	CITY OF HENDERSONVILLE Travel Policy	Amended Effective July 1, 2023
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I. Purpose

It is the policy of the City to authorize employees, elected officials, and appointed officials to conduct City business and to establish procedures for reimbursement of the costs associated with travel. Employees, elected officials, and appointed officials are encouraged to attend trainings, conferences, and meetings of professional associations.

II. Applicability

1. All employees that are required to be away from the City in order to engage in an environment pursuant and relevant to their current position or their next level position.
2. All elected officials that are required to be away from the City in order to engage in an environment pursuant and relevant to their current position or their next level position.
3. All appointed officials that are required to be away from the City in order to engage in an environment pursuant and relevant to their current position or their next level position.

III. General Policy

Training shall be defined as those conferences or sessions that provide certification or a learning environment for employees, elected officials, and appointed officials pursuant and relevant to their current City position or their next level position.


It shall be the general policy of the City to allow employees and officials to travel to training sessions, seminars, and meetings of professional associations under the guidelines specified in this policy. Service by Council members in an official capacity as representatives of the City on state or regional committees and boards is encouraged and their travel expenses will be reimbursed.

All travel and reimbursement are contingent upon the availability of funds in the proper budget account and no travel or reimbursement will be permitted without the employee completing a Travel Approval Form and a Per Diem and Expense Form.

Abuse of this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

IV. Employee and City Official Responsibility

An employee or official on City business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a sensible person would exercise if traveling on personal business and spending

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personal funds. The following conduct is discouraged and may result in the denial of travel authorization and reimbursement in the future:

- Excess costs
- Routes longer than the most direct way of travel
- Luxury Accommodations*

*Luxury accommodations would include beach houses, ocean view or other upgraded view rooms, suites, 2 bedroom or larger vacation rentals (Airbnb/VRBO -unless approved for multiple employees staying together or extended stays). Rooms listed as the offered conference rate rooms would not be considered luxury. Suggested alternatives to the conference rate rooms offered are not considered conference rate rooms.

V. Approval Authority


The responsibility for keeping within the travel budget of each activity lies with the approving authority. The authorization of all travel is as follows:

1. The Mayor shall authorize the City Manager’s travel and training requests.
2. City Council shall authorize the elected officials training and travel requests. City Council shall authorize the out-of-state travel requests of Council members. Travel expenses incurred as a City representative of a statewide regional committee, to attend a convention, or to attend a training directly related to the role of the City Council member will be reimbursed without City Council approval. The City Manager or their designee shall authorize travel and training by the department heads and appointed officials. This shall also include the reimbursement of transportation expenses of individuals visiting for employment interviews.
3. The department head or other authorized deputy finance officer shall authorize travel and training by employees within their department.

VI. Procedure

General Procedure

1. Requests for travel approval must be submitted to the authorizing party in advance of booking travel. The authorizing party will review the form to ensure all estimated travel expenditures are provided, are allowed by this policy, and are within available budget. The Finance Department will preaudit travel approved by the Mayor and City Council.

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2. Per Diem and Expense Reimbursement Forms must be submitted to the Finance Department for processing no later than 7 business days prior to travel. Forms received less than 7 days prior will not be processed for payment prior to travel. Only those expenses allowed by this policy will be paid for by the City.
3. All expenditures related to each travel event should be included on the Per Diem and Expense Reimbursement Form. This includes deposits or other costs incurred in advance on a City Purchasing Card.

VII. Reimbursable Expenses Guidelines


A. Personal Vehicles

The City prefers that personal vehicles be used only if a City vehicle is not available, not applicable, or not economical and practical. Use of a personal vehicle, when a City vehicle is available, must be approved in advance by the department head on the Travel Approval Form. Employees who choose to use a personal vehicle when a City vehicle is available, applicable, or economical and practical, will be reimbursed at one half of the current IRS standard mileage rate. If a city vehicle is not available, the requesting party may use a personal automobile and be reimbursed at the current IRS standard mileage rate. The IRS standard business mileage rate is updated annually at www.irs.gov. Mileage is calculated from your primary work location e.g., City Hall, City Ops, WTP. If more than one employee is attending the same event, carpooling is encouraged even if a personal vehicle is being used, unless the authorizing party determines that it is not economical or practical. When a group of employees or officials are traveling together in the same vehicle to the same destination, only one traveler will receive reimbursement.

No reimbursement will be made for expenses incurred in making repairs or towing a personal vehicle.

B. City Vehicles

City vehicles should be used whenever possible for any authorized travel. The requesting party must obey all laws of the jurisdiction in which the automobile is being operated. The City will not reimburse any expenditures related to any law enforcement fines or fees incurred traveling on City business. The City vehicle will be used for City business and activities only. Non-City employees will not be allowed to ride in City vehicles. A City Purchasing Card may not be used unless there is an emergency. In the event the city vehicle breaks down and repairs are required or a rental car is required to complete the authorized travel, the City Purchasing Card is permissible to use. The employee's immediate supervisor shall be notified at the earliest possible time. In the event a Purchasing Card was not distributed to the employee, reimbursement will be

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made for repairs, gasoline, oil, parking, toll fees, and other unavoidable expenses of the City vehicle. A paid receipt must be included to support all reimbursement requests. Fuel for City vehicles should be purchased with the City Fleet fuel card. Any employee or official operating a city vehicle should use the same care that a sensible person would use if operating his or her own personal vehicle. It is recommended that the employee attending training/conference or one employee from the group attending training request a temporary P-card from the Finance department prior to traveling to the training/conference.

C. Rental Vehicles

A rental vehicle may be used when it is determined that no other transportation is cost effective, practical, or possible. A rental vehicle will be used for City business and activities only. Use of a rental vehicle must be approved in advance on the Travel Approval Form. Additional vehicle rental expenses incurred while on City business may also be reimbursed upon completion of the trip with the proper documentation on a supplemental Per Diem and Expense Reimbursement Form. City employees and officials are covered under City insurance when renting a vehicle. Additional insurance is not needed and will not be reimbursed.

D. Airfare

Generally, the lowest priced coach class airfare should be purchased. Other classes may be approved if additional documentation is provided detailing better rate, lack of availability, or necessity because of disability or other special need.

Air travel should be paid for with a City Purchasing Card. Airfare purchased with personal funds will not be reimbursed until after travel is completed and documentation of payment is provided. Airfare purchased with “miles” or “points” will not be reimbursed.


One checked bag is approved per City-authorized traveler unless excess fees are due to a valid business purpose.

Travel to the airport is reimbursable and should be the most practical and economical method available. Personal vehicle travel to the airport will be reimbursed at the IRS standard business mileage rate at the time plus parking.

If parking at the airport, only the economy lots are approved for reimbursement.

E. Other Transportation

All necessary air, bus, taxi, train, or similar transportation must be obtained at the most cost-effective rate available for the economic benefit of the City. Reimbursements will be made for actual costs that are incurred and receipt supported with the completion of a supplemental Per Diem and Expense Reimbursement Form.

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F. Accommodations

The City will not pay for out-of-town accommodations for travel within a 60 mile radius of City Hall unless approved by the City Manager or their designee prior to travel. Lodging costs in the host city may be claimed from the night before the authorized event starts, if not practical to travel the day of the event, through the night before it ends, unless timely return transportation is not possible, thereby necessitating additional lodging costs. Employees must provide documentation as to the purpose of being away from the City for the business benefit of the City for every day that travel is being requested. Going to an event earlier than necessary or staying later than necessary will not be paid for by the City.

Accommodation costs will be reimbursed at the actual amount incurred. Reservation confirmation for accommodations must be submitted with the Per Diem and Expense Reimbursement Form in advance of travel, including reservations made with a City Purchasing Card. Employees and officials are limited to reserving the most cost-effective accommodations that will permit the employee or official to conduct his or her City business. Special government rates should be obtained if available.


City employees and officials are responsible for any no-show fee incurred unless an emergency or other department head approved business reason causes the cancellation. Employees should always obtain a cancellation number from the accommodations entity to protect against no-show billings. Funds prepaid by the City, which relate to canceled arrangements, must be refunded to the City by the employee or official.

No room incidentals are to be paid for by the City or charged to a City Purchasing Card. Miscellaneous expenses are not considered part of a per diem reimbursement; therefore, substantiation is required. The City will require actual receipts or written certification as substantiation. Miscellaneous expenses include cab fares outside of travel to and from the event site, fax, telephone, copy charges, and other business-related expenses. Any expense not in line with this policy will be paid for by the employee. If any unauthorized travel charge is incurred on a City Purchasing Card, the City may deduct the expense from the employee's next payroll check.

G. Meals Per Diem

Employees and officials traveling on overnight City business may receive a per diem for meals for travel according to the following schedule:

- Breakfast – Depart prior to 6:00 a.m.
- Lunch – Depart prior to 10:00 a.m. (day of departure) or return after 2:00 p.m. (day of return)

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- Dinner – Return after 8:00 p.m. If stopping for dinner would cause the employee or official to return after 8:00 p.m. when the employee or official would have otherwise returned prior to 8:00 p.m., dinner will not be reimbursed.

If a meal is included as part of a registration fee for an event paid requiring overnight travel, a deduction from the per diem will be made accordingly. Breakfast included as part of the normal room rate offered to everyone does not need to be deducted from the per diem rate. Per diem rates will be provided and updated as needed on the Per Diem and Expense Reimbursement Form.

If travel is unexpectedly extended, the traveler must submit a new ~~per diem request~~ Per Diem and Expense Reimbursement Form for approval upon return and will be reimbursed at the per diem rate.

If an employee receives per diem for days of travel that are cancelled or otherwise do not occur, the employee must return the per diem to the City.

H. Other Travel Expenses

Any phone charges, unless previously authorized or fully detailed and business related, are not permissible for reimbursement.


In-room movies or entertainment that are billed to the employee’s or official’s room that have no relation to the legitimate nature of the business travel are the responsibility of the traveler and will not be reimbursed by the City.

Parking fees and tolls will be reimbursed with proper documentation and receipts. These expenses should be included under “Other” on the Travel Form.

Gratuities paid for luggage handling at hotels, airports, or other similar areas will be reimbursed at a reasonable and customary rate.

Tips, vending machine purchases, and other similar expenses are included in the per diem meal allowance and will not be reimbursed by the City.

Reimbursement for purchases paid by the traveler with their own funds, or their personal debit or credit card, will not be reimbursed until travel is complete.

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VIII. Vacation, Familial Travel, or Traveling with Other Employees and Officials

A. Combining Business and Vacation

If an employee wishes to combine a City business-related trip with a personal vacation, the department head must approve the arrangement in advance on the Travel Approval Form. The City will only reimburse the portion of the trip that was for City business and activities.

The traveler must clearly detail and provide documentation of which expenses will be for the business portion of travel. The employee must specify the dates of the City business or activities and the total days of the trip in order to document work hours.

Great care must be exercised to ensure that the traveler does not, in appearance or fact, have personal gain at the expense of the City. Documentation must be provided showing the cost with and without personal travel to ensure the City does not incur additional expenses as the result of personal travel.

Any discounts received due to extended or combined travel, such as free days, discounted rates, etc., must be applied to the business portion of the travel.


It is the responsibility of the approving authority to ensure travel combining business and vacation meets all requirements of this policy.

B. Travel with Spouse or Family

Spouses and family members may accompany an employee or official on City business-related trips. However, the City provides reimbursement only for the employee's or official's expenses. Spouses and family members are not allowed to travel in City vehicles. Any additional expenses that the employee or official would not incur if traveling alone will not be reimbursed. Employees are required to put all expenses that are incurred due to spouse and family travel on a personal debit or credit card and they will be reimbursed only for their portion of the business-related costs upon return from travel. Employees must provide documentation of costs associated with single-person travel and documentation of actual costs incurred. No purchase is to be put on the employee's City Purchasing Card that is over what the City would pay for a single employee traveling.

C. Travel with Someone from Another Organization

If an employee travels with someone from another organization in a vehicle owned by that person or his or her employer, and if he or she shares the cost of the trip, he or she can receive reimbursement for their share only if proper documentation and receipts are submitted. This method must be approved by the proper approval authority. A waiver may be required. Employees are reminded that City insurance provides less coverage for City employees not

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traveling in City vehicles. More detailed information can be found on the North Carolina League of Municipalities website or in the Human Resources Department.

IX. Per Diem and Expense Reimbursement Form

The Per Diem and Expense Reimbursement Form must be submitted to the Finance Department prior to travel regardless of the employee’s intent to request per diem. All expenditures related to each travel event, including any expenditures for travel paid for in advance on a City Purchasing Card must be detailed and documented on a Per Diem and Expense Reimbursement Form. The employee will complete the form and attach original bills and or receipts to support the following expenditures:

- Accommodations
- Transportation Costs
- Registration Fees (a brochure, agenda or program from the event detailing all days included in the event)
- Car Rental Fees (when applicable)
- City Vehicle Expenditures (repairs, gas, oil, parking, tolls, etc.)

Employees may submit an updated and approved Per Diem and Expense Reimbursement Form for any additional costs incurred during travel upon their return. Employees who travel with non-City employees must also provide documentation for what was paid during the business portion of the travel.

X. Violations of Policy

An employee submitting a falsified Travel Form knowingly will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. A department head who approves a Travel Form which is known to be falsified will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If an employee receives reimbursement, or causes to be paid, an expenditure deemed unallowable under this policy, the City may deduct that amount from the employee’s next paycheck, in addition to other disciplinary action.

XI. Travel Policy Revisions

The City Manager is authorized to make future revisions to this policy, including an adjustment to the per diem rate for meals while traveling, mileage reimbursements, and other monetary matters. It is understood that any substantive changes to the Travel Policy should only be implemented after first consulting with the City Council.



**CITY OF HENDERSONVILLE
Travel Policy**

Amended

Effective July 1, 2023

Revised July 1, 2023

Approved by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Connet", is written over a horizontal line.

John Connet (Jul 3, 2023 15:33 EDT)

City Manager, John F Connet






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Final Audit Report

2023-07-03

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