

SALT LAKE COUNTY
COUNTY-WIDE POLICY AND PROCEDURES
ON
AUTHORIZATION AND PAYMENT OF TRAVEL RELATED EXPENSES

Purpose-

To establish a uniform policy and procedures regarding per diem allowances and payment for travel- related expenses for County personnel traveling on County business.

Scope-

This policy applies to County employees, elected officials and their appointees to pay a per diem allowance and pay travel-related expenses incurred for the clear purpose of conducting County business. Where travel is not required for attendance at an event, registration and other training costs of conferences, symposiums, or similar events shall be paid in accordance with Countywide Policy# 1202, *"Authorization and Processing of Certain Payments,"* or Countywide Policy #7035. *"Purchasing Cards Authorization and Use."*

References -

This policy and related procedures are subject to and make reference to the following Countywide policies:

Countywide Policy #7035, *"Purchase Cards Authorization and Use"*

Countywide Policy# 1350, *"Salt Lake County Vehicle Policy"*

Countywide Policy #1021, *"Vendor-paid Expenses for Employee Travel"*

Countywide Policy# 1202, *"Authorization and Processing of Certain Payments"*

Definitions -

Agency Travel Coordinator-Employee(s) designated by Agency Management to coordinate the authorization and arrangements for travel by Agency employees under the procedures set forth in this policy.

County Agency Management (Agency Management) - With respect to their own individual elected offices, executive branch departments, or divisions thereof, any of the following or their designees: County Mayor, County Executive Department Directors, County Elected Officials, Division Administrators, or the County Council (as a whole).

Request for Travel Allowance Form - Forms for use by Agency Travel Coordinators to provide Agency Management with control mechanism to understand and authorize the scope, business purpose, and overall cost of a travel and per diem request can be found on the Mayor's Finance Intranet Site located at <https://www.slcounty.org/mayor-finance/accounts-payable/>. Agency may use an internally developed form that serves the same purpose and has been approved by Mayor's Finance.

Travel Day (Day) - A day of travel defined as 24 hours at the approved destination. Travelers who do not stay overnight at the destination will be granted one-half (1/2) day per diem. For calculating per diem, the first day of travel is counted as a full day. The day of return travel from the destination is counted as one-half (1/2) day.

Travel Expenditure Report - A form for use by Agency Travel Coordinators for assisting travelers in obtaining: reimbursement for transportation costs to/from an airport when the destination is in another city; per diem allowances for properly approved emergency travel; or, reimbursement for other extraordinary travel expenses approved by the traveler's elected official. A copy of this form can be found on the Mayor's Finance Intranet Site located at <https://www.slcounty.org/mayor-finance/accounts-payable/>

1.0 Policy-

It is the policy of Salt Lake County to pay a per diem allowance and pay travel-related expenses incurred for the purpose of conducting County business for travelers covered within the scope of this policy.

Travel must have a clear County government purpose.

The U.S. General Services Administration (G.S.A.) per diem rates will serve as the basis by which Salt Lake County will pay for expenses related to travel. With exceptions noted in this policy, Agency Management and Travel Coordinators shall use a County approved and issued purchasing card to pay for airfare, lodging, and rental cars, as applicable. Per diem advances shall be limited to meals and certain other travel-related expenses also detailed in this policy.

To decentralize travel coordination at the County Agency level, and to facilitate travel arrangements, Agency Travel Coordinators shall work directly with the State Travel office in making air and other applicable travel arrangements.

2.0 Travel Request Procedures

Transportation:

Air Travel

- 2.1. ***Initiating Travel Requests.*** Agency travel coordinators shall obtain written approval from the traveler's Division Director, Department Director, or Elected Official prior to booking airfare through the State Travel Office, or the State Travel Office's travel booking platform... All County travel outside the United States

must be approved by the Elected Official. All airfare should be charged to the Agency's purchasing card.

- 2.2. ***Lead Time for Processing Requests.*** When possible, airfare should be booked at least fourteen (14) days prior to the departure date. Agency travel coordinators should initiate bookings through the State Travel Office or the State's online travel booking platform as early as possible to ensure adequate processing time and access to discounted fares.
- 2.3. ***Altering Approved Travel Schedules.*** The Agency Travel Coordinator, with the consent of the traveler's Division Director and Elected Official/ Department Director, may alter the approved travel schedule to take advantage of airfare discounts, thereby reducing costs to the County. Such alteration in schedules may require additional per diem. When this occurs, approval of the additional per diem is authorized, providing the net cost to the County is less than the originally approved travel schedule.
- 2.4. ***Exception for Elected Officials and Appointed Staff.*** The only exception to the procedures outlined in Sections 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3, above, is that Elected Officials and their appointed staff may, at their option, make their own travel arrangements. In this case, appropriate documentation (such as an invoice or receipt for the airfare) shall still be submitted by the Elected Official to Mayor's Finance as support for reimbursement of the expenditure.
- 2.5. ***Reconciliation of Airfare Charges to Travel Request.*** Since airfare shall be charged, with the exception noted in Section 2.4, to the Agency's purchasing card, a requisition or individual purchase order for airfare is not required. When the Agency receives the monthly statement from the purchasing card issuer, the Agency Travel Coordinator shall reconcile the airfare charge to the original *Request for Travel Allowance* form, along with all other purchasing card expenses charged on that travel request. All charges to the purchasing card must be for allowable purchases under Section 3.0, *Countywide Policy #7035, "Purchasing Card Authorization and Use."*
- 2.6. ***Maintenance of Travel Records.*** Agencies will be responsible for maintaining records of the reconciliations of monthly payment-card issuer statements with individual Requests for Travel Allowance, including credit memos for cancelled trips and airfare fees. County records discussed in this policy will managed in compliance with the Government Records Access and Management Act, § 63G-2-101 et seq. Utah Code Annotated, and in compliance with County Ordinance § 2.82, Records Management. Therefore, *Requests for Travel Allowance*, payment card reconciliations, and all other travel-related records shall be retained according to the accounting retention schedule.
- 2.7. Allowances for Airport Expenses. In addition to the per diem for meals, as outlined in Section 2.13 below, a traveler will receive:
 - 2.7.1. An additional \$50.00 to pay for the round trip to and from the airport, if the airport is in the same city as the traveler's destination.
 - 2.7.2. If the traveler's destination is not in the airport city, the traveler will request reimbursement for the actual cost of travel to and from the airport using the Travel Expenditure Report form.
 - 2.7.3. For additional fees charged by the airline, such as a charge for the first checked bag, the traveler will receive the amount of the fee in their per diem allowance. Reimbursement for

additional baggage fees must be requested on a Travel Expenditure Report form, as provided by section 3.0 of this policy.

Travel by Vehicle

2.8. *Approval/or Use of a Vehicle.* It is preferred that for travel within the State of Utah, the traveler should use a County-owned automobile. Whether requesting use of a County vehicle, private vehicle, or rental car the traveler must obtain specific Division Director and Department Director/Elected Official approval. The Travel Coordinator shall check the appropriate box on the *Request for Travel Allowance* form indicating the approved choice of vehicle transportation. See Countywide Policy #1350, "*Salt Lake County Vehicle Policy*," for rules related to employees driving on, County, business.

2.9. *Travel Using Personal Vehicle.* Allowances for travel by personal vehicle vary depending on the circumstances, as outlined below:

2.9.1. At the discretion of the Division Director and Elected Official/ Department Director, if a County-owned automobile is available and the traveler is approved to use their personal vehicle, the traveler may receive either the standard GSA rate or the GSA rate for "*Government Owned Automobile is Available.*"

2.9.2. When an employee is approved to use their private vehicle instead of traveling by airplane, either in state or otherwise, the Agency Travel Coordinator will calculate mileage from the County place of employment to the destination, and then contact the State Travel Office to obtain the amount of "cash in-lieu-of-airfare" to include on the *Request for Travel Allowance* form. If the destination is outside of the airport city, the base rate of a rental car from the airport to the destination will be included in the amount of "cash in-lieu-of-airfare."

2.9.2.1. The airfare information shall then be attached to the *Request for Travel Allowance* form. The traveler will be paid the lesser of:

- The normal discounted airfare based on the airlines advance reservation requirement for discounts, plus the \$50 airport transportation costs, and applicable baggage fee; or
- A mileage rate as allowed in Section 2.9.1; or
- Other approved policies in effect at the time of the travel.
- When contacting the State Travel Office if quotes from airline carriers that charge a baggage fee then traveler will receive the \$50 baggage fee in their per diem. When contacting the State Travel Office if quotes from airline carriers that do not charge a baggage fee then traveler will not receive the \$50 baggage fee in their per diem.

2.9.3. Where employees choose to travel together in one vehicle, mileage will be paid only to the driver/owner of the vehicle driven.

- 2.10. ***Rental Vehicles.*** Rental vehicles shall be obtained, whenever possible, on the applicable state contract to ensure that appropriate insurance is carried on the vehicle and to facilitate use of the Agency's purchasing card.
- 2.10.1. When using the state contract, the Agency Travel Coordinator shall decline insurance coverage, which by state contract is included in the rental vehicle rate. To pay the up-front, base rental rate for a vehicle using the Agency's purchasing card, the Agency Travel Coordinator will complete and submit the necessary documents to the Utah State Travel Office to establish an arrangement for billing the County Agency directly for the base rental rate. Additional charges related to car rental, i.e. filling the car with gas, will be paid by the Traveler and reimbursed as outlined in Section 3.0 of this policy.
- 2.10.2. If a non-state-contracted vehicle rental company is used, the Travel Coordinator shall advise the traveler of the requirement to obtain insurance coverage when entering into the rental contract. If the Travel Coordinator is unable to make payment for the vehicle rental base rate using the Agency's purchasing card, then the traveler is responsible for the payment of the base rate and any additional charges and shall be reimbursed as outlined in Section 3.0 of this policy.

Per Diem for Other Expenses:

- 2.11. ***Initiation and Approval of Per Diem Allowances.*** In conjunction with requests for approval of travel by air or vehicle on the Request for Travel Allowance form, the Agency Travel Coordinator will complete Section II of the form. Elected Officials and Department Directors may sign and submit their own forms. All other employees must receive the approval of their Division Director before forwarding to the respective Department Director or Elected Official for final approval. The approved and signed request shall be submitted by the Travel Coordinator, Department Head or Elected Official to Mayor's Finance for review and issuance of the applicable per diem allowance.
- 2.12. ***Processing Per Diem Requests.*** Agency Travel Coordinators or County Agency Management should submit an approved Request/or Travel Allowance form and related payment documents to Mayor's Finance at least ten (10) working days in advance of the traveler's departure date. Otherwise, issuance of a per diem allowance check cannot be guaranteed in advance of travel. If a Request for Travel Allowance form is submitted weeks in advance to qualify for registration or other discounts, the early payments will be processed to take advantage of the discount. However, per diem checks will be delayed until two (2) weeks prior to traveler's departure date.
- 2.13. ***Authorized Per Diem Amounts.*** A traveler's per diem allowance will include the cost of meals consistent with the per diem maximum rate established by the G.S.A. Additional amounts may also be approved to cover tuition/registration fees and other costs.
- 2.14. ***Expenses in Excess of, or Less Than, Per Diem Allowance.*** Travel expenses in excess of pre-approved per diem and mileage allowance are the responsibility of the traveler, except as noted in Section 3.0 of this policy. Per Diem allowances in excess of actual expenses may be retained by the traveler.
- 2.15. ***Expenses Paid by Outside Agency.*** Employees, traveling overnight on County business, whose expenses will be paid by an entity other than the County, shall still obtain Division and Department or Elected Official approval to travel. Travel paid by trade vendors must be

approved by the County Mayor as set forth in Countywide Policy# 1021, Vendor-paid Expenses for Employee Travel,

- 2.16. ***Issuance of Per Diem Allowance Checks.*** When the Request for travel Allowance form is processed, the per diem allowance check will be forwarded by Mayor's Finance to the traveler's Agency. Other warrant checks issued to cover travel-related expenses will be mailed by Mayor's Finance to the appropriate vendors.
- 2.17. ***Non-overnight taxable meal allowances.*** Allowance for non-overnight trips may be authorized by the elected official or department director to receive a taxable meal allowance. This allowance is at the discretion of the elected official or department director.

Hotels/Lodging:

- 2.19. ***Approval and Payment Process.*** Travel Coordinator shall include on the Request/or Travel Allowance form the amounts to be paid for lodging. However, no payments for hotel/lodging shall be made prior to an approved and signed *Request for Travel Allowance* form being obtained by the Agency Travel Coordinator from the Department Director or Elected Official. All hotel/lodging expenses may be paid using a County-issued purchasing card, and so noted on the Request for Travel Allowance form. Proof of payment and confirmation from the hotel or establishment shall be attached to the Request for Travel Allowance form. Travelers shall make arrangement with the hotel to obtain a copy of the final billing statement and provide this to their Agency Travel Coordinator for use in reconciling purchasing card charges.
- 2.19.1. Hotel related incidentals charges, i.e. movies, internet, refrigerator items, parking, telephone, etc., shall be paid for by the traveler from his/her own personal funds and shall not be charged to the County issued purchasing card. Travelers may request approval of reimbursement for these expenses on the Travel Expenditure Report, as outlined in Section 3.0 of this policy.

Registration Fees:

- 2.20. ***Approval and Payment for Registration.*** Registration fees associated with travel for which a per diem allowance for meals is given, whether in-state or out-of-state, shall be included on the Request for Travel Allowance form, along with the actual or estimated cost air and/or vehicle travel expense and per diem meal allowance.

2.20.1 All approved costs of a travel event, including registration, shall be recorded and submitted on the *Request for Travel Allowance* form to provide Agency Management with at least an estimate of the total cost of a travel event. Doing so enables Agency Management's review and approval of at least an estimate of the entire cost of a travel event.

2.20.2 The Division Director and Department Director/Elected official may approve the payment of individual or group registration fees using either the County purchasing card, or the traveler's personal check or payment card. Agency Management may utilize either the Travel Allowance form or an internal Agency form to document this approval, with direct payment to the vendor noted on the approval.

2.20.3 Proper authorization and documentation of payments made directly by the County Agency to the vendor are required in accordance with Countywide Policy #1202, "Authorization and Processing of Certain Payments" or Countywide Policy #7035, "Purchasing Cards. "

- 2.21. Expenses Not Related to Approved Travel. Travelers incurring expenses not related to County business that are required to be paid at time of registration, must provide a personal check for the amount of those expenses with the travel request. Their personal check will then be remitted with the registration check, if being paid through Mayor's Finance. If registration has been paid by County issued purchasing card the traveler will pay for such expenses directly to the vendor. Expenses not related to County business shall not be paid with the purchasing card, even if it is the traveler's intent to reimburse the County as outlined in Countywide Policy #7035 "Purchasing Cards."

3.0 Post-Travel Procedure

- 3.1. ***Travel Expenditure Report (TER) Necessary.*** A Travel Expenditure Report (TER) is required when:
- Airport transportation is needed to a different city per Sections 2.7. 1 and 2. 7.2,
 - In the case of emergency travel per Section 4.0, or
 - When a traveler claims extraordinary travel expenses. All extraordinary travel expenses shall be approved by traveler's Division Director and Department Director/Elected Official prior to reimbursement.
- 3.2. ***Approval and Processing of TER.*** Agency Travel Coordinators shall ensure that appropriate documentation and receipts, when available, are attached to the TER and reviewed, approved, and signed by the traveler's Division Director, Department Director/Elected Official. After obtaining approval, the TER with attached documentation, shall be processed timely through Mayor's Finance according to Countywide Policy #1202, "Authorization and Processing of Certain Payments."
- 3.3. ***Processing TERs for Elected Officials.*** To comply with statutory separation of duties, TER's for Elected Officials will be reviewed by the County Mayor. The Mayor's TER's will be reviewed by the District Attorney. All other TER's must be approved by the appropriate Division and Department Director or Elected Official.
- 3.4. ***Timely Submission o/TERs.*** Employees not submitting itemized TER's, when required, within three months from the date of return from approved travel, shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Human Resources Policy #5700, "Discipline." Employees who do not submit itemized TERs in a timely manner, or who otherwise do not comply with the provisions of this policy may forfeit the opportunity of future travel for the County.
- 3.5. ***Reimbursed Travel.*** Employees being reimbursed by an agency outside of the County for County paid travel shall submit reimbursement to the County. The reimbursement shall be submitted on a TER to Mayor's Finance within three month from the date of return of the approved travel outlining the expenditures paid by the County, but reimbursed by an outside agency.

4.0 Emergency Travel

When employees are required to travel without adequate lead-time to allow Mayor's Finance to process a Request for Travel Allowance form and issue a per diem payment, emergency travel must still be approved as prescribed by this policy, and the appropriate per diem allowance will be issued to the traveler upon return.

The traveler shall complete the appropriate section of the TER and it will be processed according to Section 3.0.

5.0 Cancelled Travel

If, for any reason, the intended travel is cancelled and a per diem allowance has already been paid, the traveler shall return the check or provide reimbursement to Mayor's Finance within 10 days of when the traveler becomes aware of the cancellation, or decides not to travel. No per diem checks will be issued for future travel until the previous payment has been returned.

6.0 Substitute Travel

If another person will be traveling in the place of the original traveler, any per diem checks already issued shall be returned to Mayor's Finance and new travel request forms shall be prepared.

APPROVED and ADOPTED this 22 day of July, 2025.

SALT LAKE COUNTY COUNCIL

By: 
Dea Theodore, Chair

ATTEST:


Lannie Chapman
Salt Lake County Clerk