



FISCAL DIVISION
TRAVEL POLICY
POLICY NUMBER: E-005

23 August 2013

1. **AUTHORITY:** Director of State Civil Service as contained in La R.S. 36:54 and the Division of Administration which publishes the Louisiana State Travel Guide.
2. **REFERENCES:** Current rules and regulations in the Louisiana State Travel Guide as published by the Division of Administration.
<http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/osp/travel/travelpolicy.htm>
3. **PURPOSE:** Establishes procedures and guidelines for the employees of the Department who are incurring business travel expenses on behalf of the State.
4. **APPLICABILITY:** This policy shall apply to all employees of the Department of State Civil Service. Employees shall include appointees and all other persons having an employment relationship with the Department.
5. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. **Authorized Persons**
 1. Advisors, consultants, contractors and other persons who are called upon to contribute time and service to the state who are not otherwise required to be reimbursed through a contract for professional, personal, or consulting services in accordance with R.S.39:1481.
 2. Members of boards, commissions, and advisory councils required by federal or state legislation or regulation. Travel allowance levels for all such members and any staff shall be those authorized for state employees unless specific allowances are legislatively provided.
 3. The Department Head or his/her designee is allowed to deem persons as an authorized traveler for official state business only. **Note:** College/University students must be deemed authorized travelers to be reimbursed for state business purpose.
 - B. **Conference/Convention** - a meeting (other than routine) for a specific purpose and/or objective. Non-routine meetings can be defined as a seminar, conference, convention, or training. Documentation required is a formal agenda, program, letter of invitation, or registration fee. Participation as an exhibiting vendor in an exhibit /trade show also qualifies as a conference. For a hotel to qualify for

conference rate lodging it requires that the hotel is hosting or is in “conjunction with hosting the meeting. In the event the designated conference hotel(s) have no room available, a Department Head may approve to pay actual hotel cost not to exceed the conference lodging rates for other hotels located near the conference hotel.

- C. **Controlled Billed Account (CBA)** – a credit account issued in an agency’s name (no plastic card issued). These accounts are direct liabilities of the State and are paid by each agency. CBA accounts are controlled through an authorized approver(s) to provide a means to purchase airfare, registration, lodging, rental vehicles, pre-paid shuttle service, and any other allowable charges outlined in the current State of Louisiana State Liability Travel and CBA Policy. Each Department Head determines the extent of the account’s use.

- D. **In-State Travel** – all travel within the borders of Louisiana or travel through adjacent states between points within Louisiana when such is the most efficient route.

- E. **International Travel**- all travel to destinations outside the 50 United States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam and Saipan.

- F. **Lowest Logical Airfare** – in general, these types of airfares are non-refundable, penalty tickets. Penalties could include restrictions such as advanced purchase requirements, weekend stays, etc. Prices will increase as seats are sold. When schedule changes are required for lowest logical tickets, penalty fees are added.

- G. **Official Domicile** – every state officer, employee, and authorized person, except those on temporary assignment, shall be assigned an official domicile.
 - 1. Except where fixed by law, official domicile of an officer or employee assigned to an office shall be, at a minimum, the city limits in which the office is located. The department head or his designee should determine the extent of any surrounding area to be included, such as parish or region. As a guideline, a radius of at least 30 miles is recommended. The official domicile of an authorized person shall be the city in which the person resides, except when the Department Head has designated another location (such as the person’s workplace).

 - 2. A traveler whose residence is other than the official domicile of his/her office shall not receive travel and subsistence while at his/her official domicile nor shall he/she receive reimbursement for travel to and from his/her residence.

 - 3. The official domicile of a person located in the field shall be the city or town nearest to the area where the majority of work is performed, or such city, town, or area as may be designated by the department head, provided that in all cases such designation must be in the best interest of the agency and not for the convenience of the person.

 - 4. The Department Head or his/her designee may authorize approval for an employee to be reimbursed for lodging expenses within an employee’s

domicile with proper justification as to why this is necessary and in the best interest of the state.

- H. **Out-of-State Travel** – travel to any of the other 49 states plus District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam.
- I. **Receipts/Document Requirements** - Supporting documentation, including original receipts, must be retained according to record retention laws. It shall be at the discretion of each agency to determine where the receipts/documents will be maintained.
- J. **Routine Travel** - travel required in the course of performing his/her job duties. This does not include non-routine meetings, conferences and out-of-state travel.
- K. **State Employee** – employees below the level of state officer.
- L. **State Officer**
 - 1. State elected officials;
 - 2. Department Head as defined by Title 36 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes (Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Undersecretary, Assistant Secretary, and the equivalent positions in higher education and the office of elected officials).
- M. **Travel Period**- a period of time between the time of departure and the time of return.
- N. **Travel Routes**- the most direct traveled route must be used by official state travelers.

6. **POLICY:** All travel will be in accordance with the current rules and regulations published in the Louisiana Travel Guide by the Division of Administration. Local in-state and/or out-of-state travel may be required in certain positions, using personal vehicles. Reimbursement for mileage and other expenses is in accordance with the current Louisiana Travel Guide and Department Policy. It shall be the policy of the Department of State Civil Service (SCS) to reimburse expenses incurred by employees who are assigned to work outside of their official domicile.

7. **PROCEDURES:**

- A. If an accident occurs while traveling on state business in an employee’s personal vehicle, the state insurance will pay the employee’s deductible. Individual insurance companies are expected to cover other expenses.
- B. Travel Authorizations – Employees must receive approval from the Appointing Authority prior to making travel arrangements.
 - a. Non-routine Travel - An employee must complete and submit a travel authorization form in advance for all non-routine travel. It must be approved by the supervisor and division head and forwarded to the Appointing Authority

for approval. Employees must travel with a copy of their approved Travel Authorization Form as proof of official status.

- C. Funds for Travel Expenses:
 - a. Persons traveling on official state business will provide themselves with sufficient funds for all routine travel expenses not eligible for pre-payment by State Civil Service.
 - b. Travel Advances – Requests for travel advances will be considered and approved at the Appointing Authority’s discretion.
 - 1. Based on the current State Travel Guide, travel advances shall be made only for extraordinary travel and should be punctually repaid when submitting the Travel Reimbursement covering the related travel, not later than the 15th day of the month following the completion of travel.
 - 2. Exemptions: At the discretion of the Appointing Authority, travel advances may be allowed for:
 - i. Employees whose salary is less than \$30,000/year,
 - ii. Lodging expenses,
 - iii. Employees who infrequently travel or travelers that incur significant out-of-pocket cash expenditures.
 - 3. Expenses incurred on State Business – Traveling expenses of travelers shall be limited to those expenses necessarily incurred by them in the performance of a public purpose authorized by law to be performed by the agency and must be within the limitations prescribed within the current State Travel Guide.
- D. Conference Registration – Once the request for non-routine travel is approved, an employee should work with Fiscal to register for the conference. When registering, employees should inquire about early registration discounts. The employee may pre-register for conferences online; however, he must submit the completed registration form to Fiscal so that payment can be processed. (Fiscal will notify the employees when fees are paid).
- E. All claims for reimbursement for travel shall be submitted on the Travel Expense Form which can be found under “Forms” on the SCS Intranet. All travel details should be included on the Travel Expense Form. In all cases, the date and hour of departure from and return to domicile must be shown.
- F. Travel Expense Forms should be submitted to Fiscal within 30 days following the travel. Travel expense forms shall be held until a reimbursement of at least \$25 is due or at fiscal year end.
- G. The Fiscal Division will process all travel claims within one week of receipt given the following: Travel Expense Form is completed including all travel details and approved by all necessary persons, all necessary receipts and supporting documentation are attached, and the approved Travel Authorization is attached (if non-routine travel).

- H. As stated in the State Travel Guide, Any person who submits a claim pursuant to these regulations and who willfully makes and subscribes to any claim which he/she does not believe to be true and correct as to every material matter, or who willfully aids or assists in, or procures, counsels or advises the preparation of presentation of a claim, which is fraudulent or is false as to any material matter shall be guilty of official misconduct. Whoever shall receive an allowance or reimbursement by means of a false claim shall be subject to severe disciplinary action as well as being criminally and civilly liable within the provisions of state law.
- I. Commissioners will be reimbursed on an actual expense basis for meals and lodging. If meals and lodging exceed the allowable rates as stated in the State Travel Guide, then itemized receipts must be submitted. Requests shall not be extravagant and will be reasonable in relation to the purpose of travel. Commissioners are subject to the time frames and all other requirements as listed in the State Travel Guide.
- J. Transportation – the most cost-effective method of transportation that will accomplish the purpose of the travel shall be selected.
 - a. Rental Vehicles:
 1. Employees may rent a vehicle from Enterprise Rent-A-Car if state travel exceeds 100 miles.
 2. Employees reimbursed by the State of Louisiana for out of state vehicle rental must use one of the three contracted vendors; Enterprise, National or Hertz.
 - b. Personal Vehicles:
 1. When two or more persons travel in the same personally owned vehicle, only one charge will be allowed for the expense of the vehicle. The person claiming reimbursement shall report the names of the other passengers.
 2. Mileage may be reimbursable at the rate stated in the current State Travel Guide. Mileage shall be computed using an odometer reading from point of origin to point of return, or a website mileage calculator such as MapQuest (Employee is to print the page indicating mileage and attach it with his/her travel expense form.)
 3. An employee shall always claim the lesser of the mileage from their official domicile or from their residence.
 4. When the use of a private-owned vehicle has been approved by the department head for out-of-state travel for the traveler's convenience, the traveler will be reimbursed for mileage on the basis of **51 cents per mile only**, not to exceed a maximum of 99 miles per round trip and/or day. If approval for reimbursement of actual mileage is requested and granted by the Commissioner of Administration, the total cost of the mileage reimbursement may never exceed the cost of a rental vehicle or the cost of travel by using the lowest logical airfare, obtained at least 14 days prior to the trip

departure date, whichever is the lesser of the two. The reimbursement would be limited to one lowest logical airfare quote or one vehicle rental, not the number of persons traveling in the vehicle. The traveler is personally responsible for any other expenses in-route to and from destination which is inclusive of meals and lodging. If a traveler, at the request of the department, is asked to take his/her personally owned vehicle out-of-state for a purpose that will benefit the agency, then the Department Head may on a case-by-case basis determine to pay a traveler for all / part of in-route travel expenses, however, mileage reimbursement over 99 miles would still require the Commissioner of Administration's approval. In this case, once approval is obtained from the Commissioner of Administration to exceed 99 miles, then the department head may authorized actual mileage reimbursements. File should be justified accordingly.

- c. Air Travel – ALL FLIGHTS MUST BE PURCHASED THROUGH THE STATE CONTRACTED TRAVEL AGENCY (SHORT'S TRAVEL). State contract airfares are for official business only. Whenever feasible, employees are encouraged to use the lowest logical airfares, which is the best value priced ticket available. Lowest logical fares are generally non-refundable and should be purchased at least 14 days prior to travel. Lowest logical rates should be based on an employee's personal needs as well as the business needs. To make reservations, employees must first complete a Travel Authorization Form with all required approvals. The employee should then go online to the Short's Travel website at www.shortstravel.com/la and request reservation to be charged to the Controlled Billed Account (CBA). Once reservations are confirmed and finalized by the employee, the Fiscal Officer will receive an email from Short's Travel requesting approval to charge the flight to the Controlled Billed Account. Fiscal will, then forward the detailed flight information to the Appointing Authority for approval. After agency approval has been obtained, Fiscal will then approve the purchase of the flight. The employee Will NOT be issued a paper ticket or an electronic ticket. The employee's State ID must be presented at the time of travel.
 - d. Ground Transportation – the cost of public ground transportation such as buses, taxis, airport shuttles, etc. are reimbursable when the expenses are incurred as part of approved state travel. See the current State Travel Guide for allowable reimbursements.
 - e. See the current State Travel Guide for information on other modes of transportation not covered in this section.
- K. Lodging – Employees are responsible for securing lodging accommodations. Lodging receipts must be attached to the Travel Expense Form in order to receive reimbursement.
- a. Routine Travel: Employees will be reimbursed lodging rate (as stated in the current State Travel Guide), plus tax and any mandatory surcharge. On a case

by case basis, the Appointing Authority at his/her discretion may approve lodging cost up to 50% over the allowable rate listed. Each case must be fully documented to show that attempts were made with hotels in the area to receive the state/best rate. Employees must obtain approval for expenses over the allowable rates prior to making reservation.

- b. Conference Travel: Employees will be reimbursed lodging rate, plus tax and any mandatory surcharge. The Appointing Authority has the authority to approve the actual cost of conference lodging, for a single occupancy standard room, when the employee is staying at the designated conference hotel. If there are multiple designated conference hotels, the lower cost designated conference hotel should be utilized, if available.
 - c. For in-state lodging, a Travel Expense Sales Tax Exemption Certificate must be requested from the Fiscal Division and submitted to the desk clerk upon arrival at the hotel. This certificate is for use by employees to document employee eligibility for exemption from payment of state sales taxes on authorized travel expense charges that are directly reimbursable by the State of Louisiana.
 - d. See the current State Travel Guide for lodging information not mentioned in this policy.
- L. Meals – Receipts are not required for meals that are within the allowable rates, see the current State Travel Guide. Expenses for meals that exceed the allowable rate are not reimbursable.
- a. An employee will not be reimbursed for an individual purchased meal when that meal is provided as part of your registration fee; this does not include meals such as continental breakfast or hors d'oeuvre served during a social gathering, etc.
 - b. Meals are not eligible for reimbursement on single day travel; however, the Department Head is allowed to make exceptions on a case by case basis. PPM 49 – single day travel reimbursement must be followed.
- M. Parking – Travelers will be reimbursed for hotel and airport parking fees, ferry fares, and road and bridge tolls while traveling. For each transaction over \$5.00, a receipt is required, except as noted below.
- a. Baton Rouge Airport Parking – Employee will be reimbursed at the state's current contracted daily rate(see current State Travel Guide) for parking in the indoor parking garage as well as the outside fenced parking lot at the airport. The traveler must obtain a State Parking Certificate from the Fiscal Division prior to travel. The certificate must be completed and signed on the back by the traveler. The traveler must present the certificate along with their State ID badge upon exiting the parking area at the Baton Rouge Airport.
 - b. New Orleans Airport Parking – Employee will be reimbursed at the state's current contracted daily or weekly rate for parking at Park 'N Fly (see current State Travel Guide). The employee must present Travel Authorization Form in order to receive the contracted rate along with a sales tax exemption form in order to be tax exempt.
- N. Reimbursement for Other Expenses:

- a. Internet Charges – Reimbursement of Internet charges must be Pre-approved by the Appointing Authority.
- b. Personal calls – Employees of SCS will not be reimbursed for personal calls.
- c. Baggage Tips – Employees of SCS will not be reimbursed for baggage tips.
- d. Luggage allowance – Receipts are required for reimbursement. The Appointing Authority may approve reimbursement to a traveler for airline charges for first checked bag for a business trip of 5 days or less and for a second checked bag for a 6-10 day business trip and/or any additional baggage which is business related and required by the department. The traveler must present a receipt to substantiate these charges.

O. Tips for Completion and Submission of Expense Reports:

- a. For all non-routine travel, submit travel expense form immediately upon completion of travel to ensure timely reimbursement. Reimbursements are received through direct deposit.
- b. Submit all required receipts in the original form, i.e., hotel receipts, luggage fee receipts, etc. Receipts should be submitted for ground transportation over the allowable rate. See the current State Travel Guide.

8. EXCEPTIONS: The Director of State Civil Service may grant an exception to any provision of this policy, provided such exception shall not be in conflict with Civil Service Rules and Regulations or the most current rules and regulations in the Louisiana State Travel Guide (PPM 49).

s/Shannon S. Templet
Director