

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-39

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PAHOKEE, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A PER DIEM TRAVEL EXPENSE POLICY PURSUANT TO THE U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (GSA) RATES FOR TRANSPORTATION AND MEALS FOR CITY OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES; PROVIDING FOR AUTHORIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of Pahokee (“City”) desires to establish a policy accepting Federal per diem rates that are set by the General Services Administration (GSA) for City employees and elected officials; and

WHEREAS, per-diems are fixed amounts to be used for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses when traveling on official business. Federal per diem rates are set by the General Services Administration (GSA) and are used by all government employees, as well as many private-sector employees who travel for their companies; and

WHEREAS, the GSA per-diem amounts are issued for meals and lodging depending on the location where a person is traveling; and

WHEREAS, there are almost 400 destinations across the United States for which a special per-diem rate has been specified by the GSA; and

WHEREAS, for example, General Rates for average lodging for 2022 was \$96.00 using GSA rates and \$59.00 per day for daily meals; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to adopt a comprehensive Travel, Transportation and Meal Policy for City officials and employees, which provides specific guidance to officials and employees, as well as the City Manager and Department Directors, regarding the policies and procedures to be used when seeking payment or reimbursement by the City

for travel, transportation and meals incurred during official City business or duties; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of the Travel, Transportation and Meal Policy, in substantially the travel form ("Policy"), is authorized under the Municipal Home Rule Powers Act (Section 166.021, Florida Statutes) and Section 2(b), Article VIII, of the State Constitution, and is consistent with the policy and practice of many municipalities who adopt such policies; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds that it is in the City's best interests and its officials and employees to adopt the attached Policy, substantially in the travel form.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PAHOKEE, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Recitals Adopted. The foregoing whereas clauses are true and correct and are incorporated herein by this reference.

Section 2. Approval and Adoption of Policy. The Policy, in substantially the form attached hereto as Exhibit "A."

Section 3. Authorization and Implementation. The City Manager and/or designee are authorized to take any and all action necessary to implement the purposes of this Resolution and the Policy.

Section 4. Repeal of Conflicting Resolutions and Policies. Any resolutions and policies or parts thereof in conflict herewith, are hereby repealed.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 25th day of July, 2023.

Keith W. Babb, Jr., Mayor

ATTEST:

Tijauna Warner, CMC City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:**

Burnadette Norris-Weeks, P.A.
City Attorney

Moved by: _____

Seconded by: _____

VOTE:

Commissioner Boldin	_____ (Yes)	_____ (No)
Commissioner Gonzalez	_____ (Yes)	_____ (No)
Commissioner Perez	_____ (Yes)	_____ (No)
Vice-Mayor Murvin	_____ (Yes)	_____ (No)
Mayor Babb	_____ (Yes)	_____ (No)

City of Pahokee
Travel, Transportation, and Meal Policy

1-1. POLICY.

It is the policy of the City of Pahokee to pay for all reasonable and necessary expenses associated with travel, transportation, and meals resulting from an employee's, elected official's, or other City Manager authorized person's attendance at any meeting, seminar, conference, or convention which has been properly approved as having a demonstrated public purpose, benefit to the City or in the course of official City business. Excepted from this policy are expenses deemed necessary by the Police Chief for undercover police work. The City Manager may make reasonable exceptions to this Policy when it is deemed in the City's best interests to do so.

1-2. SCOPE.

This operating procedure applies to all employees of the City of Pahokee (City) as well as all elected and appointed officials or other City Manager authorized person.

1-3. PROCEDURE.

I **Types of Authorized Travel**

- a. Class A Travel - Continuous travel of twenty-four (24) hours or more away from City Hall. The travel day for Class A travel shall be a calendar day (midnight to midnight). Class A travel shall include any assignments on official business outside of the routine regular office hours of the employee or official and away from the regular place of employment when it is considered reasonable and necessary to stay overnight and for which travel expenses are approved as provided within this Policy.
- b. Class B Travel - Continuous travel of less than twenty-four (24) hours which involves overnight absences from City Hall. The travel day for Class B travel shall begin at the same time as the travel period and shall include any assignments on official business outside of the routine regular office hours of the employee or official. Class B travel shall include any assignments on official business outside of the regular office hours and away from regular places of employment when it is considered reasonable and necessary to stay overnight and for which travel expenses are

approved as provided within this policy.

- c. Class C Travel - Travel for short or day trips where the traveler is not away from the City Hall overnight. Class C travel may receive allowance for meals as provided in this policy.

2. Travel Authorization

- a. Travel will be authorized for official City of Pahokee business purposes only.
- b. All travel subject to reimbursement must be approved **in advance** by the the City Manager or designee.
- c. Authorization for Class A and B travel for Department Directors must be approved by the City Manager or designee in advance.
- d. Class A and Class B travel overnight within the State of Florida will not normally be authorized for locations less than sixty (80) miles (based on the State of Florida Official Highway Mileage map, Google Maps, or similar system) from City Hall.

3. Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

- a. Reimbursement of travel expenses will be made in accordance with all City of Pahokee policies, Florida Statutes, and the Internal Revenue Code of the United States of America. Travel expenses of travelers will be limited to those expenses necessarily incurred by them in the performance of the authorized public purpose or official City business. Reimbursement of travel expenses must be requested on the "City of Pahokee Request for Travel and Final Cost of Travel Form".

4. Seminars and Conferences

- a. Seminars, conferences, and other events must be authorized by the City Manager, where appropriate). Seminars and conferences to be attended must budgeted and must be directly related to the training and development of the employee, public official or for the City's benefit.
- b. The Mayor and City Commissioners shall be reimbursed for their attendance at the following conferences or events which shall be pre-approved:
 - 1. National League of Cities Conference
 - 2. Florida League of Cities Conference

3. Annual Palm Beach County Days
4. Palm Beach County League of Cities Meetings (Mayor and City Commission Designee)
5. Tallahassee, State of Florida's capital, for lobbying on behalf of the City

All other conferences or seminars require approval of the City Commission. Further, all conferences or seminars where more than three (3) members desire to attend require Commission approval.

- c. Expenditures for seminar and conference registration fees may be made by a City of Pahokee purchasing card or may be requested through the Finance Department in advance and after proper authorization. Payment of required expenses must be made payable directly to the vendor. Per Diem amounts will be paid directly to the employee.
- d. The City of Pahokee recognizes that there are times when seminar and conference fees cannot be paid in advance. When fees are paid at registration by the employee, expenditures can be reimbursed with proper approval. An explanation of why fees could not be or were not paid in advance must accompany the request for reimbursement.

5. Lodging

- a. Expenditures for accommodations/lodging may be made by a City purchasing card, requested, after proper authorization, through the Finance Department in advance, or reimbursed based on actual cost after the travel period. Use of a City purchasing card is the preferred method.
- b. Accommodations/lodging will be paid at lowest rate possible and must be substantiated by paid bills. The actual receipt or bill must be attached to the final Travel Form. Employees may choose to upgrade their lodging from basic occupancy, but must pay for upgrades themselves.
- c. When seminars or conferences provide a variety of lodging that can be used, employees should first choose the lodging at or closest to the event. This Policy recognizes the qualitative value of staying close to the source of the event and its participants. If lodging isn't available at the same location as the event, lodging will be booked at the most economical hotel nearest the event. Any deviation will require prior approval by the City Manager. Employees may choose to upgrade their lodging to more expensive accommodation, but must pay for upgrades themselves.
- d. The City is generally exempt from taxes and the employee should request a

copy of the City's tax-exempt certificate from the Finance Department before departure. Taxes which are charged to the employee because they do not present a copy of the City's tax-exempt certificate will not be reimbursed. Exception: When an employee travels outside the State of Florida, taxes charged may be reimbursable. To be exempt from taxes, the payment must be by a City-issued purchasing card or check, accompanied by the City's tax exemption certificate.

6. Meals

- a. Meals and tips for other than local travel are limited to a per diem payment equivalent to the prevailing per diem established by the Internal Revenue Code Continental U.S. (CONUS) rate, (website: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>), or as amended, for meals and incidental expenses, (which may be reduced proportionately for partial days or meals otherwise provided during the travel.) The per diem amount is inclusive of all meals, drinks, tips, and any other miscellaneous daily expenses that will be incurred by the traveler. Employees are not required to submit meal receipts when being reimbursed on a per diem basis.
- b. Per diem will be reduced by one-third each if the employee begins travel status after 8:00 a.m. and/or ends travel before 7:00 p.m. Additionally, all meals otherwise provided for, excluding "continental" breakfasts, will reduce per diem payments by one-third. The City recognizes that "continental" breakfasts are generally snacks items occasionally provided during events.
- c. No allowance will be made for meals when travel is confined to the City of Pahokee, or immediate vicinity (a 80-mile radius from City Hall) except when specifically authorized by the City Manager upon finding that the meal facilitates City business. Meals reimbursed under this Policy must be accompanied by the itemized receipt (which identifies each item purchased and the record of payment, whether by cash or credit card) and a Meal Reimbursement Form.
- d. This Policy prohibits reimbursement for meals that are included or provided at a convention, conference, or seminar registration, where the fees have been paid by the City of Pahokee or any other

organization. An allowance may be made due to dietary issues.

- e. This Policy prohibits reimbursement for any meal that is included or provided in the fees or expenses for transportation paid by the City of Pahokee or any other organization, (e.g., airline meals, meals on trains, etc.).
- f. This Policy prohibits use of a City purchasing card to purchase meals where travel money, that may include per diem advances, has been made.

7. Transportation

- a. All travel must be by the most economical route. When determining transportation, employees or officials will not be unduly inconvenienced to reduce costs. Employees must choose the basic coach fare, but may pay for upgrades themselves.
- b. When planning travel, the City Manager should designate the most economical method of travel as noted above. The following considerations should be given for all trips or travel:
 - 1. The nature of the official business.
 - 2. The most efficient and economical means of travel (considering time of the traveler, cost of the transportation, and per diem or subsistence required).
 - 3. The number of persons making the trip and the amount of equipment or material to be transported.
- c. Commercial vehicle or air carrier for travel must be approved in advance and payment made payable to the vendor or reimbursed after the travel period. Use of a City purchasing card is the preferred method.
- d. When traveling by vehicle, publicly-owned vehicles should be used in lieu of the use of a privately-owned vehicle whenever possible. When travel is authorized for a privately-owned vehicle, the employee will be entitled to a mileage allowance which will be made at the amounts and limits set by the Internal Revenue Code of the United States of America. The mileage rate is set by the IRS each January 1st. All

expenses (including repairs, maintenance, etc.) pertaining to the usage of a privately-owned vehicle, other than tolls and parking, are included in the mileage reimbursement rate. Employees who are provided a car allowance or similar stipend will not be reimbursed for travel within 80 miles of City Hall. Travel exceeding this distance will be eligible for mileage rate reimbursement.

- e. Vehicles may be rented for remote or emergency travel, subject to the following:
 - 1. The location of the meeting, seminar, conference, or convention is different than that of the lodging accommodations; or
 - 2. The rental of the automobile is less expensive than other forms of transportation to or from the lodging or meeting.
 - 3. Mileage will be reimbursable from the City Hall to the point of destination unless the point of origin is closer. Mileage will be determined using any commonly available mapping tool, but the Finance Department retains the authority to determine the appropriate distance for reimbursement purposes.
 - 4. Whenever possible, carpooling should be utilized to minimize the cost of travel. When more than one City of Pahokee employee is traveling to a conference, meeting, or any official business, transportation should be shared and the City's cost minimized.

8. Parking and Tolls

Payments will be allowed for parking and tolls provided that the costs are documented and reasonable. Parking at departing airports will be reimbursed only to the extent of the cost of taxi/rideshare fare from the Pahokee City Hall to the Airport and back to Pahokee City Hall. Transfers from the airport to the destination hotel may be advanced if properly documented.

9. Insurance

No insurance will be allowed as a reimbursable travel or transportation expense. Employees or officers who choose to use their personal vehicle must carry adequate insurance coverages. The City will also maintain hired and non-owned automobile coverages for employees driving vehicles while performing City-related activities. Persons driving any car while conducting City business should carry with them the City's insurance card.

10. Other Expenses

- a. Incidental travel expenses may be reimbursed, with proper receipts and documentation. These include, but are not limited to:
 1. Taxi/Rideshare fare
 2. Official City of Pahokee business communication, e.g. telephone or fax expenses
 3. Convention/conference fees for attending events that are not included in the basic registration fee that directly enhance the public purpose and official City of Pahokee business of the attendee (e.g. additional educational classes/sessions, conference meals.). It will be the responsibility of the attendee to substantiate that the charges were proper and necessary.
 4. The City will reimburse airline fees for one (1) checked bag only for City business travel occurring for a week or less. For City business travel occurring for more than seven (7) days, the City will reimburse fees for two (2) checked bags. The City will reimburse the cost of bags needed to transport official City business materials, (e.g., exhibitor materials). Reimbursement for the bag(s) is limited to the airline's standard checked baggage fee and the City will not pay additional fees for oversize or overweight bags, except if assessed on any of the actual City owned materials (e.g., exhibitor materials).

- b. Expenses that are not reimbursable include, but are not limited to:
 5. Tips, Bellhop assistance (tips are included in the per diem payment amounts).
 6. Movie rentals in hotel/motel rooms
 7. Parking tickets or traffic fines
 8. Communication/telephone charges that are not official City of Pahokee business
 9. Alcohol

11. Compensable Travel Time.

- a. Travel time will be considered as compensable hours worked for non-exempt employees as outlined in the City's personnel policies.