



TRAVEL POLICY

Approved by the Board of Directors on March 2023

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

The Pleasant Valley Recreation & Park District (“District”) views the attendance at conferences, seminars, and professional activities that advance the District’s business and the training of District Employees and District Officials to be valuable and essential elements to ensuring the highest level of competency and promotion of the District’s interests.

The purpose of this Travel Policy (“Policy”) is to ensure that uniform and standard procedures are followed which are consistent, comprehensive and explicit for approving reimbursements to District Employees and District Officials, for reasonable travel and business expenses incurred in connection with service performed on behalf of the District.

The District shall reimburse expenditures incurred only in the course of official and authorized District business. Expenses incurred in connection with the following non-exhaustive types of activities generally constitute authorized expenses, provided other applicable requirements of this Policy, or other District policies, are also met:

- A. Communicating with representatives of local, regional, state and/or national government on District-related issues;
- B. Attending educational seminars designed to improve skills, knowledge and information levels;
- C. Participating in local, regional, state and/or national organizations whose activities affect District interests;
- D. Recognizing service to the District or community;
- E. Attending community events or participating in the events of local nonprofit, service or philanthropic organizations;
- F. Meetings with representatives of local organizations, charitable groups, religious affiliations or intergovernmental agencies to discuss matters affecting the interests of the District;
- G. Meetings with District consultants, contractors, advisors, agents, legal counsel, etc. to discuss matters of importance to the District.

District Employees and District Officials are expected to exercise moderation and thriftiness when incurring expenses in connection with conducting official District business. The intent of this Policy is to assure that any and all District funds expended for District business are properly used for the benefit of the District and are properly accounted for by the District.

The regulations set forth in this Policy are not intended to be all inclusive and exceptions may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with approval by the General Manager or their designee.

1.2 DEFINITIONS

- A. Authorizing Party: Authorizing Party means the relevant General Manager/Department Manager or their designee, with oversight of finances and expenditures.
- B. District Employee: District Employee means a current full-time, part-time seasonal, or temporary employees of the District, or volunteer acting on behalf of the District in an employee-like position.
- C. District Official: District Official means any current member of the Board of Directors.
- D. Long Distance: Long Distance means any travel that: (i) requires an employee or official to leave Ventura County, *AND* (ii) Includes at least one (1) overnight stay.

1.3 APPLICABILITY

This Policy applies to Pleasant Valley Park and Recreation District board members and employees incurring expenses during official District business and/or while acting on behalf of the District, for which reimbursement is sought. Except as provided herein, authorization is required prior to the expense being incurred.

The most reasonably priced arrangements for travel events will be utilized. Personal safety and a reasonable level of comfort and dignity will be taken into consideration.

SECTION 2: TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION PROCESS

2.1 INTENTION

The travel authorization process is intended to ensure budget compliance, appropriate use of public funds, and compliance with applicable laws and District policies.

BUDGET: Travel authorization begins with the budgetary process. Travel needs shall be anticipated and submitted in the annual budget for approval by the General Manager and/or Board of Directors. It is the Authorizing Party's responsibility to stay within departmental budget travel allocations as approved by the General Manager and/or Board of Directors. Travel requests are to include all costs associated with any and all types of travel including registration, lodging, meals, transportation, parking, and incidental expenses.

APPROVAL: All travel requests require the completion of a "Travel Request Authorization Form", available with and through the Administrative Services Manager. Travel requests shall be forwarded to the requesting party's supervisor to begin the approval process. Prior to approving a travel request, the supervisor is responsible for determining that a sufficient unexpended allocation remains in the travel/training budget.

SOCIAL EVENTS: "Social costs" includes anything that is outside the normal hours of operation for the event and are deemed social on the registration form. The District does not prepay or reimburse social event costs.

SECTION 3: VEHICLE USE

3.1 USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLE FOR DISTRICT BUSINESS

Reliable transportation may be required for some positions in order to transact necessary business. It is the responsibility of the District Employee or Official to maintain a valid California driver's license, and personal insurance coverage equal to, or greater than, the minimal coverage amounts required by any and all applicable state law while utilizing their private vehicle for transaction of District business. A copy of the District Employee or Official's driver's license and proof of automobile insurance shall be made available upon reasonable request.

District Employees and Officials are responsible to notify the Human Resources Department of any traffic citations, or changes in licensure or insurance. District Employees and Officials are responsible for any parking, mechanical or moving violations received while using their own vehicle for approved District business. Some District Employees' job title and description (e.g., department drivers) may require reporting DUI, DWI, and other moving violations.

3.2 REIMBURSEMENT FOR USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLE

Automobile mileage is reimbursed, using the District or home whichever is closer as the point of origin, at Internal Revenue Service rates presently in effect. These rates are designed to compensate the driver for gasoline, insurance, maintenance, and other expenses associated with operating the vehicle.

Personal automobiles may not be used for trips over 100 miles one-way except by prior written approval of the General Manager or designee. District Employees or Officials who use their personal vehicle for travel are expected to follow this Policy, and the Personnel Policy Manual.

Reimbursement requests shall be submitted to the appropriate Authorizing Party within thirty (30) days of the month the mileage expenses were incurred and shall be complete and accurate with proper approvals.

Parties of two (2) or more may be expected to carpool unless otherwise approved by the General Manager prior to travel.

SECTION 4: LONG DISTANCE TRAVEL

4.1 AUTHORIZATION

All Long-Distance travel requires prior written approval of the General Manager or designee. Every effort will be made to pre-arrange and pre-pay all approved expenses. However, in the event this is not possible, District Employees and Officials are eligible for:

- a) Reimbursement of approved expenses paid for by District Employee or Official, with accompanying itemized receipts.
- b) All Long-Distance travel requests must be approved no later than sixty (60) days prior to travel, unless approved by the General Manager or designee.

4.2 AIR TRAVEL

For authorized air travel, the District reserves coach rate seats at government or group rates (when such rates are available) and makes every effort to schedule reasonable flight times. Seat upgrades or flight/schedule changes unrelated to District business are not approved expenses and become the responsibility of the District Employee or Official. Refundable tickets are required unless approved by the General Manager or designee.

It is the intent of the District to book all air travel on the District's credit card unless otherwise approved by the General Manager or designee.

In the event a District Employee or Official has to book their own air travel, with prior written approval of the General Manager, Coach-class priced airfare on round-trip tickets, or one-way (both directions) whichever is most cost effective, shall be purchased. Every attempt should be made to secure advance pricing.

4.3 GROUND TRANSPORTATION & RENTAL CAR

The District makes every effort to reserve appropriate ground transportation for traveling employees (*e.g., airport shuttle, rental car*). When that is not possible, District Employees and Officials may claim reimbursement for ground

transportation according to the following:

Car Rental. Car rental rates that are equal to or less than those available through travel-pricing comparison websites such as www.priceline.com or an equivalent service for a standard or mid-size vehicle shall be considered the most economical and reasonable for purposes of reimbursement under this policy. However, when the number of employees or officials attending the event and sharing the vehicle warrants the rental of a van or other larger capacity vehicle or when the weather in the location of the event warrants the use of a SUV, the rental of such a vehicle, through the process described above, shall be considered reasonable.

Taxis/Shuttles/Ride Share. Taxi, shuttle, or ride share fares may be reimbursed, including a 15% gratuity per fare, when the cost of such fares is equal or less than the cost of car rentals, gasoline and parking combined, or when such transportation is necessary for time efficiency.

4.4 LODGING

The District shall make every effort to pre-arrange appropriate lodging using government or group rates, when available, *for* approved travel. When that is not possible, with prior written approval of the General Manager or designee, District Employees and Officials may reserve reasonable lodging, and claim reimbursement for such lodging in accordance with this section and with appropriate receipts.

If a group rate or government rate is not available, lodging rates that do not exceed the median retail price for 3-Star upscale (such as Holiday Inn, Red Lion, Radisson, Doubletree-grade hotel) lodging for that area listed on travel-pricing comparison websites like www.priceline.com or an equivalent service shall be considered reasonable and reimbursable.

Any lodging upgrades made by District Employees or Officials in excess of approved lodging rates are not approved and become the responsibility of the District Employee or Official.

4.5 MEALS

Daily reimbursement rates for meals will follow the Department of General Services for the nearest city's per diem rates.

<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

Eligible meals are defined as meals for which a District Employee or Official incurs a cost due to a valid and authorized business reason (e.g., *overnight travel, business meeting, special dietary requirements that cannot be accommodated, meal not covered by conference fee, etc.*). Meals provided as part of a conference or seminar are not eligible for separate reimbursement. Reimbursement requests for approved meal expenses must be submitted with itemized receipts. The District does not reimburse for alcoholic beverages.

An increased or decreased meal allowance may be considered when traveling to remote or metropolitan areas. Any changes must be pre-approved by the General Manager or designee prior to travel.

4.6 INCIDENTALS

District Employees and Officials are eligible for reimbursement for incidentals up to \$5.00 per day while on District business travel. Incidentals may include such items as tips (not to exceed 15%), soft drinks, postage, etc. Items such as gifts, entertainment (including in-room movies), alcohol, or other similar items are not reimbursable. Itemized receipts and/or an approved written list of expenses will be required for reimbursement.

Parking fees shall be reimbursed when related to District business travel, including airport parking fees, and parking fees for personal or rental vehicles.

4.7 TELEPHONE CALLS

The District will reimburse one (1) 15-minute telephone call per day while an employee is on official business. If the employee receives a cell phone stipend, they will not be reimbursed. If an employee does not receive a cell phone stipend, they will receive \$2.00 per day.

4.8 TRAVEL TIME

Travel time occurring during District Employee's or Official's scheduled time off, on a designated District holiday, or outside the District Employee's or Official's regularly scheduled work time will not be compensated for overtime. The only exception of this will be when travel is required by the District related to the performance of the District Employee's or Official's job duties and the overtime is authorized and approved prior to the travel by the General Manager or their designee.

4.9 COMBINED PERSONAL/BUSINESS TRAVEL

- Detailed request by District Employee or Official must be made in writing to the Department Head prior to travel dates, with a clear differentiation between personal and business travel and receive approval from the General Manager.
- District Employees or Officials who extend the length of the business trip for personal reasons must charge those days to an available leave balance, such as vacation, management leave, or compensatory time.
- District Employees or Officials who attend conferences or seminars and leave early for personal reasons other than illness or family emergency, shall reimburse the District on a pro-rated basis.
- Any additional travel cost or lodging expenses incurred as a result of extending the length of any business trip for personal reasons shall not be reimbursed or paid for by the District Employee or Official.
- District Employees or Officials who have a rental car and are extending

their business trip for personal reasons will not be reimbursed for the extra rental days.

- Any expenses inadvertently charged to the District for personal travel must be repaid by the employee who incurred the charges within thirty (30) days of return.

SECTION 5: REIMBURSEMENT

5.1 REIMBURSEMENT

For all reimbursement requests, District Employees and Officials shall complete a Claim for Reimbursement of Travel Expense Form to document that expenses meet this Policy and are required to conduct District business.

Claim forms shall be submitted within thirty (30) days of incurring an expense and shall be accompanied by receipts documenting each expense. Upon appropriate written approval, District Employees and Officials will be reimbursed as quickly as possible. Personal items, alcoholic beverages, and expenses of family members are not authorized.

SECTION 6: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

6.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The General Manager shall review Board members' requests for travel and incidental expenses for compliance with this Travel Policy and other applicable District policies. All expenses that do not fall within this Travel Policy or the Internal Revenue Service reimbursable rates as established in IRS Publication 463, or any successor publication, shall be approved by the Board of Directors at a public meeting before the expense is incurred. (GC 53232.2(f))

If a member of the Board of Directors chooses to incur travel or incidental costs that are in excess of the rates established under this Policy or IRS Publication 463, or any successor publication, and such costs have not been pre-approved at a public meeting of the Board of Directors, the member does so at their own expense. (GC 53232.2(g))

Members of the Board of Directors shall provide brief reports on meetings or other events attended at the expense of the District at the next regular meeting of the Board. (GC 53232.2(d))