gov](mailto:CountyTravelManager@auditor.lacounty.gov).



County business travelers are required to travel in Coach/Economy class and any exceptions must be approved in advance by the Deputy Director of Administration Operations. Travelers may elect to upgrade at their own cost, and are personally responsible for reimbursing the department for additional costs. Each respective facility must ensure that all upgrades were approved, and/or collect reimbursement from the employee.

County Travelers are expected to minimize travel costs to the County by taking advantage of any reasonable discounts, or accepting alternate schedules. The Agency can help travelers select itineraries that meet the County's Lowest Logical Airfare definition. Travelers are required to provide justification for not selecting the lowest logical airfare. However, the County does not expect travelers to be unreasonably inconvenienced in order to reduce the costs.

All County business travelers whose tickets were purchased through the Agency automatically receive travel accident and baggage insurance. The County will NOT reimburse expenses for additional travel insurance.

Most airlines offer discounted airfares when travel includes a Saturday night stay. Request for extended stays beyond the date of the event, or arrival before the event begins, at County expense for lodging and meals, should only be allowed on the condition that the flight savings will be greater than the cost of the additional meals and lodging. These extended stays are optional to the employee, and are not a requirement for approval of the trip. For additional information, contact your respective finance unit.

### **GROUND TRANSPORTATION**

Travelers may rent a car at their destination when it is less expensive than other transportation (ex. taxi, airport shuttle), or if the nature of travel requires it. All rental car reservations must be made with the Agency.

When travelling alone, travelers should book mid-size cars or smaller, based on the need. Travelers are required to provide reason for exception. Travelers should decline prepaid fuel if offered by the rental agency.

Travelers are responsible for cancelling rental car reservations, and must contact the Agency or rental Car Company directly. Travelers should request and record the cancellation number in case of billing disputes.

Travelers may use rail and bus transportation when necessary to complete business travel, or if they prefer it to air travel. Reservation must be made through the Agency. Departmental management is responsible for authorizing rail and bus transportation. The traveler's choice of transportation method should not result in increased costs to the County or additional time away from work.

Employees traveling to the same location should share ground transportation to and from airport whenever possible. The most economical mode of transportation should be used to and from airports, bus, and rail terminals.

## **LODGING**

Hotel reservations must be made through the Agency, and must be secured with a personal or corporate credit card. Exceptions to this requirement are:

1. If the lodging expense is bundled into a conference or training fee; and
2. If a lodging rate available through the event is more economical than those attainable through the Agency.

Traveler shall be reimbursed at a maximum rate allowable in the annual Travel Memo. However, employees attending a conference will be reimbursed for receipted lodging, plus taxes, when lodging is contracted by the conference sponsor for the event, and the appointing authority has granted prior approval for attendance and lodging at the contracted rate at the designated hotel. The county CEO is considered the appointing authority for granting approval in these instances. An exemption letter must be attached to your T&T request.

Travelers are responsible for any non-business related spending (ex., room service, pay per view entertainment, spa, etc.) beyond the basic lodging expense. Travelers are responsible for cancelling hotel rooms and must contact both the Agency and the hotel before the cancellation period ends. Travelers will not be reimbursed for any fees charged by the hotel for late cancellation of "no-show", unless the employee can document circumstances outside his/her control.

## **MEALS**

Itemized original receipts will be required for reimbursement of approved meals, not to exceed the current rate per meal as established by A-C and is also subject to the facilities discretion to reduce the amount. Tips on meals are not allowed for reimbursement.

## **ONE-DAY TRIPS**

Meals shall not be allowed in the County of Los Angeles or on one-day trips to neighboring counties of Kern, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura.

## **CAPITAL CITY ALLOWANCE**

The Capital City Allowance, per County Code Section 5.40.090 (a), is intended to reimburse additional lodging and meal expenses associated with traveling to capital and primary cities such as Sacramento, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Miami, Minneapolis, New York, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Riverside, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington D.C. The Capital City Allowance is only claimable to the extent incurred (actual itemized receipts required), and not claimable for travel to any other cities, unless approved in advance by the A-C or CEO. To receive the Capital City Allowance, travelers must have been required for business purposes, to be physically present in a designated primary and capital city for a portion of the day the Allowance is claimed. An updated list of qualified cities and their respective allowances is provided yearly by the A-C, and can be obtained from your respective finance unit, Fiscal Services, or from county travel website: <http://travel.auditor.lacounty.gov/Home>.



## **MILEAGE/PARKING FEES**

The Los Angeles County Code, Sections 5.40.190- 5.40.290, provides for the reimbursement for mileage and parking fees incurred by County employees who used their private vehicles while on County business and who are not Transportation Allowance Program participants.

Travel in Los Angeles County and the neighboring counties of Kern, Orange, San Bernardino, and Ventura will be reimbursed at the current rate as established by Auditor-Controller.

For other destinations (San Diego, Riverside, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo), traveling expenses shall not exceed the following:

1. The actual cost of transportation (receipts required) when using public carrier;
2. If privately owned vehicle is used, at a rate of **\$0.06** per mile or the equivalent of the fare via the most appropriate public carrier;
3. If to a destination outside the state and more than 500 miles from headquarters, the equivalent of the fare via the most appropriate carrier.

Mileage or parking fees claim should be submitted **within three months** following the end of the month in which the claim was incurred. The hard-copy claim form must be submitted to the department's mileage clerk. Mileage Claims must be verified for accuracy and approved by the employee's supervisor and/or by the person designated by the department head. The Mileage Claim Form is available on the DHS website.

## **EXPENSE CLAIM**

Expense Claim Forms should reflect only the actual cost incurred for each item (e.g. lodging, meals, capital city allowance, etc.) up to the maximum allowance. Itemized original receipts are required for reimbursement. A traveler must file an expense claim as soon as possible, but **no later than two weeks** after completing each trip.