

	POLICY PROCEDURE GUIDELINES	POLICY NUMBER: 03.20.00.	PAGE NUMBER: 1 of 9
		SUBJECT: Employee Travel Policy	Adopted: 1/22/2015 Latest Revision: 04/15/2016 Next Review:

03.20.00. POLICY STATEMENT

The Forest Preserve District of Cook County (the “District”) recognizes the occasional need for Department Heads to allow employees to travel to various conferences, seminars, meetings, and other related events. This policy framework is designed to clarify what the District will and will not permit and/or reimburse.

03.20.01. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to set out the District policies, procedures, and guidelines regarding employee business travels.

03.20.02. REFERENCES

Cook County Personnel Rules
Rule 8: Conduct and Discipline of Personnel

Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Vehicle Policy (01.40.00)

Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Employee Handbook
Rules of Conduct

03.20.03. DEFINITIONS

Vehicle/Equipment: These guidelines govern District owned, leased, and rented vehicles as defined in the District- Vehicle Policy.

03.20.04. SCOPE

This policy applies to all District employees. Application of this policy does not preclude the application of other District policies, ordinances, or other regulations as may be warranted by a given situation.

03.20.05. RESPONSIBILITY

Department Heads: District Department Heads shall be responsible for: **(1)** the execution of all travel regulations as well as such other policies and guidelines regarding travel as discussed in the District- Vehicle Policy and Transportation Expense Reimbursement Policy; **(2)** all travel subject to this policy shall be authorized in advance by the Department Head; and, **(3)** each Department Head shall develop a system for the prior authorization and control

of travel to prevent expenses exceeding appropriations and to hold travel to the minimum required for efficient and economical conduct of District business.

Finance & Administration Department: The Department of Finance & Administration shall manage the implementation of this policy.

District Employees: District employees are required to comply with this policy.

03.20.06. PROCEDURE

03.20.06.01. TRAVEL EXPENSES

A. Travel expenses are ordinary and necessary expenses for transportation, hotel accommodations, meals and incidental expenses for travel that is longer than an ordinary day's work, and the employee needs to get sleep or rest during non-working time while away.

03.20.06.02. ALLOWABLE TRANSPORTATION EXPENSE

A. Modes of transportation authorized for official travel in the course of District business will include automobiles, railroads, airlines, buses, taxicabs, and other usual means of conveyance. Transportation may include fares and expenses incidental to transportation such as baggage transfers and reasonable tips.

B. All taxicab fares shall be accompanied by a receipt indicating the amount paid.

C. Transportation between place of lodging and place of business at a temporary and distant work location shall be allowed as a transportation expense.

03.20.06.03. MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

A. In cases where an individual for their own convenience travels by an indirect route or interrupts travel by direct route, that individual shall bear the extra expense.

B. Reimbursement for expenses shall be based only on such charges as would have been incurred by the most direct and economical route.

C. All travel shall be by the most economical mode of transportation available, considering travel time, costs, and work requirements.

03.20.06.04. ACCOMMODATIONS ON AIRPLANES, TRAINS, AND BUSES

A. Travel on airplanes shall be coach class.

B. Any charges incurred as a result of changes to an original airline reservation made prior to or during travel are subject to Department Head approval.

- C. Employees are prohibited from accepting travel related benefits (e.g. free airplane tickets, free hotel rooms, etc.) from current District vendors, unless otherwise approved by the General Superintendent and/or his/her designee.

03.20.06.05. USE OF PRIVATELY OWNED OR RENTED CONVEYANCE

- A. When an individual rendering service to the District uses privately owned motor vehicles in the conduct of official business and such use is authorized or approved as advantageous to the District, payment shall be made on a mileage basis at rates not to exceed those published by the Cook County Bureau of Administration.
- B. Reimbursement for the cost of automobile parking fees and tolls shall be allowed.
- C. When a privately owned automobile is used for travel, the total transportation cost (including mileage allowance, parking fees, tolls and per diem expenses) shall not exceed the cost of public transportation, if reasonable public transportation is available.
- D. The use of rented automobiles will be kept to an absolute minimum and rented only in an emergency upon prior approval of the responsible Department Head. Every effort shall be made to obtain other suitable transportation rather than to use rented vehicles. Where emergencies require the use of a rented vehicle, the most economical vehicle available and suitable for the conduct of District business shall be obtained.

03.20.06.06. LIVING EXPENSES

- A. Meals and Incidental Expense:

Employees authorized by the General Superintendent and/or his designee to out of town travel shall receive a per diem set by the current U.S. General Services Administration in their Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) Meal and Incidental Expense (M&IE) rate. Travel rates differ by travel location and are periodically revised by the Federal Government. These rates can be found at the GSA “Domestic Per Diem Rates” website page at www.gsa.gov/perdiem .

The per diem rate is intended to include all meals and incidental expenses during the period of travel. There will be no reimbursement for meals and incidental expenses beyond this rate.

- B. Reimbursable Expenses:

- 1. Lodging: Reasonable costs of hotel accommodations incurred will be allowed. Lodging shall be reimbursed by receipt up to the limits of the current Federal Travel Regulations as shown on the GSA “Domestic Per Diem Rates” website page at www.gsa.gov/perdiem.

Questions of reasonable hotel accommodations should be referred to the Department of Finance & Administration. Receipts are to be submitted with the Invoice Form to support accommodation expenses claimed.

2. Transportation: Transportation to and from duty point; and, between places of lodging shall be allowed.
3. Special Expenses: The reasonable cost of miscellaneous expenses incurred shall be allowed to a traveler. The following are examples of miscellaneous

<u>Reimbursable</u>	<u>Non-Reimbursable</u>
Stenographic/ Typing Services	Entertainment
Storage of Baggage	Alcoholic Beverages
Hire of Room for Official Business	Traffic Tickets
Telephone Calls on Official Business	
Meals*	

* Meals/meal reimbursements will only be approved during authorized business related travels fifty (50) miles outside of Cook County, unless the meal/meal reimbursement is a part of the conference registration.

All special expenses shall be itemized on the Employee Reimbursement Form with receipts attached.

03.20.06.07. CONFERENCES

A. Employee Reimbursement Form Preparation:

1. All claims for reimbursement of travel expenses shall be submitted on the Employee Reimbursement Form and shall be itemized in accordance with these regulations.
2. The Employee Reimbursement Form shall show the purpose of travel, the dates of travel, the points of departure and destination, mode of transportation, and the cost of the transportation secured or mileage allowance if automobile is used.
3. The Employee Reimbursement Form shall be supported by receipts in all instances for railroad and airplane transportation, for lodging, and all other items. Also, a copy of the travel authorization is to be included for out-of-state travel.
4. The Employee Reimbursement Form shall be prepared and signed by the individual who has incurred the expenses.
5. The individual submitting the Employee Reimbursement Form is personally responsible for accuracy and propriety. Intentional misrepresentation shall be cause for disciplinary or legal action.

B. Approval and Submission of Invoice Form:

1. The Employee Reimbursement Form shall be approved by the Department Head or a designated representative, who shall sign the original Form and submit to the Department of Finance & Administration. A copy of the Form should be retained by the Department as well as the person submitting the Form.

2. Any Employee Reimbursement Form not prepared in accordance with these regulations or not properly supported by receipts where required will be returned to the originator for correction.

C. Frequency of Submission:

The original Employee Reimbursement Form shall be sent to the Department of Finance & Administration by no later than the last day of the following month in which the travel expense was incurred. Employee Reimbursement Forms submitted 60 days after the end of the month in which travel expense was incurred will not be reimbursed. A copy of the Employee Reimbursement Form should be retained by the department and the employee.

03.20.07. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

1. Department Heads/Department Head designees should be trained on this policy.

03.20.08. ACTION PLAN TO COMMUNICATE/DISSEMINATE

1. This policy should be distributed to all relative/necessary staff.
2. This policy should be distributed to all District employees.
3. This policy should be added to the District shared drive, intranet, and website.

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions concerning District policies, please contact:

Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Office of the General Superintendent
Attn: Anthony D. Tindall, Policy Director
69 W. Washington St., Suite 2040, Chicago, IL 60602
Office: (312) 603-8351; Email: Anthony.Tindall@cookcountyil.gov



APPENDIX A:

Transportation Expense Reimbursement Guidelines

GUIDELINES STATEMENT

The Forest Preserve District of Cook County (the “District”) recognizes the occasional need for Department Heads to allow employees to use their personal vehicles to conduct District related business. On such occasions the District will reimburse employees for such usage, when appropriate and as described in this guideline.

GUIDELINES PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to set out the District guidelines regarding transportation expense reimbursements.

REFERENCES

Cook County Rules & Regulations
Rule 8: Conduct and Discipline of Personnel

Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Employee Handbook
Rules of Conduct

Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Vehicle Policy (01.40.00)

Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Employee Travel Policy (07.20.00.)

DEFINITIONS

Vehicle/Equipment: These guidelines govern non-District owned, leased, and rented vehicles.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all District employees. Application of this policy does not preclude the application of other District policies, ordinances, or other regulations as may be warranted by a given situation.

RESPONSIBILITY

Department Heads: Department Heads shall: **(1)** review and approve Employee Reimbursement Forms; **(3)** submit Employee Reimbursement Forms to the Finance & Administration Department; and, **(4)** store a copy of their entire Employee Reimbursement Forms in a secure location.

Finance & Administration Department: The Department of Finance & Administration shall: **(1)** manage the implementation of this policy; and, **(2)** review and process Employee Reimbursement Forms.

District Employees: District employees are required to comply with this policy.

GUIDELINES

- A. **Commuting Expenses:** Commuting expenses between an employee's *home and permanent assignment*, including a non-District facility, will not be reimbursed, even if an employee's regular place of assignment is at different locations on different days within the District.

Example: An employee working is regularly assigned to the General Headquarters (GHQ) in River Forest, IL on Mondays and to the Downtown 69 W. Washington headquarters in Chicago on Tuesdays through Fridays, shall not be reimbursed for travel expenses from the employee's home to GHQ. Travel expenses to and from the employee's home on any day will not be reimbursed when assignments are permanent.

- B. **Temporary and Minor Assignments (mileage between temporary duty points)**

1. Employees who receive one or more temporary assignments in a day may be reimbursed for transportation for getting from one place to the other when they use their personal vehicle. Mileage from the employee's regular place of assignment, or first duty point, to all temporary duty points and back to regular place of assignment, or last duty point, is entitled to reimbursement.

Example: If employee A, who normally works at works at GHQ, goes to the Botanic Garden for a two hour meeting at the beginning of the day, they get mileage reimbursement only back to GHQ.

2. **General Guidelines:** **(a)** Mileage must be computed on the basis of the most direct route. Any mileage incurred solely for personal reasons is not reimbursable; **(b)** Employees must bear the cost of their normal commuting expenses between residence and official place of assignment; and, **(c)** Reimbursements for transportation expenses may only be for services performed for the District.

EMPLOYEE REIMBURSEMENT FORM

- A. **Preparation:**

1. All claims for compensation of transportation expenses including the use of privately owned automobile and incidental parking fees and tolls, and taxicab and bus fares shall be submitted and itemized in the Employee Reimbursement Form. (For each stop of

business use, enter date, started from location, finished at location, miles and expense between each stop. Total the dollar amount and enter in the space for "Total.")

2. When travel between home and first or last temporary duty point is authorized, the employee's residence shall be entered on the Employee Reimbursement Form, "Started from Location" or "Finished at Location."
3. The Employee Reimbursement Form shall be supported by receipts for all items, individually.
4. The Employee Reimbursement Form shall be prepared and signed by the individual who has incurred the expense and signed by their Supervisor. The original form shall be submitted to the Finance & Administration Department and a copy should be retained by the employee and by the department. Intentional falsification of a Employee Reimbursement Form is considered a major cause infraction subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.
5. The individual submitting the Employee Reimbursement Form is personally responsible for its accuracy and priority. Trip details shall be entered immediately following automobile use to eliminate possibility of errors.
6. Employees are responsible for all fines, fees and/or tickets as described in the District-Vehicle Policy and Incident Review Board Policy.

B. Approval & Submission:

1. The Employee Reimbursement Form shall be approved by the Department Head or a designated representative, who shall sign the original copy of the Employee Reimbursement Form.
2. The original Form shall be sent to the Finance & Administration Department no later than the last day of the following month in which the travel expense was incurred.
3. Employee Reimbursement Form submitted 60 days after the end of the month in which travel expense was incurred will not be reimbursed.
4. Any Employee Reimbursement Form not prepared in accordance with these regulations, including the proper signatures, will be returned to the originator for corrections.

C. Authorized Attendance at Seminars, Conventions, etc., on District Business:

These expenses shall be detailed in accordance with the procedure relating to "District-Employee Travel Policy".



APPENDIX B:

EMPLOYEE REIMBURSEMENT FORM

1	TRAVEL	<i>For Office Use Only</i>
2	<h2 style="color: #c00000; margin: 0;">Expense Report</h2>	
3		
4		
5	BUSINESS PURPOSE: _____	VENDOR NUMBER: _____ 88540
6	DATES: From _____ To _____	
7	EMPLOYEE INFORMATION:	
8	Name: _____	Account No: _____
9	Department: _____	Manager: _____
10	AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: _____	
11	EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE: _____	
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		Subtotal _____
18		Cash Advances _____
19	MAKE & MODEL OF AUTO: _____	Total _____
20		
21	DRIVER'S LICENSE NO.: _____	STATE LICENSE PLATE NO: _____
22		EXPIRATION DATE: _____
23		NAME OF INSURER: _____
24		