



Decatur Independent School District

Procedures: Travel Guidelines

Travel Guidelines Overview:

School Board Policy DDE Local State: An employee shall be reimbursed for reasonable, allowable expenses incurred in carrying out District business only with the prior approval of the employee's principal. Reimbursement for authorized travel shall be in accordance with legal requirements. For any authorized expense incurred, the employee shall submit a statement, with receipts to the extent feasible, documenting actual expenses and in accordance with administrative procedures.

Federal guidelines (IRS):

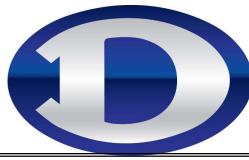
- All travel expenses shall be paid under an Accountable Plan: 1) travel must have a business connection; 2) the traveler shall account for all expenses; 3) excess advances, if any, shall be reimbursed to the district; and 4) meal expenses shall be in conjunction with overnight travel only.
- Travel advances will not be provided to traveler more than 10 days prior to the travel event
- If any travel expenses fail to meet the accountable plan guidelines, the payment to (or on behalf of) the traveler shall be taxed through the normal payroll cycle.

Federal Guidelines (EDGAR):

- All Travel expenses paid with federal grant funds (typically funds 2XX) shall meet the new EDGAR requirements (200.474) such as 1) all travel costs must be reasonable and necessary; 2) all travel costs must be consistent with the district's travel policy; 3) all travel costs must be directly related to the grant award; and 4) all travel costs must meet the obligation of expenses rules.
- In addition, all federally-funded travel expenses must meet the TEA's Current Travel & Mileage Reimbursement Rates (as published in the most recent TEA Correspondence).

State Guidelines (TEA):

- All mileage, lodging, and meal reimbursement rates published by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts apply to all grants (federal and state, typically funds 2XX, 3XX and 4XX) funded by TEA for <https://fm.x.cpa.state.tx.us/fm/travel/travelrates.php>
 - All travel expenses paid with federal and state grant funds shall meet the allowable travel expenses as specified in the TexTravel Guidelines, subject to limits imposed by District travel guidelines.
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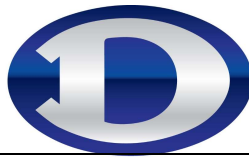
Local District Guidelines:

The local District Guideline shall apply to all travel expenses regardless of a funding source for in-state and out-of-state travel. All anticipated travel costs shall be submitted on a Travel Authorization Form, approved by the principal and Deputy Superintendent. **All anticipated travel costs shall be encumbered to the appropriate budget account code(s) before any travel-related costs are incurred by the district or traveler. Funds will not be released until all required receipts and documents are turned into the business office.**

District Allowable Travel Expense

Meals:

- Full Meal Per Diems- If the dates of travel are all full days and no meals are provided by the event, indicate the number of days for meals on the Travel Authorization form. **The total number of meals advanced will be based on whether meals are provided by the event and the time of departure and/or return.**
 - Employee Meals shall be based on the following amounts:
 - Breakfast (leave before 7 a.m.) \$ 11
 - Lunch(out of town during the noon hour) \$16
 - Dinner (arrive back to Decatur after 7 p.m.) \$28
 - Student Meals shall be based on the following maximum amounts:
 - Breakfast (leave before 7 a.m.) \$7
 - Lunch (out of town during the noon hour) \$8
 - Dinner (arrive back to Decatur after 7 p.m.) \$10
 - A check will be issued to the traveler within 2 days of the travel event for all staff and student meal per diems. All of the required documentation shall be submitted to the business office in accordance with the business office deadlines. A district travel card may be issued for student meals in lieu of a check only if paying for all students on one single ticket. A Sales tax exempt form should be used and detailed receipt turn in when using a district card.
 - A student meal sheet is required for any student trip with qualifying meals. The students' initials should be on the form as evidence that the student did receive the meal allowance.
 - Travelers do not have to submit receipts for their meal expenses but may be required to validate the actual costs with receipts, as appropriate. This form and any remaining money must be return into the business office within 5 days of travel.
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Lodging:

- The request will be considered approved when the requisition is submitted and approved by the principal.
- The Traveler shall estimate the lodging expenses per night (including all taxes, surcharges, etc). A conference or event hotel shall be the first priority to minimize transportation costs at the event city.
- The Traveler (or campus secretary on behalf of the traveler) shall make the hotel reservation and secure with their personal credit card or principal issued credit card. If the hotel requires a one night's deposit, the deposit shall be paid with the principals' district credit card.
- A travel card shall be issued to the traveler for the approved, estimated lodging expense as reflected on the Travel Authorization form.
- Lodging Costs shall be paid with a district-issued travel card on site at the time of arrival and/ or departure based on the hotel's policy. Travelers shall not pay the hotel expense with personal funds and seek reimbursement after-the-fact. Under this scenario, the traveler must ensure that only district-authorized travel costs are paid with the district credit card
- An itemized hotel bill is required.
- No Personal item (Movies, Spa Services, etc.) or food items (room service, in room-snack inventory, etc.) are authorized for purchase through the hotel bill. None of these unauthorized items should appear on the itemized bill.
- www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120

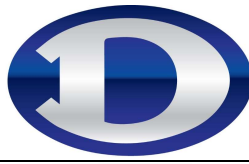
Tax Exemption:

School districts are exempt from State sales tax and Hotel Occupancy tax. It is the employee's responsibility to take the appropriate tax exemption forms.

- Texas Hotel Occupancy Exemption Certificates are available from the accounts payable department or online under travel forms. This Form exempts the District from the state of Texas tax. The city and occupancy taxes will be paid by the district.
- Texas Sales & Use Tax exemption certification forms are available from the Accounts Payable Department. (This Form will be necessary in addition to the Texas Hotel Occupancy Exemption Certificate for services such as parking).

Transportation:

- Mileage reimbursements shall be allowable for travel events that require travel outside the district.
 - Travelers should use a district-owned vehicle as the preferred method of transportation. A request for a vehicle shall be submitted on Eduphoria and make the request through FORMSPACE. Once you submitted the form, then transportation will approve the request and you will receive the confirmation that it is approved. Please make sure that the appropriate budget code is included. Follow the steps below:
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- Sign into Eduphoria
 - Select “FORMSPACE”
 - Select “SUBMIT NEW FORM” (lower left corner of page)
 - Select “GENERAL FORMS”
 - Choose the appropriate request option
 - Make sure to fill out all portions of the form and leave appropriate notes.
 - Enter the budget code, an amount and select the Green “+” symbol
 - Select SUBMIT
 - Travelers are required to submit fuel receipts if any for travel in a district owned vehicle. Travelers are not required to submit any fuel receipts for travel in a personal vehicle.
 - Travelers are expected to carpool unless prior approval is obtained.
 - Travelers who opt to drive their personal vehicle instead of a district-owned shall be reimbursed at the current mileage rate established by the Texas Comptroller and/or TEA, i.e. the current rate is \$.535 per mile.
 - A printout with the mileage from the point of origin [district address] to the point of destination shall be attached to the Travel Authorization form.

Athletics Events:

All Athletic travel with/without students, workshops, and conferences need to go through the athletic director secretary. State playoff events in which district students are not participating will only be attended by the head coach of the specific sport involved.

In-District Travel:

- Only instructional support staff, teachers and aides who have daily assignments at more than one campus will be reimbursed for in-District mileage.
- Trip mileage must begin from the employee’s regular worksite and end at last campus. Employees may not claim mileage for the distance between their home and work.

District Non-Allowable Travel Expenses:

- Alcoholic Drinks or beverages
 - Entertainment expenses, such as in-room movies, fee-based hotel amenities such as gyms, spas. Etc.
 - Expenses for spouses or other non-district employees
 - Expenses due to traveler’s failure to cancel a registration or travel arrangements (except for extraordinary circumstance)
 - Non-substantiated or fraudulent travel reimbursement requests shall be non-allowable travel expenses. Travelers who submit fraudulent travel reimbursement requests shall be required to reimburse the district for the fraudulent reimbursements and shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
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