

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION/REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE

The purpose of the Winchester Public Schools (WPS) Travel Authorization/Reimbursement Procedure is to provide standards and guidelines that ensure compliance with applicable federal and state laws for all business expenses while maintaining necessary controls, accountability and administrative efficiency.

Payment and reimbursement occur only for business expenses that are reasonable and necessary to accomplish WPS business. Business expenses and reimbursements are public records subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act and must withstand the test of public review.

A. General Guidelines

- a. These guidelines apply to all WPS employees.
- b. **Travel Authorization Request form (DLC-R1) needs to be completed and approved (a minimum of 30 days before proposed travel) and prior to any expenses are incurred.** The budget holder must approve the form and then forward a copy to the Finance Department.
- c. Each employee must exercise sound and prudent judgment when arranging for, incurring and approving business expenses in accordance with this Procedure.
- d. Sufficient funds for business expenses must be available within the department's budget.
- e. Each employee must keep receipts for all items excluding per diem meals and mileage.
- f. **Travel Expense Reimbursement form (DLC-R2) must be submitted and approved 45 days after the expense occurred.**
 - i. Approved expenses include business travel for conferences, training sessions, seminars, mileage and expenses to enhance teaching and learning experiences.
 - ii. Any reimbursement requests not submitted by the deadline will become the responsibility of the employee.
 - iii. Holding multiple months of expenses for a single larger reimbursement is not allowed.
 - iv. An individual employee may not approve their own travel or expense reimbursement.
- g. Travel Authorization/Reimbursement Guidelines and Forms (DLC-R1 & DLC-R2) are located on the WPS website under the Finance Department & Accounts Payable area.

B. Definitions

- a. Department - Any division, school or other organization within WPS.
- b. Budget Holder - A director/principal who directs and is ultimately responsible for a department's overall operations. A designee is any person acting on behalf of the said person (designee must be on the list with the Finance Department).
- c. Home Worksite Location - School or office where the employee regularly performs their duties as determined by their supervisor.
- d. Itinerant - An employee that is required to travel to multiple locations to perform their job duties.

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- e. Daily Commuting Mileage – Mileage between the employee’s residence and home worksite (roundtrip) incurred on a scheduled workday. It is a personal expense and is not reimbursable.
- f. Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) – Meals, gratuities and certain incidental travel expenses are reimbursable on a per diem basis based on current GSA rates for domestic travel. The departure and return days of travel are calculated at 75% (see Appendix F). **An internet printout detailing the GSA rate (see Appendix D) for area traveling to must be attached to the DLC-R1 and DLC-R2 for use in the meal per diem reimbursement calculation.**
- g. US General Services Administration (GSA) – GSA establishes per diem rates for the Continental United States (CONUS), <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates> which includes the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia. The per diem rates are the maximum allowances that employees are reimbursed for expenses incurred while on official travel.
- h. WPS Procurement Card (P-Card) – The P-Card is the payment method for all business expenses **excluding M&IE**.
- i. DLC-R1 Form (Appendix B) – Required form for all estimated pre-travel business expenses except when reimbursement is for mileage only.
 - i. The budget holder’s signature certifies that funds are available and expenses are approved.
 - ii. The budget holders signature certifies that the travel is necessary and approved.
- j. DLC-R2 Form (Appendix C) – It calculates the actual expenses incurred.

C. Pre-Travel Planning

- a. A WPS P-Card is the payment method for lodging, transportation cost, conference registrations, rental cars and all other travel-related costs, **excluding M&IE**.
- b. Travel reservation (including the use of third-party online booking systems) must be made using the most economical and efficient mode and route of travel. Additional fees for any upgrades are permitted only at the account manager/designee’s discretion and they must be included on the DLC-R1.
- c. Rental Vehicle – Permitted instead of the airline, rail or bus transportation when feasible and cost-beneficial. The employee must possess a valid driver’s license issued within the United States.
- d. Personal Vehicle – If an employee chooses to use a personal vehicle for conduction WPS business, it is the employee’s responsibility to ensure adequate insurance coverage (if any) is provided by their personal automobile insurance company and possess a valid driver’s license issued within the United States.
- e. Employees must submit the DLC-R1 to their supervisor and account manager/designee for approval, a minimum of 30 days before proposed travel. The employee signature & budget holder’s signature at the bottom of the form certifies the accuracy of all information and the legitimacy of the travel. Approval signature certify that funds are available and that the travel is necessary and approved.
 - i. M&IE – Travel related meals, gratuity and certain incidental expenses are reimbursable on a per diem basis determined by the GSA (not actual expenses). **P-Cards may not be used for travel related meal expenses.**

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- ii. Lodging – Refer to GSA Travel Resources to determine the allowable rate per location with the exception of host hotels. All expenses must be necessary and reasonable; exception may apply. (150% of GSA rate)
 - 1. Must be 50 miles or greater from the Home Worksite Location or outside of Virginia.
 - a. Allowable if the first day of the event begins before noon, or daily events end after 7 pm.
 - iii. Registration – An expense for a meeting, conference (see Appendix E), continuing or professional education, exam sitting, workshop, seminar/training or convention.
 - iv. Airline/Train/Bus -
 - 1. The lowest standard coach rate is allowed for airline reservations.
 - 2. The lowest standard coach rate for express rail is allowed for train reservations.
 - 3. Bus travel is permitted instead of an automobile, airline or rail transportation when cost beneficial.
 - 4. It is the account manager/designee's discretion as to allowable upgrade fees.
 - 5. Checked Baggage – one checked bag will be an approved expense for each direction of travel. Charges for oversized or overweight baggage shall be the responsibility of the employee. The account manager/designee may make an exception for these charges based on the length of travel, destination, special materials, equipment, etc., as required for the business travel.
 - v. Personal Vehicle Mileage – Will be reimbursed at Federal rate. This reimbursement covers various factors including cost of fuel, depreciation, maintenance, insurance and taxes. If the employee is driven to an airport or other commercial transportation by another person, the roundtrip mileage will be reimbursed. **An internet map printout detailing roundtrip mileage (see Appendix A) must be attached to the DLC-R1 and DLC-R2 for use in mileage reimbursement calculation.**
 - vi. Parking – Parking fees paid at airports, lodging facilities and other locations for the duration of travel.
 - vii. Tolls – Toll fees paid for the duration of travel
 - viii. Public Transportation – Subway, Metrorail, Bus, Ferry, Shuttle or Rideshare services (Uber, Lyft, taxi, etc.) are permitted transportation options.
 - ix. Miscellaneous – Telephone calls, internet access (Wi-Fi), fax transmissions, printing, hotel resort fees, etc.
 - x. Monetary Advance – The employee may request a monetary advance by submitting a DLC-R1 form three to ten business days before travel.
- f. Departure and Return Restrictions
 - i. If travel time is required the day before or after the event, the employee would be reimbursed for the additional M&IE. (At 75% of GSA rate for departure and return dates of travel.) (see Appendix F)

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- ii. If an employee voluntarily chooses to travel earlier or stay longer than required, they would not be reimbursed for any additional costs unless it reduces the entire total trip cost.

D. Post-Travel Reimbursement

- i. DLC-R2 form must be submitted and approved 45 days following travel to be reimbursed. Travel involving overnight stays do not require the daily commuting mileage reduction (see Mileage Reimbursement in section C).
 - 1. A copy of the DLC-R1 form must be attached.
 - 2. Detailed receipts must be attached to the DLC-R2 form, excluding per diem meals and mileage.
 - a. Internet/Third party reservations must include an electronic receipt from the site showing the total cost and confirmed service.
 - 3. Travel expenses submitted without detailed receipts will not be accepted and become the employee's responsibility.
- ii. Business travel meals are paid using the current GSA rates for travel and must be entered on the DLC-R2 form.
 - 1. Overnight travel meals are reimbursed through NaviLine at the current GSA allowable rate for the location and do not require receipts.

F. Travel Cancellation

- i. If the travel/event has been canceled for any reason other than the fault of the employee, a refund to the P-Card must be requested.

G. Non-Reimbursable Expenses

- i. Expenses for family members or companions, non-business or leisure travel and excursions, expenses for personal entertainment, fees for athletic or exercise facilities, golf or tennis fees, and alcoholic beverage costs are not reimbursable.
- ii. An employee who does not attend a meeting, conference, continuing or professional education, exam sitting, workshop, seminar/training or convention and who does not cancel in time to obtain a refund shall be responsible for reimbursing WPS unless the cancellation is due to unexpected circumstances and approved by the budget holder.
- iii. DLC-R2 form not submitted and approved 45 days after completion of travel become the employee's responsibility.

Appendix A – Map with return mileage

Appendix B – DLC-R1

Appendix C – DLC-R2

Appendix D – GSA Rates

Appendix E – Conference Agenda example

Appendix F – GSA Calculations

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