



Otsego
COUNTY
M I C H I G A N

Travel & Business Expenses Policy

A. General. To reimburse County employees for reasonable expenses incurred while in training or conducting official business for the benefit of the County.

B. Policy and Procedures.

1. **Original itemized receipts** shall accompany requests for reimbursement for expenses incurred in conjunction with official travel and business meal reimbursement.
2. When practical, employees should share transportation and lodging as economy measures.
3. Approval authority for travel plans and travel expense reimbursement claims is as follows:

Approval Authority
Elected Officials
Department Heads
County Administrator

Approval For
Persons in their Department(s)
Persons in their Department(s)
Board Members, Elected Officials,
Appointed Department Heads

4. Claims for travel and business meal reimbursement shall be submitted by the employee within 30 days after travel has been completed using either or both of the following forms. Travel and business meal expenses shall be reimbursed only in the budget year in which expenses are incurred. On approval by the authorizing official as outlined above, travel and business meal claims will be forwarded for payment.
 - a. County Credit Card expense voucher.
 - b. Travel Expense voucher.
5. Employees must use a County owned vehicle during County business travel unless otherwise authorized by the designated approval authority.
6. Out-of-state travel and any exceptions to this policy must be submitted in writing to the County Administrator for prior approval, with such approval being provided in writing.

C. Travel Reimbursement.

1. Accommodations: \$ 100.00 (tax included)
Reimbursement for accommodations may be higher when associated with a workshop or conference, with advance authorization from the designated approval authority.
2. Mileage cannot be incurred for travel of less than one mile and multiple trips of less than one mile shall not be accumulated for reimbursement purposes. Mileage will be reimbursed at 50 cents per mile, as approved by the County Board of Commissioners unless specified otherwise in a separate union contract. **For out-of-county mileage, a copy of a Mapquest (or similar service) printout verifying the miles of travel requested for reimbursement must be submitted with the request form as supporting documentation.**
3. Reimbursement of meals for out-of-county travel when the employee is on County

business is addressed in the Business Meals while Traveling section below.

D. Reimbursement of Business Meals.

To be considered a business meal, such meals must be directly related to County business and purposes. The meal period must be planned for the purpose of and include substantive and bona fide business discussions or other business activities which directly and specifically benefit the County.

Documentation must include names of persons attending and the business purposes of the meal, or in the case of an organization or group, the name of the sponsoring organization, an original itemized receipt, and a description of the business purposes of the organization and meal. Cost of business meals may be paid or reimbursed if approved by the authorized department signatory with required documentation.

1. In-County Business Meals

- a. In-county business meals are those meals which are located within the county (and therefore not considered travel), but not at a County work site.
- b. Examples of in-county business meals may include the following: as part of an interview the County is conducting; or as part of a negotiation with potential business partners.
- c. In general, meals attended only by County staff will not be approved for reimbursement as business meals.
- d. All in-county business meals must be approved by the County Administrator prior to the meal taking place.

2. On-Site Business Meals

- a. On-site business meals are those meals which are located on County property. Meals may be provided at County offices and workplaces if the meals are for the convenience of the County in the conduct of substantive County business.
- b. Allowable on-site meals include occasions when the participants are meeting on-site and are conducting substantive County business during or immediately before or after the meals and it is necessary to provide the meals for the efficient conduct of County business. An example would be in-house training that goes through the lunch hour.
- c. All on-site business meals must be approved by the County Administrator prior to the meal taking place.

3. Business Meals while Traveling

Reimbursement of meals for out-of-county travel when the employee is on County business is as follows:

- a. Breakfast: Travel commences prior to 6:00 a.m. and extends beyond 8:00 a.m.
Allowance Reimbursement of actual meal expenses incurred, up to \$10.00, accompanied by the original itemized receipts.
- b. Lunch: Travel commences prior to 10:00 a.m. and extends beyond 2:30 p.m.
Allowance: Reimbursement of actual meal expenses incurred, up to \$15.00, accompanied by the original itemized receipts.
- c. Dinner: Travel commences prior to 3:00 p.m. and extends beyond 8:00 p.m.

Allowance: Reimbursement of actual meal expenses incurred, up to \$20.00, accompanied by the original itemized receipts.

- d. The above reimbursement amounts include gratuity. There is a limit of 20% of meal cost for gratuity.
- e. Expenses related to alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable. Employees are prohibited from using an Otsego County credit card to purchase alcoholic beverages.
- f. The County Administrator may authorize meal charges in excess of the approved meal allowance upon receiving a written description of the necessity of the cost overage, which must be filed with the meal receipt in the Finance Department.

Adopted: 01-26-10

Revised: 08-25-15