

## TRAVEL/TIP REIMBURSEMENT POLICIES

This policy applies to all city employees and/or elected city officials who may have reasons to travel out of town on official city business. No expenses shall be reimbursed unless travel is authorized and approved in advance by department head and/or Mayor of the Town of Ashland City.

### **1. Transportation**

- a. Air Transportation:** The city will pay for regular class or business class air travel as a general rule and will only pay for first class travel where the need is clearly indicated and approved in advance. Air travel will be utilized when the distance involved in the travel indicated is the mode travel of more economical.
- b. City Vehicles:** If a city vehicle is generally available and does not otherwise interfere with the regular utilization of said vehicle, it should be used in lieu of a personal/private automobile. Arrangements for these vehicles should be made in advance through the appropriate department head. Proof of actual gasoline purchase must be presented for reimbursement.
- c. Private Automobile:** The use of a private automobile for travel on official business may be authorized by department head, but only with the concurrence of the Mayor of the city. The Department Head or Mayor shall be notified prior to the employee's use of his/her personal vehicle for city business. Authorized to use their personal vehicles, employees shall be reimbursed *at the current federal per mile reimbursement rate* for actual miles driven. Only mileage on official business may be claimed; from origin to destination of official business and return by the most direct route, together with the mileage incurred at the destination. The cost of other related expenses, such as tolls, parking, and other vehicular expenses will be reimbursed.
- d. Non-Reimbursable Vehicular Expenses:** The employee will NOT be reimbursed for any fines, traffic violations, or parking tickets incurred while on official business.
- e. Rental Vehicles Associated with Air Travel:** The cost of a rental vehicle will be paid for by the city, if and when reasonably incurred by the employee as a result of traveling by air to the destination. Rental car authorization must be AUTHORIZED IN ADVANCE by the department head and the Mayor. The City Recorder must also be notified in advance of the anticipated travel. Receipts for the cost of rental cars should accompany the request for reimbursement.
- f. Other Considerations:** The selected mode of travel will be based on the best interest of the city. Additional factors to be considered in determining the most economical mode of transportation will include distance, length of travel time, salary, fuel, meals, etc.

### **2. Lodging**

Reimbursement for lodging will be based upon the locality, purpose of travel, and availability of accommodations. Lodging shall be approved in advance of securing reservations by the department head/Mayor/City Recorder. A signed receipt from the place of lodging is required for appropriate reimbursement.

### **3. Meal Cost and Allowances**

The meals and incidentals will be paid out the rate that has been established on the GSA website [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). This is intended to cover the costs of a single days' worth of meals and incidental costs (such as tips and parking). Generally, the applicable

maximum per diem rate for each calendar day of travel shall be determined by the location of lodging for the traveler. Receipts are not necessary. If meals and incidentals should be in excess of this rate the employee will be responsible for the difference between the per diem rate and total cost submitted.

For officials attending the annual Tennessee Municipal League meeting, National League of Cities meeting or other official conferences of the city, reimbursement of meals in excess of the per diem will require receipts to be submitted with the travel form.

#### **4. Miscellaneous Expenditures**

- a. Expenditures of a personal nature, movie theaters, etc. will not be approved for reimbursement.
- b. All registration fees for employee/officials attending approved workshops, seminars, conventions, and other business meetings will be allowed, including cost of any breakfast, luncheon, banquet or other associated meeting programs.
- c. NO expense of spouses or related parties accompanying the employee/official on travel will be reimbursed.
- d. An individual combining travel on official city business and travel for another organization or for personal reasons will be reimbursed ONLY for the appropriate part of the city's costs. The basis for reimbursement will be arranged in advance of travel.
- e. BEFORE traveling, a "Request to Travel" form must be filled in and submitted to the department head/Mayor/City Recorder for approval. This form combines a request for travel advance and authorization to travel, which must be granted in each case.
- f. A travel advance shall not be granted more than **five (5)** working days prior to travel. Such request must be made **five (5)** days in advance to allow for processing and approval. Upon return from travel, an employee/official shall submit a completed expense report within twenty (20) days detailing actual expenditures due for reimbursement. The city will pay travel expenses promptly upon receipt of completed travel expense report.
- g. It is recognized that individual departments may have requirements, or policies which apply to that department's travel. These may apply to such things as the Tennessee Law Enforcement Academy or other special training programs which employees may be required to attend from time to time. Any special department policy applicable to travel is authorized upon approval of the City Council.

Violation of the travel rules can result in disciplinary action for employees. Travel fraud can result in criminal prosecution of officials and/or employees.