

**Department Of Finance and Administration**  
**Policy 8 - Comprehensive Travel Regulations**  
*Revised May 1, 2011*

**Introduction**

1. It is the intent of these regulations that employees not suffer additional cost as a result of travel incurred to carry out assigned duties. Employees shall be reimbursed for such expenses subject to the limitations provided in this travel policy and the accompanying Reimbursement Rate Schedule.
2. When traveling, state employees should be as conservative as circumstances permit. The lower cost should be selected whenever practical. Reimbursement for travel will be based upon the most direct or expeditious route possible. Employees traveling by an indirect route must assume any extra expense incurred. It is the responsibility of the employee to be familiar with and adhere to established state travel policies. Deliberate disregard of these regulations while traveling on state business or filing of an intentionally misleading or fraudulent travel claim are grounds for disciplinary action including termination of employment.
3. The Commissioner of Finance & Administration will establish and maintain the maximum rates of reimbursement.

**Travel Authorization**

4. Travel may not be undertaken unless it is authorized in advance by proper authority. Approved state travel is the basis for reimbursement in accordance with these provisions. The employee is considered to be on official travel status, and eligible for reimbursement, at the time of departure from his/her official station or residence, whichever is applicable. When completing an Edison travel authorization, the destination should always be entered under "default location," to ensure appropriate work-flow for the authorization form.
5. The department head is authorized to approve all travel for state business, including registration fees for conferences, conventions, seminars, etc. (including the cost of official banquets and/or luncheons), with the following exceptions:
  - a) The Commissioner of Finance and Administration through the Division of Accounts shall approve exceptions to the travel policy and Reimbursement Rate Schedules. Department heads are authorized to approve any necessary travel by a non-state employee. Such travel should be conducted and reimbursed in accordance with these Travel Regulations.

- b) Approval for out-of-state employee travel is processed through the Edison Travel Authorization workflow. Once approved by the department head, Executive\_Branch Travel Authorizations for out-of-state travel will be routed to the Department of Finance and Administration for review and approval. During periods of extreme budget stress, additional executive level review may occur.
- c) The Commissioner of Finance and Administration retains the authority to change the approval process as circumstances require.

6. If an employee travels into another state and back in the same day and such travel is less than 50 miles one way, such travel will be considered in-state for approval and reimbursement purposes.

### **Official Station**

7. The department head is responsible for establishing the official station of the employee. This is typically the location from which the employee performs the major portion of his/her assigned duties. The work station closest to an employee's residence should be designated as the official station for employees with multiple work stations. If an employee works predominantly from a home residence and reports to an office or other station less than twice a week, the employee's official station should be the home residence. Under unusual situations, the department head may designate other locations as the employee's official station.

8. The residence of the employee usually becomes the official station for an employee required to be on call at times other than the employee's normal working hours (i.e. nights or weekends). Employees working overtime on weekends are not normally eligible for reimbursement.

9. In the event that an employee is temporarily reassigned to a work location other than his usual official station, that location shall become the employee's official station. The employee will not be eligible for reimbursement unless he/she can demonstrate that by commuting to the temporary location he/she has incurred additional expense over the cost of the commute to his/her usual official station.

### **Reimbursement Procedures**

10. Submission of an expense report by an employee or their proxy initiates the travel reimbursement process, with approvals handled electronically through the Edison role-mapping structure. Employees must authorize the set-up of a proxy in Edison prior to the

submission of an initial expense claim by a proxy. Proxy-submitted travel claims must include the attached paper version of the travel claim, signed and dated by the employee, along with appropriate receipts.

11. Employees should submit claims for reimbursement through the Edison system as soon as possible following completion of travel. Employees on regular travel status should consider filing an expense report weekly or biweekly. Departments and agencies should review expense reports as rapidly as possible to ensure prompt payment to their employees. In accordance with Internal Revenue Service guidance (IRS Publication 463), reimbursement paid 60 days after the date of travel may be considered as taxable income.

### **Corporate Charge Cards**

12. Employees who routinely travel on state business and meet the eligibility requirements may apply for a corporate charge card through their department's fiscal office. Charges made on these charge cards are the liability of the employee.

### **Travel Advances**

13. Travel advances are available only under extraordinary circumstances. Advances are subject to the approval of the Division of Accounts and will be allowed (a) only if the employee can justify extraordinary circumstances that warrant an advance (for example, an employee is ineligible for a corporate travel card), and (b) the employee has provided Accounts with a payroll deduction authorization form which will allow the state to recover the advance from any salary owed the employee in the event of termination of employment or failure to submit an expense report.

14. The amount of the travel advance will be based on 80% of the total estimated cost of travel. Advances will not be issued for less than \$100. Immediately upon return the employee must submit an expense report regardless of whether he/she owes advance moneys back to the state or is due additional reimbursement.

### **Honorariums**

15. For those employees who receive honorariums for appearing at meetings while on official state business, the employee may, at his/her option, accept the honorarium as full payment for travel expenses including airfare, or choose to surrender the honorarium to the State, and be reimbursed in accordance with established travel policy.

## **Air Travel**

16. Departments may set their own policy as to how their employees may make reservations for air travel: either through the state travel agency designated by the Department of Finance and Administration, directly through an on-line booking service, or through either option at the choice of the employee. Advantage of discount fares and advance booking should be taken whenever practical, and fares should not exceed the regular tourist or coach fares offered the general public for both domestic and international flights. Reservations made through the state travel agency offer employees the benefit of 1-800 service for after-hour changes, automatic departmental billing for airfare charges, management of unused tickets, and common carrier insurance. When making reservations directly through an on-line booking service, a print-out of the booking must accompany the employee's expense claim. Employees who have unused tickets that were booked on-line should inform their departmental fiscal office, and make use of such tickets if additional travel is required.

## **Taxi Fares - Airport Transportation**

17. Reasonable taxi fares are allowed from airports. It is expected that bus, limousine or light rail service to or from airports will be used when available and practical. In traveling between hotel or other lodging and meeting or conference sites, reasonable taxi fares will be allowed. No receipt is required for reimbursement of reasonable taxi fares.

## **Travel - State Owned Automobile**

18. State-owned vehicles should be used only for official business. Only properly authorized state of Tennessee employees may operate a Motor Vehicle Management dispatch vehicle and must possess a valid driver's license for the type of vehicle being operated. All operators of dispatch vehicles must possess and present a valid state of Tennessee employee identification card. Persons driving state owned cars will be furnished with a courtesy card for gas and service at Department of General Services approved facilities.

19. Persons taking a state vehicle out of state will also need an approved MVM Dispatch Assignment, an approved Credit Card Request For Out of State Travel form, and a current driver's license. Motor Vehicle Management also requires a copy of the approved Travel Authorization to be certain prior approval has been obtained.

20. Emergency out of pocket expenses such as gasoline, oil or other services and emergency repairs will be reimbursed but must be accompanied by proper receipt identifying the automobile and itemizing the services. Such expenditures must be of an emergency nature where immediate service is required and access to a Department of

General Services approved facility is not possible. Claims for such expenditures should be filed using a separate Edison Expense Report, indicating the "business purpose" as "MVM fuel reimbursements," which routes the expense report to the proper approving authority. Reasonable tolls and ferry fees will be allowed when necessary without receipt, and may be filed on the expense report with other travel expenses.

### **Travel - Personally-Owned Automobile**

21. Department head authorization is required for the use of personally owned automobiles in the daily performance of duties. Unnecessary expenses which result from the use of an automobile for reasons of personal convenience will not be allowed.

22. Reimbursement for the use of personally owned cars is at the standard mileage rate. Reasonable tolls and ferry fees will be allowed when necessary; no receipt is required for reimbursement.

23. Only mileage on official state business may be claimed for reimbursement. Reasonable vicinity mileage will be allowed. The Edison system will automatically calculate point to point mileage. If the point to point mileage calculation by Edison appears incorrect or excessive, employees may make changes to the expense report in accordance with procedures established by the Division of Accounts.

24. Procedures for calculating mileage are based on the fact that the State is prohibited from reimbursing employees for normal commuting mileage.

a) If an employee begins or ends a trip at his/her official station, reimbursable mileage will be the mileage from the official station to the destination.

b) If work is performed by an employee in route to or from his/her official station, reimbursable mileage is computed by deducting the employee's normal commuting mileage from the actual mileage driven.

c) If an employee begins or ends his/her trip at his/her residence without stopping at his/her official station, reimbursable mileage will be the lesser of the mileage from the employee's residence to his/her destination or his/her official station to the destination. On weekends and holidays, the employee may typically be reimbursed for actual mileage from his/her residence to the destination.

d) If an employee travels between destinations without returning to his/her official station or his/her residence, reimbursable mileage is the actual mileage between those destinations.

### **Automobile Rental**

25. Advance authorization from the employing department head must be secured for automobile rental, whether for in-state or out-of-state travel. Car rental should be used only when necessary, i.e. when other forms of transportation are inconvenient, expensive or not available. Reservations made through the state travel agency can assure the department of any discounts negotiated with vendors. Charges for insurance for rented automobiles are not reimbursable costs; the State is self-insured through the Department of Treasury, Division of Claims Administration. Whenever possible, employees should refuel before returning vehicles.

### **Parking**

26. Charges for routine parking while on travel status will be reimbursed. Receipts are required if the parking charge exceeds the allowance stated in the rate schedule. Charges for routine parking at the official work station will not be reimbursed. Long-term airport parking is reimbursed at the standard rate offered by the airport's long-term or economy parking facility.

27. If travel is by air the employee will be reimbursed for the lesser of: (a) the allowable mileage reimbursement for one round trip and long-term airport parking; or (b) the cost of one round trip taxi fare from the employee's official work station (or residence on weekends/evenings). The employee may also be allowed the appropriate mileage reimbursement for two round trips from home when driven by a friend or relative, at the employee's option.

### **Promotional Materials and Airline Baggage Fees**

28. Fees for the handling of promotional materials or equipment will be allowed up to the maximum indicated in the Reimbursement Rate Schedule. Airline baggage fees for up to two bags will be reimbursed.

### **Lodging**

29. The employee will be reimbursed for actual lodging costs plus tax incurred up to the applicable maximum amounts as indicated on the Reimbursement Rate Schedule. This schedule includes state parks. Lodging receipts are required and must itemize room charges and taxes by date. If a convention rate exceeds the maximum reimbursement rate and is documented by a convention brochure or registration form, a higher reimbursement rate will be allowed. Miscellaneous lodging expenses such as energy or utility surcharges are fully reimbursable and should be added to the lodging cost, in manner similar to local hotel or sales taxes.

30. The maximum reimbursement rates for out-of-state travel are the same as those maintained by the U.S. General Services Administration for federal employees within the continental United States (CONUS). The CONUS list, available on the General Services Administration web site, contains a standard reimbursement rate for lodging and meals and incidentals, and several pages of exceptions. Most destinations for out-of-state travel fall within the list of exceptions.

31. If a room is shared with other than a state employee, actual costs subject to the applicable maximum rate in the reimbursement rate schedule apply. In the event of double occupancy for state employees on official travel, both employees should attach an explanation to his/her travel claim detailing dates and other employees with whom the room was shared. The lodging cost may be claimed by the employee who incurred the cost, or one half the double occupancy charge may be allowable for each employee.

#### **Per Diem Rates for Meals and Incidentals**

32. The maximum per diem rates include a fixed allowance for meals and incidental expenses (M & I). The M & I rate, or fraction thereof, is payable to the traveler without itemization of expenses or receipts. Incidentals are intended to include miscellaneous costs associated with travel such as tips for baggage handling, phone calls to home, etc. Reimbursement is made only when overnight travel is required. Generally, the applicable maximum per diem rate for each calendar day of travel shall be determined by the location of lodging for the traveler.

33. The per diem rates for meals and incidentals are established on the Reimbursement Rate Schedule. The M & I rates for out-of-state travel are the same as those for federal employees, and are available on the General Services Administration's web site. As with lodging, there is a standard rate for the continental United States (CONUS), and a list of exceptions. Please note that these rates may change effective October 1 of each year.

34. Reimbursement for meals and incidentals for the day of departure shall be three-fourths of the appropriate M & I rate (either the in-state rate or CONUS rate for out-of-state travel) at the rate prescribed for the lodging location. Reimbursement for M & I for the day of return shall be three-fourths of the M & I rate applicable to the preceding calendar day. Note that the Edison System defaults to the standard CONUS meal rate for a day, and the employee must enter the three-fourths rate for the day of departure and day of return. To assist in this calculation, the following table lists partial per diem rates for meals and incidentals for in-state and out-of-state travel.

**Per Diem Rates -  
Three-Fourths Calculations**

\$ 46	\$34.50
51	38.25
56	42.00
61	45.75
66	49.50
71	53.25

35. Employees who receive maintenance in the form of meals provided by their employing agency at their official work station shall be eligible for reimbursement if they are away from their official work station on state business and do not receive the maintenance meal.

36. Reimbursement for a single meal (or meals) for employees on one-day travel status with no overnight stay is not permitted. While on travel status if more than a single full meal is provided as part of a state-sponsored training session or conference, the employee should deduct the cost of those meals from the per diem for that day, using the schedule provided below. This also applies to the day of departure and the day of return. In those instances where all meals are provided, only the incidental rate should be claimed. For non-state sponsored training or conferences the employee is not required to deduct from the per diem the cost of a meal or meals provided through a conference fee.

**In-State and Out-of-State  
Meals & Incidentals - Allocated By Meal**

Per Diem	\$46	\$51	\$56	\$61	\$66	\$71
Breakfast	7	8	9	10	11	12
Lunch	11	12	13	15	16	18
Dinner	23	26	29	31	34	36
Incidentals	5	5	5	5	5	5

**Non-Standard Shift Hours**

37. Employees who are scheduled to work nonstandard shifts (official work hours begin before 7 AM or end after 5:30 PM) and are eligible for meal reimbursement shall be reimbursed at one-third of the daily M & I rate for each reimbursable meal. Total



reimbursement is limited to the full day M & I allowance listed in the Reimbursement Rate Schedule.

### **Extended Travel**

38. Extended travel status applies to those employees on continuous travel for a period of more than two weeks. Employees on extended travel status may elect to rent an apartment rather than live in a motel or hotel. While this option is left to the discretion of the employee and the employing department, department head approval is required prior to renting an apartment. The monthly rental allowance shall include rental furniture and payment of utilities, and shall not exceed the standard CONUS rate for thirty days.

39 Employees on extended travel status working in-state are authorized to travel to and from his/her home station once a week at the mileage rate for personal vehicles. Those employees on extended travel status working out-of-state are authorized to take one trip to the home station by common carrier once every two weeks. Employees authorized to use personal automobiles in out-of-state travel may be reimbursed at the personal mileage rate. The employee may also be reimbursed for local transportation to conduct state business.

### **Telecommunications Costs While on Travel Status**

40. Local phone calls, FAX charges and long distance calls for state business will be reimbursed. Employees must provide a statement furnishing the date, name and location called for long distance calls and FAX charges. Hotel Internet access charges may be reimbursed when approved in advance and when it is anticipated the employee will be working from a hotel room on official state business.

41. Department heads may authorize an employee to use his personal cellular phone in conducting state business. Authorized employees shall be reimbursed for any additional cost incurred in using their personal cellular phones on official business. An itemized statement indicating the date, name, location, and cost of each call plus a billing statement indicating that additional cost was incurred above the standard monthly charge is required for reimbursement. In some instances employees may be able to obtain lower cellular rates by purchasing a package that offers lower per minute rates for a higher threshold of minutes per month. Reimbursement is acceptable for such billing packages subject to review by fiscal officers. In such situations, the state would typically reimburse the employee for a portion of the monthly package used for business calls.

**Exceptions**

42. The Commissioner of Finance and Administration shall have the authority to grant exception from any part or all of these rules and regulations when deemed appropriate for an employee or group of employees on official state travel. Approved exceptions other than those for individual trips shall be maintained in a central file by the Department of Finance and Administration. Policy exceptions, which have state-wide implications, shall be approved through established procedures in accordance with the provisions of T.C.A. § 4-3-1008(3).

**Statutory Authority**

43. In accordance with the provisions of T.C.A. § 4-3-1008(3), these travel regulations, effective May 1, 2011, supersede and rescind all previous promulgated travel regulations and shall remain in effect until subsequently modified or rescinded.

Mark A. Emkes  
Mark A. Emkes, Commissioner  
Department of Finance and Administration.

5/3/11  
Date

APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_(approval on file in Div. of Accounts)\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert E. Cooper, Jr.  
Attorney General

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date