


POLICY

SUBJECT: Employee Travel and Reimbursement

NUMBER: MGT-651-24

APPLICABLE TO: All DJS employees

APPROVED: 
Vincent Schiraldi, Secretary

DATE: March 28, 2024

I. POLICY

The Department of Juvenile Services (DJS or agency) provides fair, consistent, and cost-effective administration of staff travel and expense reimbursement in accordance with Maryland law and regulations, and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) policy.

II. AUTHORITY

- A. Md. Code Ann., Hum. Servs., § 9-203 and §9-204
- B. Md. Code Ann., State Personnel & Pensions, §7-602(a)(1)
- C. Md. Code Ann., State Fin. & Proc., § 10-203
- D. COMAR 23.02.01.
- E. American Correctional Association (ACA) Standard, 4-JCF-6B-15

III. DIRECTIVES/POLICIES RESCINDED

- A. Employee Travel and Reimbursement, MGT-603-14

IV. FAILURE TO COMPLY

Failure to comply with the Department's Policy and Procedures shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

V. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Standard operating procedures have been developed.

VI. REVISION HISTORY


SUMMARY OF REVISION	DATE OF REVISION
Updated policy in accordance with State travel regulations and current Department practices	April 2014
Updated policy with contact information	July 2018
Updated policy with new state travel guidelines/reimbursement rates. Updated policy number.	March 2024

PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: Employee Travel and Reimbursement

NUMBER: MGT-651-24

APPLICABLE TO: All DJS employees

APPROVED: 

David E. Brown
Deputy Secretary of Support Services

DATE: March 20, 2024

I. PURPOSE

These procedures establish a consistent, efficient, and cost-effective travel and reimbursement process for staff travel and training needs in accordance with state travel regulations. These procedures are aimed to ensure fairness and economy and to enable staff responsible for making travel accommodations to make timely arrangements.

II. DEFINITIONS

Commute mileage means the mileage traveled from the employee's home to the assigned office or work location. Commute mileage must be deducted from the total mileage when an employee leaves from home rather than the office or work location.

In-state travel means travel to destinations inside the boundaries of Maryland. In-state travel includes the Washington D.C. area and travel to attend meetings with federal regional counterparts.

Official business means authorized duties performed by an employee in their official capacity in accordance with their prescribed position duties and responsibilities.

Out-of-state travel means travel to destinations outside Maryland and the Washington D.C. area.

Routine business travel means authorized travel on a daily or periodic basis to a location other than the employee's assigned office or work location for official business. Employees may not receive reimbursement for meals or hotels while on routine business travel.

Secretary means the Secretary of the Department of Juvenile Services.

Travel status means an employee traveling on approved state business to any location over 2 hours from the employee's assigned office or work location. An employee is not in travel status while commuting from home to their assigned office or work location. Employees may be reimbursed for meal and hotel costs while on travel status.

Exception Report means the bi-annual report submitted to the DBM explaining each travel accommodation booked with a vendor outside of the statewide contracted vendor.

Emergency travel means an employee requesting travel outside of the regular period for requesting travel (i.e., for in-state travel, the regular period is 15 calendar days and for out of state, 30 calendar days).

III. **PROCEDURES**

A. **General Conditions**

1. The Deputy Secretary of Support Services shall identify an individual or individuals to serve as the designated agency travel coordinator(s) for all travel requiring commercial transportation and/or lodging in accordance with these procedures and the travel regulations promulgated by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). All identified hotel accommodations identified are deemed 3 star and above.
2. All accommodations must be booked through the statewide contracted vendor selected by DBM and the vendor shall utilize the lowest logical commercial transportation and lodging fares available. Neither the designated agency travel coordinator nor the state employee on state travel may participate in any promotional plan, such as a frequent flier program, when this participation entails foregoing a more favorable fare rate. Travel awards accrued under a promotional plan as a result of state business travel should be applied to state business travel expenses whenever feasible. Baltimore Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport is the required departure airport. If, however, it is convenient and cost-effective to fly from another airport that airport should be used when possible.
3. All commercial travel and lodging arrangements will be made through the DJS Travel Unit under the Auxiliary Director with the statewide contracted vendor.
4. The Travel Office will determine the appropriate travel arrangements, including. departure day and times, lodging nights and meals costs to be advanced or reimbursed based on the start and end date and times of the conference or meeting. The Travel Office will book all lodging and travel arrangements in accordance with the DBM Travel Regulations and ensure all bookings are cost effective. The Travel Office will book lodgings for

DJS trainings, such as Entry-level Training and Dialectical Behavior Training, as it is cost-effective for the department.

5. Staff traveling out of state shall receive prior approval on the *Individual Request for Out-of-state Travel Form, Appendix 1* pursuant to section C. below. No reimbursement will be made for costs incurred during out of state travel unless this travel form, with necessary approvals, is submitted to the appropriate travel coordinator. This form and itemized receipts, bills, or other supporting documentation shall accompany the employee's reimbursement request, the *State of Maryland Expense Account Form, Appendix 2*. See section H. 3. below.
6. An employee on official business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses as would a prudent person for personal reasons. Travel for business should be conducted at a minimum cost for achieving the success of the mission. Travel in first class and business class is not reimbursable by DJS.
7. Travelers shall request needed reservations through the appropriate agency travel coordinator (email: djs.travel@maryland.gov) as far in advance as possible and in accordance with these procedures. All out-of-service training and related travel requests must be received at least 30 calendar days prior to the start date of training. All in-state travel requests must be received 15 calendar days prior to the travel date. The employee shall submit the approved *Request for Travel and Lodging/Reservations Form, Appendix 3* to the travel email at djs.travel@maryland.gov.
8. Requests for travel received after 3:00 p.m. are logged on the next business day.
9. Once made, no changes can be made to airfare reservations. The employee who fails to show for their flight will be required to reimburse the agency for all travel costs.
10. When reservations are made through the travel coordinator, all travel receipts must be submitted within five (5) calendar days of return date of travel, including, but not limited to, receipts for applicable hotel, air, and rental expenses.
11. All approved requests for reimbursement must be submitted electronically to the appropriate Accounting Unit accounts payable email using the **State of Maryland Expense Account Form within 60 calendar days of date of travel in accordance with the Comptroller's Accounting Policy**. The Accounting Unit will review and process all expense forms within five calendar days to the General Accounting Division.

12. State facilities shall be used for in-state meetings whenever available unless the use of outside facilities is more cost effective or the Secretary certifies that the outside facility is more appropriate for completing the business mission.
13. Reimbursement rates, including the maximum meal reimbursement rates, shall be the amount established by the Secretary of the DBM and approved by the Board of Public Works (BPW). The rates in effect on the date of the travel shall apply.
14. Failure to comply with these procedures could result in forfeiture of future travel privileges or the employee's assumption of financial responsibility for incurred costs.

B. Travel Advance Requests

1. Employees shall complete the *Travel Advance Request Form, Appendix 4* when requesting a travel advance. Travel advance requests will only be accepted for travel involving a minimum of three days and two nights and will only be granted for meals, other means of transportation such as (taxi, Uber or Lyft) and gas costs only if a rental car has been deemed necessary and reserved. All other travel requests that lack information or are blank will be denied.
2. The travel advance request must include a request for a specific amount of funds required for travel.
3. The travel advance request must be signed by the employee for whom the advance is requested and the employee's supervisor.
4. No subsequent travel advances shall be approved if the employee owes an outstanding expense form for a previous travel to the DJS Accounting Unit.
5. In accepting a travel advance, the employee must submit a *State of Maryland Expense Account Reimbursement form, Appendix 5* to the DJS Accounting Unit within 10 calendar days after the completion of the trip with all receipts attached. If the Accounting Unit does not receive the employee's reimbursement form within 10 calendar days, the Accounting Unit will notify the employee once before making a referral to the Central Collection Unit (CCU) to collect any expenses from the employee for which the employee did not provide a receipt. If the employee does not respond to the notice within 10 calendar days from the date of notice, the employee's right to be informally heard by the Accounting Unit as to why the expense account is late and why referral to CCU should not be submitted.

C. Travel Authorization

1. Routine in-state business travel may be approved by a supervisory employee authorized to approve expense accounts. In-state travel for training that exceeds one week must be approved by the Training Unit Director. If a training is offered by a non-state agency, the DJS Travel Unit shall book travel accommodations through the statewide travel vendor. An employee may be required to stay at a hotel if it is more cost effective.
2. Out-of-state travel to placement facilities for the purpose of monitoring or audit visits or placing, visiting, or picking up youth based on their needs must be approved by the appropriate Regional Director or Facility Superintendent through the appropriate supervisor, using the *Individual Request for Out-of-state Travel Form, Appendix 1*.
3. Travel meeting the following criteria must be approved by the appropriate Executive Director and Deputy Secretary of Support Services:
 - a. In-state travel to conferences, seminars or training which cost greater than \$500; or
 - b. Travel to out-of-state placement facilities for reasons other than those listed above in section C. 2.
4. Out-of-state travel for groups larger than 4 employees and with incurred costs of \$500 or more in state funds must be approved by the Auxiliary Director and/or Deputy Secretary for Support Services and, when applicable, the Deputy Secretary for Residential or Community Services, the Assistant Secretary or the Superintendent of Juvenile Services Education Program.
5. Any travel outside the United States must be approved by the DJS Secretary prior to submission to the Board of Public Works.
6. In accordance with the [DBM Fare Policy Summary](#), all state employees must use the least expensive route as indicated in Google Maps. Delays of not more than two hours that result in materially lower costs shall be taken. Employees may, however, accept or request longer delays.

D. Private Mileage Reimbursement

1. State employees are required to carry out their assigned duties even if a state vehicle is not available or if the employee is not eligible to drive a state vehicle pursuant to DJS and state driver guidelines. The state is not required to provide a state vehicle to employees to perform their assigned duties.

2. Authorized persons who use a privately-owned motor vehicle for official state business shall be reimbursed in accordance with the DBM-approved rate and in accordance with section E. below. Should an employee prefer to use a privately- owned vehicle when a state vehicle is available for conducting official business, the employee shall only be reimbursed at one- half the standard rate allowed for the use of privately-owned vehicles. See *State of Maryland Half-rate Expense Account Form, Appendix 6*.
3. Authorized drivers shall be reimbursed for reasonable parking and toll expenses incurred while conducting state business in a privately-owned vehicle. Receipts must be submitted electronically with the completed and approved *State of Maryland Expense Account Form* to the appropriate Accounting Unit email **within 60 calendar days of date of travel in accordance with the Comptroller's Accounting Policy**.
4. The state does not reimburse employees for any increased insurance premiums attributable to the use of their privately-owned vehicle for state business. Reimbursement for insurance is reflected in the mileage reimbursement rate.

E. Reimbursable Mileage

1. Subject to section D. above, reimbursement is based on the principle that the employee should be reimbursed for all official business or mileage accumulated in a private vehicle that is beyond that mileage incurred from the employee's home to the assigned office or work location.
 - a. An employee who leaves the office to conduct business in the field and returns to the office may be reimbursed for all mileage directly connected with the business trip.
 - b. Subject to subsection d. below, an employee who leaves home to conduct state business without stopping at the assigned office may be reimbursed for all mileage directly connected with the business trip in excess of the round trip commute miles normally traveled.
 - c. An employee who conducts state business prior to arriving at or on the way home from the assigned office may be reimbursed for all mileage in excess of the one-way commute miles normally traveled for the respective portion(s) of their normal commute.
 - d. Where on-site lodging is available for staff during DJS-sponsored or approved training or conferences is more than a 2-hour drive .their assigned work location and the employee elects not to take advantage of the lodging offered, the employee shall only be reimbursed for day one of training and the last day of training
 - e. If the employee elects to not stay in the offered hotel and this causes overtime, the overtime must be estimated and submitted for approval by the Unit Head and Deputy Secretary of Support Services, Deputy Secretaries of Residential and Community

Services, and Superintendent of JSEP.

- f. An employee who has been reassigned from their original work location cannot receive mileage reimbursement for mileage to and from their new work location.

F. Meal Reimbursement

1. Meal allowances for employees while in travel status are reimbursable at the rates established by DBM.
2. When an employee is in travel status involving absence from home overnight, all meals are reimbursable except complimentary or continental breakfasts included in the lodging costs.
3. Reimbursement will not be made for the cost of alcoholic beverages.
4. The cost of breakfast is reimbursable when an employee in travel status is over 2 hours away beyond their normal commute to their assigned work location and must leave home on official business before 6:00 am on the first day of travel. The cost of dinner is reimbursable when an employee in travel status is unable to arrive home within two hours of the end of the employee's normal shift. The travel time does not include the normal commute time.
5. In cases when an employee meets the conditions of F. 4. and is in travel status for the entire day, but not overnight, the employee's lunch is also reimbursable.
6. Reimbursement for breakfast or dinner may not be made solely because of the hour at which an employee is required to leave home, or at which the employee returns home, because of the normal commute to and from the employee's normal place(s) of employment.
7. Except as provided in F. 2., 4., and 5. above, an employee may not be reimbursed for the cost of lunch.
8. If the registration fee for a conference, convention, seminar or training meeting includes the cost of meals, the employee shall be reimbursed for the full registration fee if prior approval to pre-pay outside of the Training Unit is authorized by the Deputy Secretary for Support Services and the Deputy Secretaries for Residential and Community Services, an Assistant Secretary or JSEP Superintendent where applicable and in writing. The employee may not request reimbursement for any meals included in the conference registration or otherwise provided s, except to the extent the employee requires special dietary accommodations. Such requests shall be

submitted in advance and require the approval of the Deputy Secretary for Support Services and the Deputy Secretaries for Residential and Community Services where applicable.

9. Members of boards and commissions established by statute who do not receive compensation from the state may be reimbursed for actual and necessary meal expenses incurred while on official state business. Reimbursable meal expenses including tips may not exceed amounts established by DBM.
10. Meal reimbursement above the standard limits is allowable for employees conducting business in high cost areas designated by the DBM. Employees shall be reimbursed for actual amounts per meal; (this is not a per diem rate by day) not to exceed limits set by the Secretary of DBM based upon submitted receipts.
11. Meal reimbursement above the standard limits is allowable for employees on travel status outside the United States and its territories upon submission of receipts approved by the Secretary or the Secretary's designee.

G. Lodging

1. All lodging requests shall be coordinated by the appropriate travel coordinator. Except in emergency circumstances, staff shall submit the approved *Request for Travel and Lodging/Reservations Form* to the travel coordinator (email: djs.travel@maryland.gov) at least 15 calendar days in advance of the date of travel.
2. The travel coordinator shall make lodging accommodations in accordance with the [DBM's Standard Travel Regulations](#).
3. The travel coordinator shall make lodging accommodations within a 10 mile radius of a meeting and/or conference location that ensures a cost savings of at least 10% including . the cost of traveling to conference from the hotel location.
4. Staff shall submit a receipt to the travel coordinator for the lodging within five (5) calendar days of return from travel date.
5. Should a problem arise with hotel accommodations, the employee must contact the Travel Coordinator for assistance. The point of contact for the Travel Coordinator is listed on the Travel Confirmation packages sent prior to travel and in the auto-reply emails. Payment for any unauthorized changes in accommodations will be the responsibility of the employee who makes the changes.

6. Employees are not authorized to use an Airbnb while on approved travel. DJS will not authorize Airbnb rentals nor approve reimbursement for an Airbnb expense in accordance with the [DBM Airbnb Policy](#).

H. Miscellaneous Reimbursable and Non-Reimbursable Items

1. Telephone and postage expenses incurred in the performance of official duties are reimbursable. Documentation of these expenses is required.
2. DJS will not reimburse any employee for any expenses incurred by the employee's spouse, child, or other person who accompanies the employee on an official business trip.
3. All anticipated expenses likely to be incurred during out-of-state travel shall be included on the *Individual Request for Out of state Travel Form*. All travel arrangements will be made by the designated travel coordinator. Any reimbursements must be evidenced by receipts for all out of state expenditures and must be included with the *State of Maryland Expense Account* form.
4. Air travel insurance is provided through the state Treasurer's Office. Beneficiaries are those designated with the state Retirement and Pension System. No reimbursement is allowed.
5. Approved conference registration fees are not reimbursable to participating state employees and officials. Fees are only reimbursable if the employee has written pre-approval to self-pay and must submit a receipt. All conference registration fees and appropriate forms are required to be submitted to the Training Unit.
6. Taxi, Uber or Lyft, bus fares incurred while on travel status are reimbursable when traveling to and from the airport, train station, or bus station, or when otherwise incurred while conducting official business. Employees shall use the mode of public transportation that results in the lowest logical cost to the state. Before an Uber/Lyft can be used, an employee is required to use taxis. An Uber/Lyft may be used only as a last resort. Receipts for the costs of all modes of transportation must be submitted with the expense account form.
7. All rental car requests shall be coordinated by the appropriate travel coordinator. Except in emergency circumstances, staff shall forward the approved *Individual Request for Out of state Travel Form* at least 30 calendar days before the rental car is needed. Staff shall submit a receipt for the rental car within five business days of the rental car return. Staff may not request a rental car to travel between the Conference or

Training site; staff may use a taxi for that purpose, unless the cost of a taxi is greater than the cost of the rental car.

8. Necessary rental car expenses incurred for gasoline, oil, parking, and toll charges are reimbursable. All receipts must be submitted for expenses incurred.
9. Porter fees and hotel tips per bag carried at common carrier depots and hotels, respectively, are reimbursable at the rates established by DBM. Please refer to the [DBM Meal and Tip Reimbursement Rates](#).
10. The cost of laundry, cleaning, and pressing is reimbursable when an employee is required to be on travel status for a period exceeding five (5) consecutive working days. Receipt is required.
11. Fees for Uber or Lyft rides in lieu of a rental car are reimbursable if rides are being used to further state business. Tips for Uber or Lyft rides are subject to a cap of 15% in accordance with the [DBM Meal and Tip Reimbursement Rates](#).
12. The rentals of movies, mini bar, and/or room service outside of a meal time and over the meal reimbursable rate are not reimbursable.

I. Emergency Circumstances

1. Staff who need to submit a travel request outside of the regular period for requesting travel (i.e., for in-state travel, the regular period is 15 calendar days and for out of state, 30 calendar days) shall complete an *Emergency Travel Request Form, Appendix 7* and include justification for the emergency travel request (i.e., need and reason) and document on the Exception Report.
2. The DJS Office of Budget and Finance shall consider reimbursement for emergency circumstances on a case by case basis or when authorized by the Chief of Administrative Officer, Deputy Secretary for Support Services or the Secretary.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

Treatment Program Administrators and Regional Directors are responsible for implementation and compliance with this procedure.

V. INTERPRETATION

The Deputy Secretary for Support Services is responsible for interpreting and granting any exceptions to these procedures.

VI. LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES REQUIRED

No

VII. DIRECTIVES/POLICIES REFERENCED

- A. [DBM Fare Policy Summary](#)
- B. [DBM Airbnb Policy](#)
- C. [DBM Meal and Tip Reimbursement Rates](#)

VIII. APPENDICES

All forms can be found [here](#) on the DJS Intranet under the "Forms" tab.

1. Individual Request for Out-of-state Travel Form
2. State of Maryland Expense Account Form
3. Request for Travel and Lodging/Reservations Form
4. Travel Advance Request Form
5. State of Maryland Expense Account form
6. State of Maryland Half-rate Expense Account Form
7. Emergency Travel Request



DJS POLICY AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Statement of Receipt and Acknowledgment of Review and Understanding

SUBJECT: Employee Travel and Reimbursement
NUMBER: MGT-651-24
APPLICABLE TO: All DJS employees

I have received and reviewed a copy (electronic or paper) of the above titled policy and procedures. I understand the contents of the policy and procedures.

I understand that failure to sign this acknowledgment form within five working days of receipt of the policy shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

I understand that I will be held accountable for implementing this policy even if I fail to sign this acknowledgment form.

SIGNATURE

PRINT FULL NAME

DATE

WORK LOCATION

***SEND THE SIGNED COPY TO YOUR SUPERVISOR
FOR PLACEMENT IN YOUR PERSONNEL FILE.***