



## EFFINGHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### Human Resources Standards of Practice

Standards of Practice: <b>Section 2.15</b>	Issue Date: 11/21/2023 New ____ Revised <u>X</u> ____ Supersedes Policy Dated: 6/15/2021
Title: <b>Travel, Employment and Board of Commissioners Expenses</b>	Approved By Effingham County Board of Commissioners

### 2.15 - TRAVEL, EMPLOYMENT AND BOARD OF COMMISSIONER EXPENSES

#### **A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform expense guidelines for board members, elected **and appointed officials**, employees, and approved volunteers (representing Effingham County). These guidelines will govern all allowed expenses, reimbursements, allowances, and advances for any travel, or other business expenses, which are incurred only when conducting County business as required by the Board of Commissioners.

#### **B. STANDARD**

1. All out-of-County travel by allowed participants shall be reimbursed/advanced only after proper and prior authorization has been obtained. To receive authorization, a Travel/ Expense Form must be completed and submitted for approval.

a. All travel and other County business expenses must be approved by the Department Head (where appropriate) and the County Manager and/or Chairman. The County Manager may refer major travel and expenses (over \$500 – estimated) to the Chairman for joint review.

2. The County will only pay/reimburse the cost of a single room, single coach class airfare, single meals, etc., unless specific advance approval is obtained from the County Manager and/or the Chairman.

3. Advanced per diem payments are authorized at the discretion of the County Manager and/or the Commissioners.

#### **C. GUIDELINES**



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The following list of expenses is allowable for reimbursement/advancement by Effingham County, if they are actually incurred/were caused while conducting County business.

1. **Transportation:**

1. Air Travel – Coach class airfare may be paid/reimbursed for travel to locations of more than 200 miles in distance.

2. Vehicle Travel – The actual expense of any gas and oil will be paid/reimbursed, based on actual receipts, when using a county vehicle. If a County vehicle is not available, a private auto may be used only with prior approval (see above). Mileage will be paid/reimbursed at the current federal allowance for the official County miles only. All persons are encouraged to travel in groups, in order to reduce expenses.

a. Any person operating any County vehicle must possess a current valid driver's license, and is required to report any occurrences affecting their driving record, or the validity of their license, to their Department Head prior to reserving a vehicle.

b. To ensure availability of an automobile, County staff and Commissioners must schedule the use of all county vehicles with the appropriate Department Head or the County Manager.

2. **Lodging:** Payments/reimbursements will be allowed for the actual cost of adequate lodging, only if valid hotel/motel receipts accompany the travel/expense form. Lodging will not be reimbursed if the site of the meeting/business is less than 100 miles from Effingham County. If there is a special event within 100 miles, and lodging is requested, specific advance approval by the County Manager and/or the Chairman must be obtained. Each person shall be responsible for filing the proper tax exemption forms at the time of check-in.

3. **Meals and miscellaneous:** The cost of related miscellaneous items such as tips, cab or shuttles fares and parking expenses may be paid/reimbursed based on

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submittal of actual receipts, and only after proper and prior authorization has been obtained. Receipts must be attached to the completed travel/expense form.

1. *Per Diem* allowance – Expenses shall be paid/reimbursed based on Per Diem Rates determined through the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Website (<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>). ~~Partial days shall be prorated on this website as well.~~ If travel is required before 7 a.m., then breakfast will be paid; if travel is required after 7 p.m., then dinner will be paid. If policies herein prove inadequate, then flexibility can be permitted, but only upon the specific advance approval of the County Manager or Chairman.

2. Guests, including, but not limited to representatives of companies, local state or federal dignitaries (and their guest) may be entertained on occasion, when it is deemed to be necessary official County business. Guests do not include family or personal guests.

3. If meals are provided as part of the registration fee for conventions, seminars, schools, or association meetings, *or if meals are provided by other parties arranged in advance (such as vendors, other municipalities, or organizations), then the per diem allowance will be adjusted accordingly. Additionally, if the hotel provides a hot breakfast (not a continental breakfast) included with the cost of the room(s), the per diem will also be adjusted accordingly. Purchasing Cards (P-Cards) are not to be used for charging meals when traveling unless sponsoring a meal on behalf of the County.*

4. **Registration fees:** Fees charged for registration at any convention, seminar, school or association meeting are allowable for reimbursement. Registration fees should be paid in advance (directly to the vendor), so that the County may take advantage of any discounts for early registration. Requests for advances to pay fees must be accompanied by the registration form.

5. **Advances:** A cash advance can be obtained for items other than registration fees when, in the opinion of the County Manager and/or Chairman, payment would be a hardship for those traveling on County business. All portions of



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the advance request form must be completed before it is submitted for approval to the County Manager and/or Chairman.

#### 6. **Forms:**

1. The Travel/Expense form is to be used for travel and related expenses. All portions of the form must be completed prior to its submission to the County Manager and/or Chairman for approval.

2. All other travel or other expenses for which County reimbursement is claimed must be reported on the Travel/Expense form. To obtain reimbursement for travel expenses, the ~~completed and signed travel packet form~~ must be submitted to the ~~Purchasing~~ Accounts Payable Department ~~within five (5) days of return from travel~~ no later than 14 calendar days prior to travel, but does not guarantee per diem to be paid in advance. Advancement on per diem is a **courtesy and not a requirement**. To obtain reimbursement for all other expenses, the ~~form~~ ~~completed and signed travel packet~~ must be submitted within thirty (30) days of incurring the expense. All receipts, ticket stubs and vendor documentation that support the payment/reimbursement request must be attached to the travel/expense form. All attached items should be in original form, if possible.