

## 512 Business Travel Expenses

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Employees are generally responsible for making their own travel arrangements. However, all business travel must be approved in advance by the appropriate elected official or their designated representative. Except in emergencies, authorization should be in writing and should include the business purpose for travel, mode of transportation, lodging arrangements, estimated expenses, expected dates and times of departure and return and other relevant information. Travel Expense Voucher forms are available from the Accounting Office and on the County website for this purpose.

Lodging, transportation and registration fees should be billed directly to the County if possible or charged to a County credit card. Employees should inquire regarding special government rates when making reservations for lodging and transportation. Employees will generally be reimbursed for other reasonable business travel expenses incurred while on assignments away from the normal work location. All requests for reimbursement of travel expenses are subject to the approval of the appropriate elected official or their designated representative and the Board of County Commissioners.

Employees are generally allowed a maximum of \$45 per day for meals while traveling in state and \$51 per day for Out of State travel. Cash advances for meal expenses may generally be obtained by submitting a properly authorized claim to the Accounting Department with a copy of the Travel Expense Voucher form at least one week prior to departure. Reimbursements for partial days will be made at the following rates:

	In-State	Out of State
* Breakfast	\$11.25	\$12.75
* Lunch	\$15.75	\$17.85
* Supper	\$24.75	\$28.05
* Full Day (Maximum)	\$45.00	\$51.00

Meals provided by any other party as part of the cost of travel accommodations such as transportation, hotel or conference/seminar registrations should not be included in requests for reimbursement of meal expenses and will not be reimbursed.

All claims for reimbursement of travel expenses must include documentation indicating travel dates, business purpose for travel, and receipts for all expenses incurred other than meals. Credit card charges and other claims for payment or reimbursement of travel expenses along with the Travel Expense Voucher form should be submitted to the Accounting Office for payment as soon as practical but not more than 30 days from the date expenses are incurred.

Employees are generally required to use the most economical and practical mode of transportation available. Authorized transportation expenses, when traveling by common carrier, shall generally be limited to the least expensive fair available. When traveling by automobile, a County vehicle will generally be provided if one is available. A County credit card may be provided for fuel purchases or the employee may be reimbursed for the actual cost of fuel.

The use of privately owned vehicles may be authorized when it is more practical than transportation by

common carrier and a County vehicle is not available. Privately owned vehicles must be properly licensed and insured. Employees who are required to use their personal vehicle for business travel generally will be reimbursed at the current IRS mileage allowance rate. Mileage will generally be calculated from the employees work station to the destination using the most practical route. Mileage will be determined by using a Rand McNally Atlas or other reliable method. Odometer readings will generally be used only when other reliable means for calculating mileage are not available.

Employees may also be authorized to use privately owned vehicles for their own convenience when traveling for business. In such cases, reimbursement for transportation expenses shall be limited to the cost of the least expensive or most practical alternative available or the employee's actual expenses, whichever is less.

With prior approval, employees on business travel may be accompanied by a family member or other companion, as long as it does not interfere with successful completion of business objectives. Employees may also be permitted to combine personal travel with business travel, as long as time away from work is approved in advance.

Employees will generally be required to use vacation leave or compensatory time off to extend travel time for personal reasons. Travel expenses for the employee's companion(s) and any additional travel expenses incurred for the sole benefit of the employee due to departing earlier or returning later than necessary, unnecessary stopovers or delays in transit, traveling by indirect routes, etc., are the responsibility of the employee.

Vehicles owned, leased, or rented by Bonneville County may not be used for personal use without prior approval. Employees are required to comply with applicable laws and regulations at all times when operating County owned vehicles or when using personal vehicles for travel on County business. Persons who are not employed by the County generally should not be allowed to operate County owned vehicles without prior approval.

Employees who are involved in an accident while traveling on business must promptly report the incident to their immediate supervisor and remain available for post-accident drug and alcohol testing if required. Any fines or fees incurred for violations of laws or regulations in connection with the operation of a vehicle for business travel are the responsibility of the employee.

Employees should contact their supervisor or the Accounting Office for guidance and assistance on procedures related to travel arrangements, travel advances, expense reports, reimbursement for specific expenses, or any other business travel issues.

Failure to comply with the requirements of the travel policy or falsification of travel expense reports may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.