



# CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

## Office of the Controller

DEPARTMENTAL GUIDELINES No. 003-13

Business Travel Reimbursement Guidelines

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This document supersedes all previous versions of the travel guidelines. Changes in this document include an increase of the mileage reimbursement rate to 56.5 cents /mile, and overnight parking at hotels changed to the lowest available rate provided.

APPROVED FOR DISTRIBUTION:

Ben Rosenfield, Controller

### Purpose of Guidelines

This guideline is to provide the City's travel rules and provide guidance to departments on what expenses will be allowed. As a general rule:

**Officers or employees should incur only those expenses that a reasonable and prudent person would incur when traveling on official business.**

Due consideration should be given to such factors as suitability, convenience, and the nature of the business involved. Travel expenses are reimbursable for officials and employees travel on official business of the City and County, subject to the allowances, limits, and requirements discussed below.

### Definition of Official Business

To constitute “**official business** of City and County of San Francisco”, the activities of an officer or employee of the City and County of San Francisco must clearly demonstrate that there is a valid City and County interest to be served or gained through the travel; and there is:

- a. Relevance to City and County operations or the individual's role in such operations; and/or
- b. The promotion or development of City and County programs, methods or administration; and/or
- c. Compliance with instructions or authorization of the Mayor or Board of Supervisors.

### Travel Authorization

All requests for business travel require approval in advance by the Department Head or an Authorized Travel Signatory. A travel authorization form must be completed and signed by the employee and approved by the Department Head or Travel Signatory. Information required on the authorization form include:

- Date(s) of travel and location
- Business purpose of travel/training/conference
- Estimated expenses including registration fee, cost of air ticket, other transportation costs (i.e. taxi, shuttle, or car rental), and lodging. Fully itemized detail in accordance with the guidelines in this document must be provided for estimated expenses.

Departments should develop detailed internal procedures for their travel pre-approval process.

**Travel Expenses** include lodging, transportation costs, registration or attendance fees, meals and other costs reasonably and necessarily incurred that are paid for by the City and County, or by the officer or employee subject to reimbursement by the City and County, when an officer or an employee is required to travel on official City and County business. Department Heads should only allow travel that is clearly anticipated in their approved budget. *Employees and officials are responsible for cancellation of lodging and transportation if travel is cancelled or postponed, to ensure that the City will not be liable for any costs.*

### **Guidelines for Issuing and Monitoring Travel Advances**

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When a travel advance is needed for authorized business travel, the advance requires approval by the Department Head or Authorized Travel Signatory. The approved request along with documentation for expenditure estimates supporting the advance amount should be forwarded to the Department's Accounting/ Finance Division for processing. When travel advances are issued:

- The minimum advance amount is \$1,000.
- Advances can be issued for lodging, conference registration fees, and transportation expenses. Travel advances are not allowed for airfare as employees can purchase air tickets through a City approved vendor.
- Checks are issued to employees approximately ten business days prior to travel. Department's should process the TA travel advance document in FAMIS allowing sufficient time for check issuance.
- Advances must be cleared in the City's financial system (FAMIS) within ten business days of return from a travel. Each Department's Accounting/Finance Division is responsible for monitoring advances and following up with employees to ensure advances are cleared timely.
- If an advance is not liquidated timely, the employee will have a payroll offset and will not be eligible for travel advances for a minimum of two years from the date of the offset.
- Employees with an outstanding advance cannot receive another travel advance.
- Departments who have more than one payroll offset in a six month period or do not demonstrate due diligence in the process will have travel advances frozen.

### **Guidelines for Submission, Review and Processing of Travel Expense Vouchers**

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Complete expense reimbursement requests or travel liquidations must be fully supported by original receipts and forwarded to the Department's Accounting /Finance Division no more than 30 days from return of travel. If a travel advance was issued, the advance must be liquidated and any unused funds returned to the City within 10 days of return. Reimbursement requests with incomplete documentation will be denied. Expense reimbursement must be processed in the City's financial system (FAMIS Accounting) no more than 90 days upon return of the trip.

***When filing a travel claim, the employee is:***

- Responsible for forwarding complete and timely travel claims to their Department Accounting/Finance Division no more than 30 days from return of travel, or 10 days if an advance was issued.
- Required to specify the business purpose of the trip, destination, conference/workshop/meeting dates, travel dates, and times (departure and return). The business purpose should be descriptive enough to clearly answer any questions regarding the necessity of the travel.

- Required to submit all supporting documentation including, but not limited to, approved Travel Expense Voucher, air or other itinerary, conference/meeting/workshop schedule and agenda, original itemized receipts, proof of payment, any necessary pre-approvals and/or justifications, etc.

*When reviewing travel claims, the Department's Authorized Travel Signatory and Accounting/Finance Divisions are responsible for:*

- Ensuring expenditures are reasonable, necessary, and for official business purpose and duration does not exceed official business trip requirements.
- Reviewing and auditing for compliance with Controller's travel policy.
- Requesting additional documentation, information, justification from employee as needed.
- Deducting unallowable expenses.
- For project or grant funded travel, reviewing to ensure the request is in compliance with project/grant requirements.
- Verifying authorized approver.
- Ensuring all appropriate/required and supporting documentation submitted and maintained in department files.
- Approving/denying travel claim in a timely manner.
- Processing reimbursements in a timely manner. Reimbursement must be completed in the City's financial system within 90 days from return of business travel.

*When processing reimbursement:*

- Process employee travel reimbursements and travel advance liquidations in FAMIS Accounting.
- Use document type/prefix **TT – Travel and Training Reimbursement**, if no travel advance was issued.
- Use document type/prefix **TA – Travel Advance** for all related advance liquidation transactions (when actual expenditures are equal to, less than, or more than the advance amount), except cash receipt.
- Vendor number should be “E” employee vendor #. If one does not exist in FAMIS vendor file, contact Vendor File Support to create the employee vendor number.
- Department must have at least one initiator and one approver in FAMIS Accounting.

## **Use of Vehicles**

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Vehicle use for travelers on official business is reimbursable. In all instances, the most direct and cost efficient route must be taken. When multiple employees are attending the same business activity (i.e. out-of town meeting, conference, etc.), employees are strongly encouraged to carpool. Employees are personally responsible and will not be reimbursed for traffic violations or other penalties for infractions of any law.

The following information is required to be included on the employee Travel Expense Voucher:

- Business purpose for use of vehicle.
- Starting point (i.e. worksite or home, whichever is the closer of the two) and the destination.
- Vehicle make, model and license #. If using City issued vehicle, provide vehicle number.
- Odometer reading, beginning and ending.

***Personal  
Vehicle***

- In accordance with Section 10.28-1 of the San Francisco Administrative Code, the mileage rate for payments to officers and employees for use of privately owned automobiles in connection with any official duty or service shall be at the rate established by the Controller.
- Effective January 1, 2013, the IRS standard mileage rate for business use of an automobile is 56.5 cents per mile, and the Controller adopts this rate for use.
- Mileage is reimbursed when using personal vehicle, fuel is not reimbursed.
- Personal expenses such as private vehicle repair and maintenance are not reimbursable.
- When using personal vehicle for official business, all passengers in the vehicle must be on official business of the City and County.

***City  
Vehicle***

- When using a City vehicle, fuel should be obtained from Central Shops. When impractical to do so, fuel purchased at a commercial location is reimbursed with written justification and original receipt(s). Mileage is not reimbursed.
- All passengers traveling in a City vehicle must be on official business of the City and County.

***Rental Car***

- Cost of rental car used for official business is reimbursable if it was pre-approved by the Department Head or Authorized Travel Signatory.
- The pre-approval is required to be documented in writing, (i.e. department approval form, or email approval) and must include:
  - (a) The car rental amount and estimate of other related expenses such as parking and fuel, and
  - (b) Justification why other forms of transportation are not appropriate, why a rental car is necessary, and how a rental car is the most economical and efficient/practical.
- All passengers traveling in a rental vehicle must be on official business of the City and County.
- Car rental is limited to standard compact size vehicle. Midsize vehicle is reimbursable if use is for three people or more, justification provided, and pre-approved in writing by the Department Head or Authorized Travel Signatory.
- Original receipts and car rental pre-approval are required to be submitted with reimbursement requests.
- Pre-paid fuel for full tank is not reimbursable. Employee must submit fuel receipt for actual usage.
- As the City is self insured, auto insurance is not reimbursable.

**Transportation**

Departments will be expected to obtain the lowest published routine fare for travel by the **most efficient, direct and economical mode of transportation** required by the occasion. Departments may book their air or rail travel with travel agencies approved by Purchasing or on-line directly with the airline. Departments will be charged in FAMIS for the airfare if booking is made with the City’s travel agencies. Alternatively, if employees make their own arrangements, they will have to pay first and request reimbursement.

If an alternative mode of transportation is selected, the allowable cost shall be the lower of the actual cost of alternative modes of transportation or the lowest economy/coach class airfare available for the date and time selected.

**Mode of Travel:**

***Air Travel***

- Airfare should be booked for economy/coach class only. Business or First class is not reimbursable. Upgrades are not reimbursable.
- Air ticket must be purchased in advance to take advantage of the most economical fares available. Same day or near travel day ticket purchases are not reimbursable unless approved by the Department Head and properly justified.
- Air travel itinerary is required to be submitted with travel claim documentation.
- If airline charges for checked luggage, reimburse the cost of first checked bag only. Additional baggage check-in costs will be reimbursed with justification explaining the business need for extra luggage.

***Mileage for long distances, employee drives instead of flying***

- In situations where employees would normally travel by air, but an employee chooses to drive instead, reimbursement will be the lower of the two options, driving or flying. At the time of the travel authorization, employee must obtain a quote from an approved City vendor documenting the cost of air ticket for the travel dates. Maximum reimbursement will be up to the quoted cost of the air ticket.
- Example: Training in Los Angeles, CA, employee drives instead of flying. In all cases, reimbursement will be the lower of the two options.

<b>Mode of Transportation</b>	<b>Expenses Reimbursed</b>
(a) Employee drives personal car	(a) Mileage, up to the cost of air ticket quote.
(b) Employee drives city vehicle	(b) Fuel expenses, up to cost of air ticket quote, when impractical to obtain fuel from Central Shops.
(c) Employee drives rental car	(c) Cost of car rental and gas expenses, up to the cost of air ticket quote.

***Transportation between worksite/home and airport within SF Bay Area***

- Recommended options are public transportation or shuttle.
- If using taxi, maximum reimbursement is \$50 each way, including tip, up to \$100 total for the related travel.
- If using personal car,
  - (a) Mileage is reimbursed up to \$15 each way, maximum \$30 total for the related travel. The only exception to mileage limit is for PUC Mocassin employees driving into local airports.

(b) Parking is limited to long-term parking only, maximum of \$18 per day, as per the SFO long-term daily rate effective 6/15/12. Maximum parking is up to \$120 total for the travel.

(c) When using personal vehicle, employee will not be reimbursed for any damages that may occur.

***Transportation during the travel between airport and hotel/conference site***

- Recommended options are public transportation, shuttle, or taxi.
- Car rental is reimbursable if the requirements stated in the Use of Vehicles section are met.
- For overnight travel in which employee uses personal, City, or rental vehicle, maximum reimbursement for overnight hotel parking is limited to the lowest available rate.

## **Lodging**

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The most economical and practical accommodations available considering the purpose of the meeting, and other relevant factors will be reimbursed. For travel within the United States, the maximum reimbursement is the Federal per-diem GSA (General Services Administration) rate for lodging. To stay within the maximum rates, conference discount rates and “government rates” should be used whenever possible.

If conference-lodging rates exceed the Federal rate, actual expenses will be reimbursed when documentation of the conference lodging rate and a receipt are provided. In rare circumstances, with appropriate pre-approval and justification of business need, employees may be reimbursed beyond the federal per diem rate. An itemized hotel bill is always required for reimbursement to be made. Reimbursement should be for single room rate.

***Conference Hotel***

- If conference hotel lodging rates exceed the Federal rate, actual expenses will be reimbursed when documentation of the conference lodging rate and a receipt are provided.
- Hotels recommended by the conference or overflow hotels with a conference rate will be reimbursed when documentation of the conference lodging rate and a receipt are provided.
- If a hotel is listed as recommended/overflow hotel but does not have a documented conference rate, reimbursement will be for actual expenses, with maximum up to the conference hotel rate only.
- For hotels not listed in the conference material, reimbursement will be for actual expenses, with maximum up to the conference hotel rate only.
- Required documentation of the conference lodging rate includes copy of conference registration information showing location, dates of conference, conference hotel(s), and single room rate. Documentation of the conference hotel rate must be provided.

***Lodging in Excess of Federal Per Diem Rate***

- In situations where employee is unable to find lodging at GSA rate or business circumstances require employee to stay in a hotel that exceeds the federal per diem rate, reimbursement will be allowed if all of the following requirements are met.
  - (a) Written pre-approval by the Department Head or Authorized Travel Signatory.

(b) Justification of business need and demonstration of most economical and practical, i.e. the only lodging within federal per diem rate is located a long distance from the meeting site and would require a car rental or costly taxi ride, which in total exceeds the cost of the higher lodging rate.

(c) Itemized hotel bill must show employee obtained “Government rate” and rate is reasonable, not to exceed one and half times the federal per diem rate.

If these requirements are not met, the reimbursement will be reduced to the federal per diem rate.

***City Not On the CONUS Per Diem Listing***

- If a city is not listed, check to ensure that the county within which it is located is also not listed. On the GSA website there is a link to the National Association of Counties which can help determine the county a destination is located in.
- If the city is not listed, but the county is, then the per diem rate is the rate for that entire county.
- If the city and the county are not listed, then that area is considered to be a Standard CONUS location which is currently \$70 for lodging and \$46 for meals and incidental expenses.

***Lodging for Travel Within Local Commuting Area***

- Lodging for travel within the local commuting area requires written pre-approval by the Department Head or Authorized Travel Signatory. Department is required to maintain documentation of the pre-approval and the justification of business need with the employee travel claim document.
- For the City and County of San Francisco, local commuting area is defined as within the nine Bay Area counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano and Sonoma.

Federal domestic and foreign lodging, maximum travel per diem allowances, meals and incidental expense breakdown are available from the following website:

Double click here for access to [U.S. General Services Administration](http://www.gsa.gov) at <http://www.gsa.gov>

**Meals and Adoption of the Federal Meal and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) Rate**

Meals and incidentals are reimbursed according to the guidelines below if **the travel is overnight and is pre-approved as an exception by the Department Head** or is provided for in the employee’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Please see Appendix A for allowances agreed per MOUs.

The Federal rate for meal and incidental expenses (M&IE) will be paid without itemization of expenses or receipts. If an officer or employee chooses to request specific reimbursement for meals, original itemized receipts are required. For employee travel, the maximum meal reimbursement is up to the federal per diem rate.

Each city in the Federal rate guide has a dollar value for the full day depending on the relative cost of meals in that jurisdiction. Once you obtain the total dollar value, you can refer to this table to determine the rates for each meal:

**Federal Domestic Meal & Incidental Expense (M&IE) Rates**

M&IE RATE (FULL DAY)	\$ 46	\$ 51	\$ 56	\$ 61	\$ 66	\$ 71
Continental Breakfast/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

***Conference Provided Meals***

- If one or more meals are included as part of a conference registration fee, you should only charge the remaining meals and incidental expense rate from the above chart. A copy of the conference schedule and any other conference information must be attached to the travel claim documentation.
- You cannot claim per diem in lieu of conference provided meals. There are no exceptions allowed.

***Meal and Incidental Per Diem on Travel Days***

- When a per diem reimbursement is requested for part of a day, please use the rates in the M&IE chart to determine meal reimbursements. Partial per diem is based on travel times. Departure and arrival times must be documented on the travel reimbursement form approved by Authorized Travel Signatory.
- Breakfast per diem if leave home before 6am.
- Lunch per diem if leave worksite/home before 10am (day of departure) or return to worksite/home after 2pm (day of return).
- Dinner per diem if return to worksite/arrive home after 7pm.
- Full day incidental is allowed on travel days.

***Incidental Expenses***

- Includes transportation between places of lodging or business and places where meals are taken, if suitable meals cannot be obtained within walking distance of the conference/training site or hotel.
- Fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, hotel maids and stewards.
- Mailing costs associated with filing travel vouchers.

***Travel In the Local Commuting Area***

- Does not qualify for the per diem reimbursement, e.g. attending conferences, meetings, trainings, etc. The only exception for allowing meal per diem is when employee was pre-approved by Department Head or Authorized Travel Signatory for overnight travel/lodging within nine Bay Area counties.

***Day Trips/Same Day Travel (e.g. for Conference, Training, Meeting, etc.)***

- No meal per diem

## **Other Expenses**

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Other expenses associated with and incurred in the performance of City and County business while in travel status, deemed necessary and reasonable by the Controller, are reimbursable. These include ground transportation (to or between the officer or employee's work site and airport, bus station, train depot and the meeting or lodging site and return), parking fees, bridge tolls, necessary business telephone charges, copying charges, and business-related internet access. These expenses are to be reviewed by the Department's Authorized Travel Signatory and only approved if deemed reasonable and proper.

### ***Travel Change or Cancellation Fee***

- Travel agencies or airlines charge up to \$150 for itinerary changes and cancellation fee when an employee changes or cancels a flight reservation. If this situation arises, the employee must submit written justification explaining the reason/business need for the itinerary change or cancellation, including approval from the Department's Authorized Travel Signatory in order for change/cancellation fee to be reimbursed.
- For a cancelled air ticket, the amount paid is credited to the employee's name.
  - (a) If air ticket was booked through a City travel agency, the Department is responsible for monitoring use of the credit and ensuring use for authorized official business travel only.
  - (b) If booked on-line directly by employee, the City will reimburse for the cancellation fee if justified business reason for cancellation is provided and approved by the Department's Authorized Travel Signatory. The City will not reimburse for the cancelled air ticket.

### ***Business Calls, Fax and Internet Usage***

- Employees will be reimbursed for reasonable usage with original receipt.
- Business purpose and justification of need required to be documented.
- Identify all business internet charges, business calls, faxes, etc. on the hotel bill.

**Original receipts are required** for all other travel and official expenses related to official City and County business. The only exceptions are Toll/Bart/Muni/parking meter/public telephone costs which are reimbursable without receipts.

**Reimbursements will not exceed the necessary and reasonable amount as determined by the Controller.** If there is any question about these provisions, please obtain authorization from the Controller in advance of the travel to ensure that reimbursement above these rates will be allowed.

These regulations shall apply to all expenditures in the performance of official City and County business **except**:

1. Departments who have developed their own travel policies that have been approved by the Controller.
2. Cost of extradition of prisoners by sworn peace officers which are subject to regulations imposed by the State.
3. Travel costs incurred by judges and employees of Superior and Municipal Courts. However, such travel will be subject to rules and regulations adopted by the Courts and approved by the Controller.
4. Any travel or related expenses incurred which are subject to reimbursement from Federal or State grants when such grant specifically provides for reimbursement under applicable Federal and State regulation and is more restrictive than the City and County guidelines.
5. Any travel or related expenditures for a Department, Board or Commission, or subunit thereof, which may be specifically exempted by action of the Board of Supervisors by Ordinance.
6. Any particular travel expense or reimbursement rate for represented Officers or employees that is specifically addressed in a ratified Memorandum-of-Understanding (MOU) agreement or arbitration award with a recognized employee organization.
7. P.O.S.T. (peace officers standards and training) reimbursement policy is applied for affected employees.

**Non-Allowable and Non-Reimbursable Costs:** The following items will not be reimbursed unless highly unusual circumstances have occurred and written pre-approval was obtained from the Department Head or Authorized Travel Signatory.

<b>Type</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Travel/Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Unjustified car rental and/or upgrade from standard compact size vehicle.</li> <li>● Auto/flight/travel insurance.</li> <li>● Air travel ticket higher than coach/economy class.</li> <li>● Parking/moving violation tickets or other penalties for infractions of any law, repair of automobiles and towing charges.</li> <li>● Passport application fees.</li> <li>● Unjustified cancelled travel tickets and change/cancellation costs.</li> </ul>
Lodging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Unjustified lodging in excess of federal per diem rate.</li> <li>● Lodging other than “standard” room rate. Upgrades are not reimbursable.</li> <li>● Payment for accommodation with friends/relatives.</li> <li>● Unjustified lodging during training/meetings within the nine Bay Area counties.</li> <li>● Hotel movies.</li> <li>● Unjustified internet access.</li> </ul>
Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reimbursement for meals unless travel is overnight and pre-approved as an exception by the Department Head or provided for in employee MOU.</li> <li>● Meal expenses in lieu of conference provided meals.</li> <li>● Alcoholic beverages.</li> </ul>
Other Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Boarding cost of pets and children during business travel.</li> <li>● Excessive phone calls from hotels when traveling.</li> <li>● Personal laundry/dry clean for trips less than 7 days.</li> <li>● Significantly large tips.</li> <li>● Upgrades</li> </ul>

**Q & A**

**Q:** What is the policy regarding using City approved vendors vs employee booking air travel directly?

**A:** Employees have the option of purchasing air tickets from a City approved vendor or on-line directly. If employees choose to purchase air travel on-line directly, they must document and demonstrate this option is the most economical by obtaining a comparative quote from a City vendor for the travel dates.

**Q:** Can I book air travel for other than coach/economy class?

**A:** No. Airfare should be coach/economy class only. Business class is not reimbursable. Upgrades are not reimbursable.

**Q:** If an airline charges for checked luggage, what is the policy for reimbursing baggage check-in expenses. What documentation is required?

**A:** The City will reimburse the cost of first checked bag only. Additional baggage check-in costs will be reimbursed with justification explaining the business need for extra luggage. Original receipt required for reimbursement.

**Q:** What expenditures are reimbursed when I drive personal vehicle, city vehicle, rental car?

**A:**

<b>Mode of Transportation</b>	<b>Expenses Reimbursed</b>
(a) Employee drives personal car	(a) Mileage
(b) Employee drives city vehicle	(b) Fuel expenses (with justification why employee was unable to obtain fuel from Central Shops)
(c) Employee drives rental car	(c) Cost of car rental and gas expenses

See "Transportation" section for additional information and requirements.

**Q:** Does my lodging receipt need to be itemized?

**A:** Yes, hotel lodging receipt must be itemized listing all expenses (room, tax, phone calls, etc.) separately. The receipt must also have a zero balance showing the payment was made. If a hotel bill with zero balance is not available, submit the itemized hotel bill along with a copy of credit card statement showing payment was made.

**Q:** Are room upgrades reimbursable?

**A:** No. Lodging reimbursement is for "standard" rooms only.

**Q:** Is there a limit to the cost for overnight parking at a hotel?

**A:** No, but the parking should use the lowest cost available, such as self parking instead of valet.

**Q:** If the conference hotel is not available (i.e. fully booked), can I stay at one of the conference provided list of recommended hotels or over flow hotels?

**A:** Yes, conference recommended hotels or overflow hotels with a conference rate will be reimbursed when documentation of the conference lodging rate and a receipt are provided. Reimbursement should be for single room rate.

**Q:** For domestic travel, what if a city is not listed on the CONUS Per Diem website?

**A:** If a city is not listed, check to ensure that the county within which it is located is also not listed. On the GSA website there is a link to the National Association of Counties which can help determine the county a destination is located in. If the city is not listed, but the county is, then the per diem rate is the rate for that entire county. If the city and the county are not listed, then that area is considered to be a Standard CONUS location which is currently \$70 for lodging.

**Q:** Can the City pay an employee's family/friends for lodging or other expenses when employee stays with family/friend during business travel?

**A:** No.

**Q:** When employees stay with family/friends during business travel and therefore do not incur lodging expense to the City, can employees be reimbursed for buying family/friends thank you flowers, or meal etc.

**A:** No.

**Q:** Can I claim meal per diem if allowed in my labor agreement MOU?

**A:** Yes, provided the meal per diem follows the MOU rules and regulations.

**Q:** Can I claim meal per diem if I found the conference meals unhealthy or insufficient?

**A:** No.

**Q:** Can I claim meal per diem if I was not available for the conference provided meal?

**A:** No.

**Q:** Is alcohol and/or corkage expense reimbursable?

**A:** No, alcohol/corkage reimbursement is not allowed. As per Department of Human Resources Employee Handbook, employees may not manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use alcohol or illegal drugs in workplace.

**Q:** Is meal per diem allowed for same day travel?

**A:** No, unless contained in the employee's MOU stipulated benefits.

**Q:** Can the employee be reimbursed for meals if the travel is for required training?

**A:** Yes, as long as the travel is overnight and the Department Head has pre-approved the exception.

**Q:** Can the employee be reimbursed for meals if the travel is grant funded?

**A:** Per the Federal grant guidelines (2CFR215) the City cannot disproportionately spend funds for the same activities that are reimbursed at a lesser rate for non grant funded activities. Therefore, grant funds may not be used to provide meal per diem unless provided for under the employee's MOU or has been pre-approved by the Department Head as an exception.

**Q:** For foreign travel, what if a location is not listed for per diem under the country employee is traveling to?

**A:** Any location not listed for per diem under a country takes the "Other" rate GSA administers and publishes for that country. An unlisted suburb of a listed location takes the "Other" rate, not that of the location of which it is a suburb.

**Q:** What is the City's policy for reimbursing internet, fax and phone calls for business?

**A:** Employees will be reimbursed for reasonable usage. Business purpose and justification of need must be documented and original receipts provided. Identify all business calls, faxes, etc. on the hotel bill.

**Q:** If my travel is Grant funded and the Grant will reimburse for expenses, i.e. lodging expense beyond the maximum federal per diem rate, can I be reimbursed?

**A:** Yes, departments should certify grant will fully reimburse and maintain appropriate supporting documentation.

**Q:** Can I combine personal travel with official business, i.e. personal travel before/after/or in between business trips?

**A:** Employee may combine personal travel with business travel when pre-approved in writing by the Authorized Travel Signatory. The City and County is responsible only for the official business portion of the trip. When travel on business is extended for personal reasons, before, in between, and/or after official business travel, no personal expenses can be included on the travel expense voucher claim form. Employee must obtain a quote from approved City vendor showing the cost of roundtrip ticket for most economical and direct travel to/from the business destination for the dates of official business. This quote will be used for comparison and reimbursement purposes. Employee must pay for the personal portion of the airfare expense. When combining personal travel with official business travel, there is no reimbursement for lodging, meal per diem, or any other expense incurred before/in between/after the conference/official business starts /concludes.

**Q:** Is the \$5 incidental per diem given on travel days?

**A:** Yes, incidental per diem is allowed for travel as long as the trip is overnight and pre-approved as an exception by the Department Head.

**Q:** What does incidental expense per diem include?

**A:** Transportation between places of lodging or business and places where meals are taken, if suitable meals cannot be obtained within walking distance of the conference/training site or hotel; Fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, hotel maids and stewards; Mailing costs associated with filing travel vouchers.

**Q:** What is the guideline for giving tips?

**A:** For tips not covered by the GSA Incidental per diem, tips should generally be within 15%.

**Q:** When on foreign travel for official business, what does the M&IE incidental cover?

**A:** Separate amounts are established for lodging and meals plus incidental travel expenses (M&IE). The maximum lodging amount is intended to substantially cover the cost of lodging at adequate, suitable and moderately-priced facilities. The M&IE portion is intended to substantially cover the cost of meals and incidental travel expenses such as laundry and dry cleaning.

**Q:** For international business travel, are passports and visas reimbursable expenses?

**A:** Visas are reimbursed with original receipt. Passport expenses are not reimbursable.

**Q:** What documentation do I need to provide for currency conversion when foreign/international travel for official business?

**A:** International travel expenses must be converted to U.S. dollars. Conversion rate should be calculated for the date the expense was incurred. Include proof of the currency exchange rate.

Proof can be in the form of (1) receipts obtained by the employee during travel or (2) a copy of the employee's credit card statement showing the travel expense or (3) a print out from the OANDA.com website or other conversion website using the date shown on the receipt(s).

**Q:** What is the policy for expenditures incurred by persons who are not City employees?

**A:** In order for expenses (i.e. lodging, meals) to be allowable for persons other than the officer or employee, the Department Head must certify that such expenditures are for a public purpose and necessary for the conduct of City and County business. Expenses must conform to the guidelines and conditions as established for City employees. If there is any confusion on the applicability of this, please obtain prior written approval of the Controller.

**Q:** If an employee pays for conference registration in advance can they be reimbursed before the conference date?

**A:** No, all employee reimbursements should be approved after the conference has completed. If the department wishes to take advantage of available discounts a check from FAMIS should be made.

**Q:** Am I required to provide printouts from an online map service such as Google Maps or Mapquest to be reimbursed for mileage?

**A:** No, only odometer readings are required by the Controller, as long as the mileage is reasonable. Your department may have a policy that requires map print outs, please contact your department's travel signatory if you are unsure.

**Appendix A: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) meal provisions**

Employee Organization	Meal Provision
Automotive Machinist, Local 1414	IV.K. MEAL PROVISION – HETCH-HETCHY ONLY 253. When an employee works longer than a ten (10) hour shift at a remote location, the City shall provide the employee with a meal, or pay the employee the current per diem rate for the meal. 254. The parties recognize that recodifications may change the references to specific Civil Service Rules and Charter sections contained herein. Therefore, the parties agree that such terms will read as if they accurately reference the same sections in their newly codified form.
Consolidated Craft MOU - Bricklayers, Building Inspectors, Carpenters, Carpet & Soft tile Workers, Glaziers, Hod Carriers, Iron Workers, Painters, Pile Drivers, Cement Masons, Plasterers, Roofers, Sheet Metal Workers, Truck Drivers, and IATSE	III.B. MAINTENANCE AND CHARGES 125. Charges and deductions for all maintenance, such as housing, meals, laundry, etc., furnished to and accepted by employees shall be made on timerolls and payrolls in accordance with a schedule of maintenance charges fixed and determined in the Annual Salary Ordinance.
SF Deputy Probation Association	II.F. MAINTENANCE AND CHARGES 102. Charges and deductions for all maintenance, such as housing, meals, laundry, etc., furnished to and accepted by employees shall be made on time rolls and payrolls in accordance with a schedule of maintenance charges fixed and determined in the Annual Salary Ordinance.
Deputy Sheriffs' Association	none
SF District Atty Inspectors' Assn.	none

Employee Organization	Meal Provision
Electrical Workers, Local 6	<p>III.B. MAINTENANCE AND CHARGES                      101. Charges and deductions for all maintenance, such as housing, meals, laundry, etc., furnished to and accepted by employees shall be made on timerolls and payrolls in accordance with a schedule of maintenance charges fixed and determined in the Annual Salary Ordinance.</p> <p>B. Meals/Meal Periods.                      4. <u>Special Conditions Applicable to Recreation and Parks Department Employees Assigned to Camp Mather</u>: Unit employees assigned to Camp Mather are entitled to one (1) paid travel day, each way to and from Camp Mather and a \$10/day meal voucher for each travel day pursuant to the Administrative Code.</p>
SF Firefighters	none
SF Institutional Police Officers' Assn.	none
IPFTE, Local 21	<p>II.L. MEAL ALLOWANCE                      126. Personal Property Auditors required to travel to and stay overnight in large metropolitan areas such as New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Boston, etc. while attending to City business, shall be entitled to a meal allowance of either \$50.00 per day or the travel per diem rate identified in the Controller's Office travel policy memorandum, whichever is greater.</p>
Laborers, Local 261	<p>III.B. MAINTENANCE AND CHARGES                      112. Charges and deductions for all maintenance, such as housing, meals, laundry, etc., furnished to and accepted by employees shall be made on timerolls and payrolls in accordance with a schedule of maintenance charges fixed and determined in the Annual Salary Ordinance.</p> <p>3. MEAL PROVISION FOR HETCH HETCHY ONLY                      175. When an employee works longer than a ten (10) hour shift at a remote location, the City shall provide the employee with a meal or pay the employee the current per diem rate for the meal.</p>
MEA, Miscellaneous	none
MEA, Fire Chiefs	none
MEA, Police Chiefs	none
Municipal Attorneys' Association	<p>II.G. REIMBURSEMENT OF MILEAGE AND OTHER EXPENSES                      62. Represented attorneys required by their respective department heads to attend any meeting (related to City business) at which a meal is served shall be reimbursed for the cost of the meal within sixty (60) days from submission of expense receipts to the Controller.</p>
Operating Engineers, Local 3	none
Police Officers' Association (Units P-1 and P-2A)	<p>Section 15. Meals and Breaks During Demonstrations.                      142. The Department shall provide meals or a reasonable meal break time for employees assigned to special events where active duty thereat continues for more than four (4) consecutive hours. If the Department fails to or is unable to provide such meals, the Association may do so and will be reimbursed for the reasonable cost thereof on such occasions by the Department. This provision is subject to the development of procedures by the Department for the reimbursement for the cost of meals provided by the Association.</p>

Employee Organization	Meal Provision
SEIU Loc. 1021, Miscellaneous	<p>Meals</p> <p>148. City employees shall, subject to the procedures established by the Controller, be reimbursed for the reasonable and actual costs of meals upon presentation of receipts in the following circumstances:</p> <p>149. When an employee is required by his/her department to attend a meeting at which a meal is served and such meal is billed to the employee;</p> <p>150. When an employee is traveling overnight out of the City on City business.</p> <p>Maintenance and Charges</p> <p>517. Charges and deductions for all maintenance, such as housing, meals, laundry, etc., furnished to and accepted by employees shall be made on timerolls and payrolls in accordance with the schedule of maintenance charges fixed and determined in the current Annual Salary Ordinance. Such charges will be fixed at their current rates for the term of this agreement.</p> <p>518. No charge shall be made for meals furnished to cooks, bakers, dieticians, lunchroom helpers and other kitchen workers while on duty.</p>
SEIU Loc. 1021, Committee of Interns and Residents	<p>S. MEALS</p> <p>127. The City and the Department agree to provide interns and residents with meal cards good for breakfast, lunch, and dinner when working at SFGH. The Union recognizes that these passes are for the exclusive use of the individual to whom the pass is issued and that improper use or abuse of this privilege may result in the discontinuance of such privilege for that individual.</p>
SEIU Loc.1021, H-1 Fire Rescue Paramedics	none
SEIU Loc. 1021, Staff Nurse/Per Diem	none
Stationary Engineers, Local 39	<p>II.G. MEALS – SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT ONLY</p> <p>86. Sheriff’s Department Only – The current practice of providing a meal per shift to covered employees assigned to the jails shall continue as long as this benefit is provided to the Deputy Sheriffs assigned to the jails.</p>
Supervising Probation Officers	none
Teamsters, Local 350	none
Teamsters, Local 856 (Multi-Unit)	none
Teamsters, Local 856 Supv RN	none
TWU Loc.200, SEAM	none
TWU,Loc.250-A, 7410 Auto Svc.Wrkr	none
TWU,Loc.250-A, Multi-Unit	none
TWU,Loc.250-A (9163)	none
United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters	<p>III.B MAINTENANCE AND CHARGES</p> <p>108. Charges and deductions for all maintenance, such as housing, meals, laundry, etc., furnished to and accepted by employees shall be made on timerolls and payrolls in accordance with a schedule of maintenance charges fixed and determined in the Annual Salary Ordinance.</p>
Union of Amer.Physicians & Dentists	none
Unrepresented Employees	none