

STERLING

A Colorado Treasure

TO: All Departments
FROM: Joseph D. Kiolbasa, City Manager *JOK*
DATE: April 16, 2009
RE: City of Sterling Travel Policy

This Travel Policy will be in effect immediately from and after the date of this memorandum. This policy will replace all previous policies currently in effect. Any exceptions to this policy shall be directed to this office for review and approval by the City Manager.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all City employees.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

Travel authorization for out-of-town trips must be approved by the City Manager and the Department and/or Division Head prior to the commencement of the trips. An exception is made in the case of emergency vehicles leaving the City for purposes of an emergency response and may be made for unplanned trips with verbal approval of Department Head, Director of Finance and notification of City Manager. In such a case, proper authorization shall be completed. "Out-of-town trips" shall be trips outside Logan County for City business purposes.

TRAVEL REQUEST AND EXPENSE STATEMENT

No expense voucher for out-of-town travel will be paid by the Finance Department without a proper travel authorization. Furthermore, failure to receive the authorization may lead to disciplinary action against any employee, including a Department and Division Head. The purposes for the Travel Request and Expense Statement are as follows:

1. Documentation of permission granted to have the City vehicle or personnel vehicle on City business outside of Logan County.
2. Documentation of City employees attending to City business on out of town trips.
3. Review of the business purpose for City employees outside on out of town trips.
4. Documentation for past occurrences, should a question arise of the whereabouts of a City employee when on out of town trips.
5. An advance notice of availability of funds for a particular line item in the budget to ascertain whether budgeted funds are available for employees to travel outside the City.

In the case of travel requests where no reimbursement is requested (i.e., Police Officers traveling to Fort Morgan using City vehicles for DUI hearings), the Travel Request portion of the statement may be submitted to the City Manager's office after approval of the Department Head. In all other cases, the completed statement must be submitted through the Finance Department for review of the budget expenditures. This is done so that prior to the City Manager's authorization, it can be ascertained that sufficient budget exists for employees to travel outside the City for their particular purpose and that there has not been a mistake made by the Division or Department Head or the employee in preparing the travel statement.

In the event an employee travels in-state or out-of-state on a scheduled airline at the City's expense, travel must be the most economical available. In no event will the City pay for first class travel unless no other method of transportation is available and prior approval by the City Manager's office is received.

If an attendee arrives more than one day prior to any meeting or conference, or extends an out-of-town stay for personal reasons, the expenses associated with such extra time are considered personal and are not reimbursable by the City. Extending an out-of-town stay for personal reasons when an employee is using a City vehicle is not permitted. Extending an out-of-town stay for more than one day prior to or after a meeting or conference is permitted if lower airfare can be obtained with the extension, but approval from the Department Head and City Manager must be obtained prior to finalizing such arrangements. The only exceptions to an out-of-town stay being extended are in the case of illness, accident, or injury to the employee, which would preclude the employee's immediate return to the City. In any event, the City should be notified of such an occurrence.

USE OF CITY VEHICLES

The City provides vehicles to certain employees to perform their daily functions, and these vehicles should be used for travel when necessary. Employees with provided vehicles may elect to use their personal vehicle with approval of the Department Head and City Manager and reimbursement will be 50 percent of the prevailing IRS rate. For City employees not furnished vehicles, the City has a pool car available for out-of-town travel, which should be used unless it is unavailable, in which case, the City will reimburse employees at the rate of 90 percent of the IRS prevailing rate to the meeting site and back upon mileage documentation. The use of the pool van for other purposes may be allowed with approval of Department Head and City Manager. Any employee utilizing their own vehicle will, with the travel request, furnish the City proof of liability insurance in the amount of \$100,000/\$300,000, to assure the City that in the event of an accident, the employee has appropriate insurance. If the pool van or other appropriate vehicle is available, the employee may elect to use their own vehicle with approval of Department Head and City Manager and the reimbursement will be 50 percent of the prevailing IRS rate.

City vehicles should be used for City business purposes for travel outside the City. Passengers in City vehicles should include only the following, unless prior approval is received under special circumstances:

1. City Employees.
2. City Board Members.
3. Participants in City programs (i.e., swim team members, parents, etc.).
4. Personnel from other governmental agencies who may be attending the same meeting.
5. In the event other governmental personnel or other individuals are attending the same meeting, as previously indicated, they may "car pool" with City of Sterling personnel to that meeting. It should be determined prior to any request for travel whether or not this will be occurring. The City will not prohibit car-pooling if another agency does not have a provision for reimbursing the City. The City may reimburse another entity 30% of the IRS rate if invoiced by the entity.

In the event the City employee is utilizing a City vehicle and has a breakdown, and the cost of repairing that breakdown is minimal (such as repairing a fan belt or flat tire, etc.), the employee will be reimbursed upon presenting a receipt for the repair. In the event of a major breakdown of a City vehicle, the employee should contact the Director of Public Works who will make arrangements for the repair or replacement of that vehicle for the employee. The Director of Public Works will contact and coordinate

with the employee's Department Head appropriate travel arrangements so that the employee may return or continue the trip.

Employees utilizing City vehicles or their own vehicle are reminded that deviating from normally traveled routes to and from the meeting site and after arriving at the meeting site may result in the City's not being covered in the areas of Workers' Compensation and other insurance. Employees are further reminded of the City's Personnel Policy regarding DUI, which could result in the employee's dismissal.

All traffic offenses, parking tickets, or other vehicular violations are the responsibility of the employee and will not be paid by the City. Furthermore, such offenses could subject the employee to disciplinary action. Employees are expected to use discretion in the use of City-owned vehicles on out-of-City travel.

REIMBURSEMENT

The City will reimburse employees for travel expenses incurred while on City business. **Receipts are required for reimbursement in all cases. Credit card receipts only are not acceptable.** Exceptions to this rule, in an instance where an employee has made an expenditure and has not received a receipt for their expenditure, will be considered by this office upon recommendations of the Department Head approving the travel voucher. This will be done rarely, and only in the case of approval of the Department Head upon presentation by the employee of satisfactory written explanation of the request for reimbursement without a receipt.

1. **SPOUSE AND/OR FAMILY MEMBER** – In any situation where a City employee may travel to a conference or meeting, whether in-state or out-of-state with their spouse and/or family member, the City will not pay for travel, meals, or incidental expenses for the employee's spouse and/or family member. In the case of lodging, the employee will be required to pay the verification/documentation of the difference of rates. Exceptions will be granted in only extraordinary circumstances such as when an employee may be receiving an award, but only upon prior approval from the City Manager.
2. **LODGING** – The City will reimburse a reasonable rate per night for in-state travel, with rates being furnished for verification. On in-state or out-of-state travel, the City will reimburse a reasonable amount for lodging when an employee must be booked into specific lodging area for a conference or meeting. Again, this is with prior approval from the City Manager. All employees should ascertain whether or not government discounts are available and whether or not the hotel or motel involved will direct-bill the City with presentation of a Tax Exemption Certificate.
3. **MEALS** – The City employee, in the course of conducting City business or while attending a business meeting, will be allowed the following meal expense allowances (TIP INCLUDED):

	<u>IN-STATE</u>	<u>OUT-OF-STATE</u>
Breakfast	\$11.50	\$14.00
Lunch	\$14.00	\$16.00
Dinner	\$19.50	\$23.00

Breakfast on the day of departure is not reimbursable. If the employee arrives back in Sterling after 7:00 p.m. with one-way travel of 3 hours or more or after 8:00 p.m. with travel time of less than 3 hours, \$19.50 is allowed for dinner with proper receipt and verification. In all instances, Department Heads shall be responsible for making determination on dinner. When a meal is included in a registration fee, in the transportation cost or provided as an official function, the above amounts will be deducted from the meal allowance. Therefore, if a

continental breakfast is provided at the seminar, no allowance for breakfast will be allowed. For a one day function an employee departing before lunch and arriving home after 7:00 p.m. with no meal provided as part of the function, will be reimbursed up to **\$33.50 per day for in-state travel meals and \$39.00 for out-of-state travel, upon presentation of receipts. For functions requiring overnight lodging, the above amounts for breakfast will be allowed.**

Foregoing a meal does not allow the employee to accumulate eligible meal allowances. For example: if an employee is eligible for breakfast and lunch (\$25.50) but elects not to eat breakfast (\$11.50) the eligible lunch allowance will be (\$14.00).

The tip is included in the meal allowance. The employee shall bear in mind that the normal tip is 15%. If no tip is granted, tip allowance is not reimbursable. While not always feasible (such as when a credit card is used) including documentation of the tip is strongly encouraged. Any tip in excess of 15 percent rounded up to nearest 50 cents, will not be reimbursed unless a larger amount is added by the establishment.

If a City employee, acting with discretion and in the interest of City business, purchases a meal for any member of the public, **a receipt is also required.** Adequate documentation listing the purpose and participants of the setting of the expense should be submitted with the receipt. If such an expense should occur, the amount expended for the guest will not be considered as part of the meal allowance for the employee.

4. **ALCOHOL** – The City will not, under any circumstances, pay for or reimburse employees for the purchase of alcoholic beverages.
5. **FUEL** – An employee needing to purchase fuel for travel in a City-owned vehicle should **purchase the minimum amount necessary** to accomplish the task in getting to and from the meeting.
6. **MISCELLANEOUS** – Parking fees, taxi charges, and other similar items will be reimbursed **when accompanied by a receipt.**
7. **REIMBURSEMENT** – Will only be made after review by and signature of the Department Head or City Manager if the traveler is a Department Head.
8. **MAXIMUM DAILY** – The maximum daily total/reimbursement for all expenses will be \$175.00 subject to the above limits unless approved by the City Manager.

CASH ADVANCE

An employee may request a cash advance prior to leaving the City for out-of-town travel. Said request shall be in the forms provided by the Finance Department. The policies and limits for travel shall not be altered by this request. Furthermore, all sums of money advanced in excess of allowable expense shall be returned within three working days of the return to the City. Failure to do so may subject the employee to discipline and shall be subject to a payroll deduction. If the employee is disciplined or subjected to a payroll deduction, the employee will not be eligible for further advances for 12 months.

The use of a City Credit Card will be considered a cash advance and all expenses not allowed shall be treated as such.

CONDUCT

All employees traveling on City business should be reminded that they are representing the citizens of Sterling, their Departments or Divisions, and the City of Sterling as a whole. They should conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner at all times so as not to bring discredit upon themselves, their Departments or Divisions, or the City of Sterling.

Any questions or comments regarding this Travel Policy should be directed to this office in writing. Any exceptions, questions as to applicability, or other types of questions will be decided by this office. Appropriate responses will be disseminated.

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xc: Mayor and City Council

Revised 04-16-09

