

# Chapter 15 - Employee Training and Travel

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## 15.1 Training and Travel Expenses

It is the policy of the City of Arkansas City to provide employees educational and training opportunities to improve their skills and capabilities as may be appropriate for their duties and responsibilities.

When training (including classes, seminars, conferences or college courses) is required by the City Manager or an employee's department/division head, expenses associated with those training opportunities will be paid by the City according to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), Internal Revenue Service (IRS) guidelines and this Employee Training and Travel policy.

### 15.1.a. Travel

Occasionally performance of official City business will necessitate travel by City employees. Any amount of time you spend driving or traveling on official City business will be paid time.

### 15.1.b. Travel/Training Time and Regularly Scheduled Work Shift

All non-exempt employees (except those whose overtime hours are measured by Work Periods) will be paid the greater of all travel and/or training time or their Regularly Scheduled Work Shift, whichever is greater. This will be measured within the Work Week.

All employees whose overtime hours are measured by Work Periods will be paid the greater of all travel and/or training time or their Regularly Scheduled Work Shift, whichever is greater. This will be measured within the Work Period.

Please note only time worked will be included in the Overtime Pay threshold.

### 15.1.c. Definitions

1. Authorized Travel – Travel outside of City limits that is directly relevant to, and necessary for, the successful accomplishment of, legitimate City requirements (i.e., official City business).
2. Authorized Individuals – Individuals who are either performing official City business or representing the City in some fashion.
3. Reimbursable Mileage Rate – IRS business standard mileage rate in effect at the time of Authorized Travel.
4. Purchasing Card – Any card or other similar item or arrangement which authorizes credit purchases by an employee in the name of the City of Arkansas City.
5. Reimbursable Expenses – Only those expenses for which City funds will be used for reimbursement.
6. Travel Approving Official - Person authorized to approve travel and related expenses. For this policy, the Travel Approving Official will be the department/division head. If the Authorized Individual is a department/division head, the Travel Approving Official will be the City Manager.

### 15.1.d. Approval Process

Any Authorized Individual intending to travel on official City business shall request approval from their Travel Approving Official prior to the planned departure date.

#### **15.1.e. Authorized Expenses**

1. Transportation costs (specified below) for out of town meetings, conferences and seminars; and,
2. Lodging for approved overnight business-related functions as detailed below; and,
3. Actual meal expenses for official City business when traveling out of town as explained below; and, incidental travel related expenses such as tolls, parking, etc.

#### **15.1.f. Unauthorized Expenses**

1. Alcohol; and,
2. Appetizers unless ordered as a meal; and,
3. Snacks; and,
4. Personal expenses; and,
5. Expenses for family members or others; and,
6. Entertainment expenses such as tickets to concerts, plays, sporting events, etc.; and/or tips.

#### **15.1.g. Means of Transportation**

Employees needing to travel may use the following means of transportation:

1. City Vehicle – Employees without assigned City Vehicles may request a City Vehicle for business-related travel. City Vehicle issuance is based on availability and shall be approved by the department/division head that has responsibility for the assigned vehicle.
2. Commercial Carrier – The allowable expense is economy or tourist class if by air; first class day coach if by train. When possible, commercial travel should be planned far enough in advance to take advantage of reduced fares. Under no circumstances will an airline be selected, or route established, solely for the purpose of accruing airline bonus points.
3. Private Vehicle - Rates for reimbursement will be the Reimbursable Mileage Rate (IRS business standard). Mileage will be determined by the usually traveled, most direct route in accordance with figures obtained by Google Maps or Map Quest applications. If approved, this use of a Private Vehicle may be selected but reimbursement will be limited to cost of the most economical mode of transportation available (i.e., limited to the total cost of reimbursable mileage to airport, airport parking, airfare, etc.).
4. Rental Vehicle – Rental Vehicles may be authorized if their use is the most economical option either traveling to and from or at an authorized event.
5. Other Travel-Related Expenses - Other business expenses directly attributed to City related travel such as public transportation, baggage fee, airport parking, taxi/bus fares, tolls and parking fees are allowed as long as receipts detailing the charges are provided.

Please note mileage will not be reimbursed for travel within the City limits of the City of Arkansas City.

#### **15.1.h. Lodging**

The City may pay lodging costs associated with attendance at an authorized business meeting, seminar or conference. Reimbursement will be for the best available room rate.

Phone calls and internet access charges on the hotel bill will be deducted unless identified as to who was called and the nature of City business conducted.

#### **15.f.i. Meal Expense**

Meals will be paid or reimbursed for actual cost (including tip not to exceed fifteen percent (15%)).

Expenses for meals associated with a training seminar or meeting within the City limits of Arkansas City will not be reimbursed.

When overnight stay is not required but an employee's travel extends their Regularly Scheduled Work Shift by three (3) hours, the employee will be provided with one (1) meal.

An itemized, original receipt must be submitted for reimbursement. The receipt must identify name and address of restaurant, date and itemized purchases.

Meal purchases must be done with good judgement and proper discretion. Employees are encouraged to use the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) guidelines for acceptable expenses. Under no circumstance shall the amount exceed GSA guidelines for the area.

### **15.2 Certification/License Testing**

When attempting Certification/License Testing (job requirement) the City will reimburse the employee for the cost of (1) the first attempt (pass or fail) and (2) the final successful attempt at testing. The expense for all other attempts will need to be paid by the employee.