

SECTION 1.05 – TRAVEL PROCEDURES

Contact: Accounting @ Extension 4170

A. **Overview**

The district recognizes that employees, representatives, and students may be required to travel within the district, in-state and out-of-state in the performance of their regular duties or as part of the regular, extra-curricular or co-curricular program. The district also recognizes that in-state and out-of-state travel will be necessary at times to allow board members, employees, students and others to attend meetings, conferences, conventions and workshops which will contribute to their professional growth and to the further development of district programs.

B. **References**

[Board Policy/Procedure 6213/6213P](#) –Reimbursement for Travel Expenses

C. **Authorization**

A [Travel Request form](#) must be submitted, either online or by paper form, before traveling on district business whenever expenses are to be charged to the district, either directly or through reimbursement. The form is located in Employee Online under Other, then [Travel and Reimbursement form](#), or in the Business Information Manual under Forms. A copy of the registration application, if applicable, must accompany the travel request form. A travel authorization request is not required if the only expense(s) are mileage for use of a personal vehicle, parking, and/or tolls. In such instances, expenses should be submitted on a Travel and Reimbursement form located via Employee Online or a [Mileage Report form](#) with supervisor and budget authority approval. A travel request is not required for registrations for web-casts or other such virtual workshops where an individual essentially stays within the district and there is no actual travel involved.

Instructions for online employee reimbursement forms are located [Reimbursement Request Web Form Instructions](#).

All travel requests must be approved by the administrator(s) responsible for the travel or registration budget(s) to be charged and must be approved by the employee's supervisor. In addition, superintendent authorization is required for out-of-state travel requests. For board travel, the superintendent is responsible for budget authorization. Superintendent travel requests shall include the board president or designee's signature. Administrators and supervisors that approve travel requests are responsible to ensure that prudent judgment is exercised in the purpose for and arrangement of out-of-district travel.

D. **Reimbursement**

Reimbursement for all travel expenses shall be made pursuant to the submission of a Travel and Reimbursement form, located in Employee Online under [Travel and Reimbursement form](#) or the [Statement of Travel Expenses](#). The basis for

reimbursement will be reasonable actual costs associated with travel with the exception of meals for overnight travel which will be on a set per eligible meal basis. The use of a district procurement card for all acceptable travel expenses is allowed, except that purchase of food and non-alcoholic beverages (via procurement card, purchase order or personal reimbursement) consumed by staff and others while conducting district business requires prior approval of the superintendent.

An individual is eligible for meal per diem only for overnight travel. Meals for non-overnight travel may be authorized when the conditions of the travel are such that the meal would qualify as non-taxable under IRS guidelines. Meals served during a business meeting and at the business site would qualify. If a staff member is acting in a custodial or supervisory role for students as part of their official duties, the overnight rule for meals does not apply. Such meals shall be based on actual reasonable expenditures. Receipts and meeting agendas, and/or itineraries are required.

Reimbursement for meal costs incurred within the boundaries of Everett Public Schools are generally not reimbursable under this section, but instead may be covered by [Business Information Manual Section 1.02, Food and Beverage Consumption](#).

Individuals may only be eligible for lodging reimbursement if the conference or travel destination is located more than fifty (50) miles away from the traveler's residence or the Everett Public School's boundaries (whichever is closer to the conference destination). Special exceptions may be granted by the individual's supervisor based upon duration of the event and location of the traveler's residence. If a staff member is acting in a custodial or supervisory role for students who will be staying overnight, and it is part of their official duties, the fifty (50) mile rule does not apply.

All expenses reimbursed directly to the employee must be listed on the [Travel and Reimbursement form](#), located in Employee Online, or [Statement of Travel Expenses](#), and when required, have original itemized receipts attached. Only those expenses incurred by and for the person submitting the request may be reimbursed, unless an exception is pre-approved by the superintendent. Reimbursements shall satisfy the following criteria:

- Airline, Train, Bus Fare: Travel at tourist or coach rate is required. Tickets may be purchased over the internet, charged to a district procurement card account, or may be charged to the district at one of the local travel agencies that have been designated by the finance and business services department. Employees on approved travel may pay for tickets and be reimbursed upon completion of travel. The flight itinerary along with the original charge slip and/or detailed sales receipt are required. Receipts or other proof of payment will also be required for any necessary baggage fees.

- **Registration Fees:** Individual registration fees may be charged to a district procurement card account, paid directly by issuance of a warrant through the accounting office, or by reimbursement. A copy of the registration application must be attached to the travel request form. Individual registration fees of less than \$25.00 may be paid by the employee if preferred. An original receipt is required for reimbursement of said registration. The \$25.00 baseline is for convenience, not restriction. Exceptions are permissible, however, the individual will not be reimbursed for the registration until completion of the travel.
- **Lodging:** Actual reasonable expenses per day may be reimbursable. Itemized original receipts are required. Meals and other incidental costs charged to rooms shall not be reimbursable.
- **Meal Per Diem Rates:** The district recognizes the financial benefit of establishing standard per meal eligibility for in-state and out-of-state travel to facilitate the efficient management of the meal reimbursement process.

Meal eligibility is based on guidelines provided by the US General Services Administration (GSA) and the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM). This eligibility, including tax and tips, are as follows:

Meal	In-State*	Out-of-State
Breakfast	\$15.00	\$16.00
Lunch	\$18.00	\$19.00
Dinner	\$31.00	\$34.00
Total Per Diem	\$64.00	\$69.00

For unique circumstances associated with travel outside of the continental United States, or unique high-cost travel areas, the finance and business services department may use the current GSA rate for that area of travel, or may determine modified rates.

Travel status shall begin three hours prior to a meal to establish eligibility for entitlement of such meal. Travelers are not eligible for the last meal entitlement on their last travel day unless necessary travel status extends two hours past what is considered the typical meal period. Meals included as a part of registration should not be considered an eligible entitlement. Hotel continental breakfasts and airline meals do not qualify as a provided meal.

- **Shuttle, Taxi, or Limousine To or From Airport:** Reimbursement for actual reasonable expenses is allowed. Receipts should be obtained when possible.
- **Parking:** Reimbursement for actual reasonable expenses is allowed. Receipts should be obtained when possible.
- **Ferry or Toll:** Reimbursement for actual reasonable expenses is allowed. Original receipts are required. For toll fees incurred by the traveler, original

receipts or Flex-Pass account statements showing payment of trip cost details must be submitted. Commuter lane toll fees reimbursed by the district should include a benefit to the district, not for the mere personal convenience of the traveler.

- Personal Vehicle Mileage: Reimbursement is limited to current IRS regulations. Reimbursement may occur on a [Travel and Reimbursement form](#), located in Employee Online, or [Statement of Travel Expenses](#) (in association with an approved Travel Request form) or on a [Mileage Report](#) located in the Business Information Manual.
- Telephone Calls: Business related telephone calls are a reimbursable expense and may be included with the lodging expense. One call to home per day of a reasonable length may also be reimbursable while on travel status.

E. Mileage - Personal Vehicle

Mileage reimbursement is limited to current IRS guidelines.

- Inside the District: Reimbursement is allowed with budget authority approval. Expenses can be submitted on a [Statement of Travel Expenses](#), a [Travel and Reimbursement form](#) located via Employee Online, or a [Mileage Report form](#) is to be submitted. Distances between district sites have been established through Mapquest. The shortest time will be calculated or listed on the [Everett Public Schools Mileage Chart](#). (Indicated distances are one-way)
- Outside the District: Reimbursement is allowed typically only in connection with an approved [Travel Request](#). However, when mileage, parking and tolls are the only expense(s), they may be reimbursed by submitting a Travel and Reimbursement form located in Employee Online, or on a Mileage Report, for travel to destinations generally defined as Western Washington (including Portland and Vancouver B.C.).

Mileage: Mileage should be completed and submitted to accounting on a monthly or no less than quarterly basis.

F. Non-Reimbursable Expenses

Expenses not directly related to district business are not reimbursable including but not limited to the following:

- Alcoholic and tobacco products.
- Personal telephone calls (except as noted in Part D, Telephone Calls) and postage.
- Commuter mileage between work location and home. (The IRS considers travel from home to work as commuting, even if the travel is on a weekend,

in the evening, an extra trip, or a trip at another non-typical hour. Commuter miles are a personal expense and are not eligible for reimbursement).

- Mileage for school levy promotions and other non-official school functions.
- Entertainment.
- Parking citations.
- Other personal expenses, or expenses that are construed as personal unless a specific exemption, business benefit, and approval applies.

G. Travel Advances

Travel advances of \$25.00 or more may be issued no more than two weeks prior to departure in connection with approved travel. **Please submit the Request for Travel Advance to accounting at least two (2) weeks prior to travel.**

Travel advances are made through the district's Advance Travel Bank Account for approximately 75% of estimate out-of-pocket expenses. (Requests for advances of 100% of estimated out-of-pocket expenses should be directed to the accounting office for prior approval.) Advances are made in increments of \$5.00 (rounding down).

State law requires that any officer or employee receiving a travel advance shall submit within fifteen (15) days following completion of travel, a fully itemized online [Travel and Reimbursement form](#) or [Statement of Travel Expenses](#) accompanied by the unexpended portion of such advance, if any. Other state requirements are effective if the employee defaults on their responsibilities for the advance. Refer to [RCW 42.24.140](#), if necessary.

H. Reimbursement of Expenses

To claim reimbursements, a [Travel and Reimbursement form](#) or [Statement of Travel Expenses](#) is to be submitted following completion of travel. Mileage for in-district travel is to be submitted monthly or quarterly on a [Travel and Reimbursement form](#) or [Mileage Report](#). All paper forms submitted must be completed and signed in ink.

A separate online Travel and Reimbursement form or Statement of Travel Expenses, prepared in ink or typewritten, is to be signed and submitted for each approved travel request. Reimbursements are paid through the accounting office. See the accounts payable [Section 4.04](#) for warrant issuance timelines.

Travel requests should encompass reasonable estimates for all known or potential travel costs to be incurred. For efficiency, immaterial cost variances or non-substantial changes in travel circumstances as compared to the authorized Travel and Reimbursement form or Statement of Travel Expenses, do not need to be re-routed for budget authority approval. Costs that substantially exceed the

original travel request estimates or represent significant changes in travel circumstances should be approved by the appropriate budget authority.

I. Responsibilities of Travelers

A traveler on official district business is responsible for:

- Securing prior authorization for travel as required by this section, especially superintendent approval for out-of-state travel.
- Being familiar with district travel regulations before embarking on travel.
- Exercising prudent care in incurring expenses while accomplishing the purpose of the travel. Excess costs including but not limited to circuitous routes of travel, elective flight delays (bumps) or elective luxury accommodations are not acceptable.
- Retaining detailed itemized receipts when required. Receipts are not applicable for per diem meal entitlements.
- Adjusting meals claimed on the online [Travel and Reimbursement form](#) or [Statement of Travel Expenses](#) if any such meals were provided as part of the registration expense. (Reasonable exceptions due to just cause, may be considered on a case by case basis. In the absence of which, the traveler is expected to self-monitor and adjust meal claims as appropriate)
- Preparing the online Travel and Reimbursement form or Statement of Travel Expenses and providing appropriate documentation.

J. Unique Circumstances

The district takes very seriously its fiduciary duty to ensure all costs it incurs are necessary, reasonable and allowable uses of public funds. The community expects the district to be extraordinarily prudent in its governance of travel related costs. Decisions for unique guidance and limitations are made through the lens of public perception and expectation, in addition to laws and regulations.

If a particular travel itinerary or circumstance presents itself with a unique situation that is not addressed in the Business Information Manual, please contact the finance and business services department for guidance and limitations. Appropriate documentation and approvals may be necessary for unique situations.