



TRAVEL & EXPENSE POLICY
FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ADOPTED: _____

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SECTION 1: AUTHORITY

Florida Statutes, Section 112.061

SECTION II: OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE

To establish regulations and procedures for the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners, employees and authorized persons where authorized travel is necessary and reimbursement is requested. The purpose for this detailed policy is to provide the individuals traveling on official County matters and/or business an effective policy and procedures that comply with Florida Statutes while effectively minimizing the County's travel costs without unfairly burdening the individual traveler.

SECTION III: DEFINITIONS

Elected Officials – County Commissioners.

Appointed Officials – County Coordinator.

Department Head, Agency Head – The highest decision making authority for the specific County Department or Agency as identified by the County Commission.

Employees – All other employees of the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners.

Authorized Person – A person, other than a public officer or employee, who is authorized to incur travel expenses in the performance of the County's official duties, such as a consultant or contractor, a volunteer, or a candidate for an executive or professional position.

Official Headquarters – The location where the employee is assigned to work except that: the official headquarters of a person located in the field shall be the location(s) nearest to the area where the majority of his/her work is performed, or such other location(s) as may be designated by the department head; provided that, in all cases, such destination must be in the best interests of the department and not the convenience of the person. When appropriate, the department head may assign an employee more than one official headquarters.

Point of Origin – The geographic location of the traveler's official headquarters or the geographic location where travel begins, whichever is lesser distance from the destination.

Traveler – Elected official, appointed official, department head, agency head, employee, and anyone else who is authorized to travel on official, County business.

Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expense – The form adopted by the Board of County Commissioners and to be utilized by all staff and officials subject to this travel policy. The form shall be subject to future amendment and revisions pursuant to Commission instruction and requirements of Florida Statutes.

SECTION IV: SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

Travel expenses shall be limited to those expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of a public purpose authorized by law to be performed by the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners and must be within limitations described herein and in Chapter 112.061, Florida Statutes, and is in the best interest of the County. This policy applies to all travel as defined in Section VI for any purpose and for which reimbursement will be claimed by officials, employees, and authorized persons of the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners. Such persons are eligible to travel in the conduct of County business or to attend meetings, conferences, conventions, and training sessions for the benefit of the County, at County expense, pursuant to proper authorization prescribed herein. Reimbursement for travel expenses incurred for the purpose of obtaining certifications required for continued employment with Franklin County can be allowable expenses, provided appropriate advance authorization is obtained.

Candidates for employment with Franklin County will be covered under this policy when the Director of Administrative Services or the County Commission deems it to be in the best interest of the County. In addition, consultant travel which is not covered within the scope of the consultant's contract and which is billed separately to the County on a cost reimbursement basis must receive prior approval and will be reimbursed in accordance with this policy. Further, travel by members of volunteer boards and committees in the performance of the County's official duties must receive prior approval in order to be eligible for travel expense reimbursement. When volunteers receive prior approval, the approval will state the terms of reimbursement. Where no specific terms are listed, travel expenses incurred by volunteer on pre-authorized travel will be reimbursed in accordance with this policy.

SECTION V: EXCEPTIONS

Any exceptions or unusual circumstances not provided for in this policy must be documented and will be subject to review and approval by the Board of County Commissioners or designee.

SECTION VI: TYPES OF TRAVEL

- A. Class "A" Travel: continuous travel for a period of 24 hours or more out of the County. The travel day for Class "A" travel shall be a calendar day (midnight to midnight).
- B. Class "B" Travel: continuous travel of less than 24 hours which involved overnight absences out of the County. The travel day for Class "B" travel shall begin at the same time as the travel period. Class A and Class B travel shall include an assignment of official business outside of regular office hours and away from regular places of employment when it is considered necessary to stay overnight and for which travel expenses are approved.
- C. Class "C" Travel: travel for short or day trips where the traveler is not away from his or her official headquarters overnight. No allowance for meals shall be made for day travel.

SECTION VII: TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

All travel will be conducted pursuant to authorized annual budget allocations. Prior to incurring any Class A or Class B travel expenses for which reimbursement or cash advance is requested, it shall be approved by the County Commission or designee as set forth below. Routine day travel which is included in the annual budget allocation for travel does not need prior authorization and should be reimbursed in accordance with Section X of this policy.

Authority for approval of Class A, Class B, and Class C travel is designated as follows:

Elected Officials:

Travel of individual County Commissioners shall be approved in advance, whenever possible, by the Board of County Commissioners at a regularly scheduled Board meeting. In cases where travel cannot be reviewed and approved prior to the trip, it shall be on the agenda within two meetings following the conclusion of the travel and ratified by the Commissioners thereafter.

Appointed Officials:

Travel of the Director of Administrative Services shall be approved by the Board of County Commissioners. In cases where that travel cannot be reviewed and approved prior to the trip, it shall be approved by the Chairman of the County Commission.

Department Head/Agency Head:

Department/Agency Head's travel must be approved by the County Coordinator or the County Commission.

Employees:

Employees' travel must be approved by their department head.

Other Authorized Persons:

Volunteers and other authorized persons not previously described in this section, traveling for the purpose of performing official duties of the County, must have their travel authorized, in advance, by the department head from whose budget the travel expenses will be paid and County Coordinator OR the County Commission.

The following guidelines shall be used when approving requests for travel:

Funds are available in the budget.

A determination is made that a public purpose is achieved in taking the trip.

SECTION VIII: TRAVEL ADVANCES

County travelers, including elected and appointed officials and employees, may obtain travel advances for advance payment of travel expenses upon completion and approval of the Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses. Advances should not be sought for amounts less than \$100 unless an explanation of the necessity for the advance is provided.

Upon completion of the travel, all travel advances should be settled within ten (10) working days of return from traveling. No advances for additional trips shall be given until all prior advances have been settled and accuracy attested. Failure to settle advances promptly may result in disciplinary action and/or deduction through payroll.

It is the responsibility of the authorizing department to ensure that the traveler complies with this section of the policy. The department is responsible obtaining Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses for employees and the County Coordinator is responsible for obtaining the forms for the elected officials. Exceptions to this section of the policy may be made upon written justification of circumstances which necessitates multiple advances.

SECTION IX: PREPAYMENT OF CHARGES

Officials and employees should utilize the county-issued credit card for items such as airline tickets, lodging, car rental, shuttle services, and registration/conference fees, as this is the preferred method of payment. Employees may request prepayment of these items by issuance of a check upon receiving the proper approvals. Requests should be submitted to the County Clerk's Finance Office ten (10) working days prior to the date that payment is needed when possible and upon submission of the required forms. The requirements in Section VIII and Section X for filing Travel Expense Reports and settling advances apply regardless of payment method.

SECTION X: REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

If an advancement is received, within ten (10) days of completing authorized travel, travelers must sign the confirmation section of the Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expense. The Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expense should reflect the name of the traveler, the cost of the trip, including all advances and direct payments made. The traveler must sign and date the Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expense. Travelers will attest to the accuracy of the form for the actual travel performed. Persons who submit falsified reports are subject to termination. The completed Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expense must then be reviewed, approved, and signed by the appropriate department head or their designee. The form is then forwarded to the County Clerk's Finance Office for final review and processing. If the County is due a return of funds from a travel advance, a check payable to Franklin County should be attached to the Voucher.

The following describes allowable expenses and the documentation required. In general, where receipts are required, original receipts should be submitted. If an original receipt is not available, an explanation must be included on the Travel Expense Report. Further, a copy of the meeting/conference/convention/training agenda, when one is provided, must be attached to the Travel Expense Report. When one is not provided, this should be indicated on the form.

Any changes or additions to the cost of the travel made after the Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expense is approved must be explained in the confirmation section of the Voucher.

A. Meals and Per Diem

1. Travel outside the County/State in order to conduct bona fide County business shall be reimbursed by the following method pursuant to most current Travel and Per Diem Resolution adopted by the Board of County Commissioners:

Lodging: Actual Cost

Mileage: Standard Mileage Rate established by the Internal Revenue Service on January 1st of each year.

Meals: **Breakfast:** When travel begins before 7:00 a.m. and extends beyond 8:00 a.m. - **\$8.00**

Lunch: When travel begins before 12:00 noon and extends beyond 2:00 p.m. - **\$12.00**

Dinner: When travel begins before 5:00 p.m. and extends beyond 7:00 p.m., OR when travel occurs during nighttime hours due to special assignment - **\$26.00**

2. A County traveler shall not be reimbursed for a meal or lodging included in a convention or conference registration fee paid by the County unless an exception is stated, reviewed and deemed permissible under Florida Statute. A continental breakfast provided as part of the conference/convention registration fee is considered breakfast and may not be claimed for reimbursement. An evening reception or other function that serves only hors d'oeuvres is not considered dinner and the traveler is entitled to seek reimbursement for dinner. However, should the conference/convention registration fee include the provision of any lunches or dinners, these meals may not be claimed for reimbursement.
3. When a meal is provided by a hotel or an airline, the traveler is not allowed to claim the meal for reimbursement.
4. The county should pay directly for lodging. If it is not possible for the county to pay directly, reimbursement will be limited to actual costs. For conferences and conventions, the rate is provided in advance. An itemized hotel receipt must be submitted to claim reimbursement (a credit card receipt is not sufficient). Sales tax on lodging if paid will not be reimbursed. All other reimbursable expenses, such as parking, should be properly listed on the travel reimbursement voucher.
5. When traveling within Florida and not utilizing the Franklin County credit card, an advance check for lodging should be requested from the Clerk's Finance Office and picked up by the traveler to bring on the trip in order to qualify for a sales tax exemption. The traveler must also take a copy of the County's tax exempt certificate. No sales tax will be reimbursed for Florida accommodations that should have been tax exempt.
6. When lodging, transportation and/or meals are paid or provided by any federal, state, or local governmental agency, the traveler shall be reimbursed only for the actual expenses paid by the traveler. Traveler shall not submit request for expenses not paid and/or advanced or reimbursed by another governmental entity.

B. Transportation

Employees must use the most efficient and economical means of travel, which is determined using the following criteria: the nature of the business; the time of the traveler, the impact on productivity of the traveler, the cost of transportation, and projected per diem expenditures; the number of persons making the trip as well as the amount of any equipment or materials that may need to be transported.

- Airline Travel – Coach Fare, by the route and/or rate best suited for the interest of the County, is allowed and must be documented by a paid receipt. Should a traveler select a different route and/or rate, for their own benefit, reimbursement will be limited to the Coach Fare, by the route and/or rate, determined by what is in the best interest of the County. Reimbursement of first class air fare is specifically limited to trips under emergency conditions when coach accommodations are not available. In those instances where an electronic airline ticket was purchased, documentation should include a copy of the traveler's itinerary, identifying the purchase of the airline ticket, or a separate paid receipt for the airline ticket. Preferred method of payment is the Franklin County Credit Card.
- County-Owned Vehicles – When available, county-owned vehicles may be used for travel. Receipts for expenses must be presented.
- Private Vehicle – Use of a private car for travel is authorized. A traveler using his/her privately owned vehicle will be reimbursed at the most current IRS rate in effect on the date(s) of travel. All mileage shall be shown from point of origin to point of destination. Road and bridge tolls may be claimed in addition to mileage upon presentation of receipts. Vicinity mileage necessary for the conduct of official business is allowable but must be listed separately on the reimbursement request and the purpose explained.
- Train or Bus – Travelers must use the most economical accommodations on short trips, not involving overnight travel. On longer trips, travelers are entitled to comfortable single accommodations. However, in no case will reimbursement exceed the rate of Coach fare for air travel to the destination, except under emergency conditions.
- Taxi, Public Transportation, Parking and Car Rental – The actual costs incurred for normal use of taxi, public transportation and parking are reimbursable upon proper documentation and presentment of receipt. Car rental expense is reimbursable, but only when prior approval is obtained and a receipt is attached. However, a County approved traveler should not purchase collision-damage waivers when renting a car, as the County's self-insured program is adequate to cover claims. The purchase of "Personal Accident Insurance" by a traveler is also non-reimbursable as employees on authorized business are covered under Workman's Compensation. The state contract for car rental providers should be used whenever possible. Please contact your department head for preferred state rental car vendors and associated discount rates. Expenses incurred for collision-damage waivers or personal accident insurance will not be reimbursed unless prior approval of an exception is granted.

C. Telephone , Fax and Internet Charges

Only the cost of business calls, faxes, and internet access charges with a stated business purpose are reimbursable. "Collect" calls to County offices are acceptable when required.

D. Registration Fees

Fees for registration, including meals and other programmed events sponsored by the conference or convention organization, should be paid with a county issued credit card whenever possible. Optional fees for recreation and/or entertainment activities associated with a conference or convention are not reimbursable. Fees for non-county officials or non-county employees (e.g., family members) to participate in activities are not reimbursable.

E. Miscellaneous

Any other necessary expense, not otherwise provided for, but incurred for the benefit of the County, must appear together with identification on the Travel Expense Report form. The amount should be reasonable, and, whenever possible, the traveler should obtain and attach receipts to the expense report to substantiate miscellaneous expenditures.

SECTION XI: LOCAL MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT (CLASS C)

Reimbursement for local mileage shall be submitted on the Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses form and shall specify:

- the date of the travel
- the origin
- the destination
- the number of miles traveled
- the purpose of the travel
- the amount requested for reimbursement

If the expenses being requested for reimbursement pertain to use of a privately owned vehicle, the reimbursement amount is calculated by multiplying the number of miles traveled by the most current IRS mileage allowance. No receipts are required.

If the expenses being requested for reimbursement pertain to use of a County vehicle, receipts for actual expenses for fuel or tolls must be attached.

The Travel Reimbursement Form shall be submitted monthly and must be signed by the employee requesting the reimbursement and the appropriate department head or designee, to include the Director of Administrative Services.

XII: IMPROPER CLAIMS

Florida Statutes, Section 112.061(10), states “any person who willfully makes and subscribes any such claim which he or she does not believe to be true and correct as to every material matter, or who willfully aids or assists in, or procures, counsels, or advises the preparation or presentation under the provisions of this section of a claim which is fraudulent or is false as to any material matter, whether or not such falsity or fraud is with the knowledge or consent of the person authorized or required to present such claim, is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.” Whoever shall receive an allowance or reimbursement by means of a false claim shall be civilly liable in the amount of the overpayment for the reimbursement of the public fund from which the claim was paid.

DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 2020.

Chairman

Franklin County Commission

ATTEST:

Marcia M. Johnson, Clerk of Court

SAMPLE VOUCHER FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSE
FILLABLE FORM AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

FRANKLIN COUNTY		Traveler: _____				Date Prepared: _____											
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS		Is this payment an advance? Circle Yes or No				Title of Traveler: _____											
VOUCHER FOR REIMB. OF TRAVEL EXPENSE		If payment is an advance, complete certification within 10 days of return				Dept: _____											
Date mm/dd/yy	Travel Performed From Point of Origin To Destination / Other	Purpose or Reason	Hour of Departure or Return	Meals for Class A & B Travel	Actual Lodging Expenses	Class C Meals	Map Mileage Claimed @ \$.575/Mile	Other Expenses Amount/Type									
						M. Total	0.00										
I hereby certify or affirm that the above expenses were actually incurred by me as a necessary travel expenses in the performance of my official duties; attendance at a conference or convention was directly related to official duties of the agency; any meals or lodging included in a conference or convention registration fee have been deducted from this travel claim; and that this claim is true and correct in every material matter and the same conforms in every respect with requirements of Section 112.061 Florida Statutes.						Totals	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -					
												Subtotal Due:	-				
												Less Advance Received:	-				
												Less Class C Meals(Emp. Only):	-				
Traveler's Signature						Net Amount Due:						-					
Pursuant to Section 112.061(3) (a), Florida Statutes, I hereby certify or affirm that to be the best of my knowledge the above travel was on official business of the State of Florida and was performed for the purpose(s) stated above.																	
Supervisor's Signature						If payment was requested prior to travel - please complete the acknowledgement and certification below											
Sup. Title: _____ Date Appr.: _____ TRAVEL RATES APPROVED 03/20/12: Lodging: Actual Cost, <i>Mileage:</i> \$0.575/mile in private vehicle (IRS rate changes January 1 of each year, \$0.575 effective 01/01/20), <i>Meals:</i> Breakfast(w hen travel begins before 7:00 AM and extends beyond 8:00 AM) \$8.00, Lunch (w hen travel begins before 12:00 Noon and extends beyond 2:00 PM) \$12.00, Dinner (w hen travel begins before 5:00 PM and extends beyond 7:00 PM or w hen travel occurs during nighttime hours due to special assignment) \$26.00. Franklin County does not reimburse for Class C travel meals. Class C travel is day travel.						I hereby confirm that the travel reimbursement advance that I received for the travel above w as true and correct. If any amount is due back to Franklin County please notate below and submit a check or refund to the county w ithin ten days of return from travel.											