

# City of Minneapolis

## LOCAL TRAVEL AND REIMBURSEMENTS PROCEDURES

### For City Employees and Officials

#### **1.0 Purpose**

The City of Minneapolis recognizes the need for local business travel by its employees and by its elected or appointed officials (hereafter “officials”) and through these procedures, assigns the responsibilities connected with local travel for government business purposes.

#### **2.0 Scope**

This Local Travel and Reimbursement Procedure applies to business travel expenses incurred by City employees and officials when the trip does not involve overnight travel. The City’s Ethics Policy shall be incorporated into this Procedure by reference.

#### **3.0 Public Interest Requirement**

The primary purpose of all local travel must serve a public interest related to the City of Minneapolis government. Business travel satisfies the “public interest” requirement if the authorized trip’s primary purpose is to accomplish work-related tasks or for professional development.

#### **4.0 Travel Expenses and Reimbursements**

All travel expenses must be approved by an authorized signatory in the Traveler’s department. An authorized signatory is any person in a job title that is identified as a “position authorized to sign contracts” according to the Finance Department records. The City will reimburse appropriate and documented business expenses incurred while traveling on a City business.

#### **5.0 Mileage Reimbursement Rules**

- i) When an employee is required to use his/her personal vehicle to conduct authorized City business, the City shall reimburse the employee at the current [Federal IRS mileage reimbursement rates](#) on the most direct route according to MapQuest/Google Maps. Payment of this mileage rate is full payment for all costs of the private vehicle’s operation, such as depreciation, financing costs, maintenance, repairs, gasoline, oil, insurance, taxes and vehicle registration fees. Employees shall not receive vehicle mileage or other transportation expense reimbursement for commuting between a permanent work station and their home.
- ii) City pool cars are available for local business travel. An employee’s decision to use a personal auto for business trips does not obligate the City to pay for additional parking or mileage than would be necessary if a City pool car had been used. Convenience for the employee, by itself, is not a sufficient business reason to use a personal car for work-related local travel.

Employees who choose to use their own car for City business, instead of using an available City-owned vehicle, are agreeing to certain financial risks by doing so. First, the employee’s personal car insurance (not the City’s self-insurance fund) provides the primary coverage for vehicle and property damage if an accident occurs.<sup>1</sup> This primary coverage is assumed if the employee receives mileage reimbursement or if the use of their own car was not mandated by their job. In contrast, if the employee is on authorized business in a City vehicle, then the City

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<sup>1</sup> However, personal injury to the *employee* may be covered under the City’s Workers’ Compensation plan.

pays for the damage to the City's and to other people's property. Second, using a personal car for work-related trips may increase the employee's car insurance rates, regardless of their personal accident record. Third, the employee may incur expenses (such as downtown parking fees) that are not reimbursable because the expense would not have happened if the employee had used a City pool car.

- iii) Tolls and parking fees at the meeting location are reimbursable at actual cost by submitting a receipt with the Auto Expense report. However, parking fees for the time employees are at their regular work location(s) are not reimbursable.

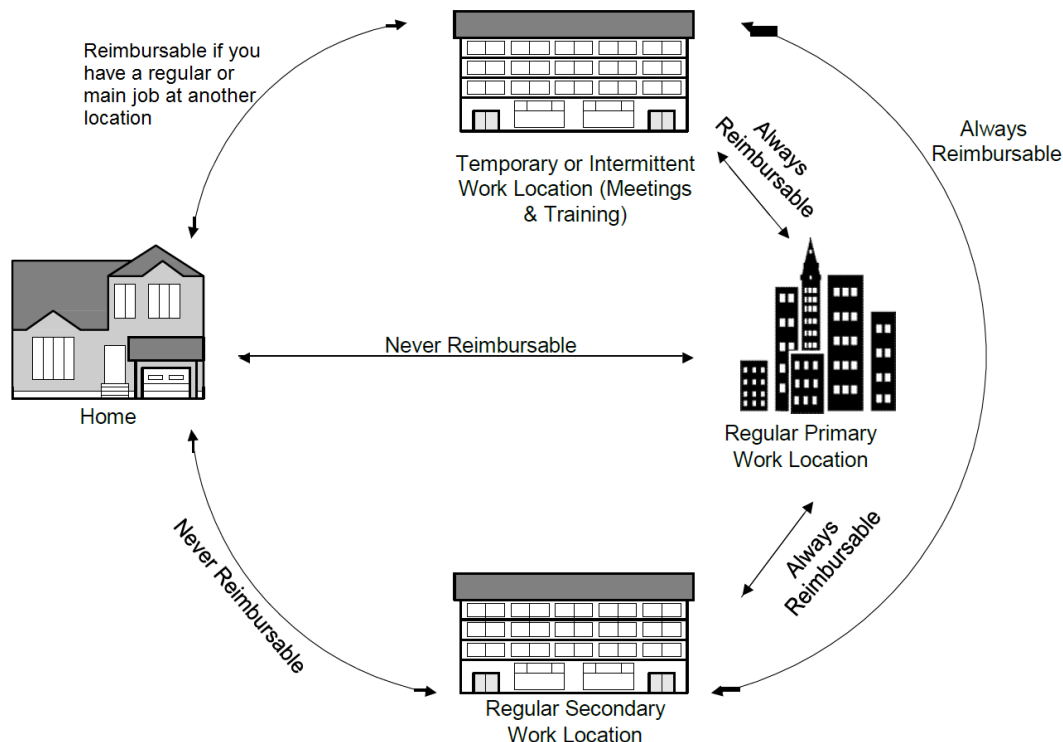
In general, mileage claimed will be calculated from the traveler's regular primary work-site to the meeting and return. When several employees attend the same local meeting, consider carpooling. If an employee uses a personal auto to make it easier to travel from home to the meeting or from the meeting to home, the reimbursement amount will be determined as per below.

When an employee does not report to his/her permanent work location during the day or conducts official City business before or after reporting to his/her permanent work location, the allowable mileage shall be:

- 1) mileage from the employee's residence to the first stop/temporary worksite;
- 2) all mileage between points visited on City business during the day;
- 3) mileage from the last stop/temporary worksite to the employee's residence.

Provisions 1 and 3 apply only if the employee has one or more regular work locations away from home.

The diagram below illustrates the rules for City reimbursement of business-related mileage. For purposes of this diagram, all City job-sites in downtown Minneapolis are counted as one "work location."



**EXAMPLE**

The City of St. Cloud is hosting an event at St. Cloud State University. The Mayor of St. Cloud is giving a speech. A Minneapolis City official is invited to present as well. He/she needs to travel to the University for the event and then to the St. Cloud City Hall to have a luncheon with the Mayor to discuss the future partnership opportunities between the cities.

The Minneapolis City official lives in Maple Grove, MN. He/she drives a personal vehicle to St. Cloud. He/she does not go to the office in the morning but drives to St. Cloud directly from home. The mileage from the official's residence in Maple Grove to St. Cloud State University (first stop) will be reimbursed at the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate.

After the presentation at the University the Minneapolis City official drives to the St. Cloud City Hall to meet with the Mayor. This mileage and parking expenses are reimbursed in full.

Coming back, the official drives to his/her permanent workplace at the Minneapolis City Hall to finish his/her day and to share the details of the visit. The mileage from the Mayor's office in St. Cloud to the City Hall in Minneapolis is reimbursable.

- iv) **Commuting Expenses.** In general, the costs of commuting between home and work are personal expenses and will not be reimbursed by the City even if the employee:
  - 1) Hauls work tools or equipment in their personal car while commuting; OR
  - 2) Conducts business during the commute.
  
- v) **Commercial Transportation.** When an employee is required to use commercial transportation (air, taxi, rental car, Uber, etc.) in connection with authorized City business, the employee shall be reimbursed for the actual expenses of the mode and class of transportation so authorized. Reasonable gratuities may be included in commercial travel costs. When using commercial transportation for local (non-overnight) travel, the most reasonable and cost-effective option must be selected.

If it is more practical to travel to and from a temporary work location directly from home instead of a regular work location using commercial transportation, the actual cost will be reimbursed. These situations must be reviewed by a supervisor on a case by case basis.

## **6.0 Meal Reimbursement Rules**

During local travel the City will pay for meals, tips and related taxes and service charges using the current Per Diem M&IE breakdown schedules as set by the federal government. These schedules can be found at: [M&IE Breakdown](#). The City uses the rates for Minneapolis/St. Paul. Incidentals are paid only when all three meals qualify for reimbursement. The Per Diem allowance is a daily amount as set by federal schedule and is used instead of reimbursement for actual expenses for meals and related incidental expenses.

For Local Travel Per Diem is pro-rated based on the eligibility of the meals as follows:

- 1) An employee may claim reimbursement for breakfast only if the meeting or event start time is a minimum of one hour prior to normal starting hours.
- 2) An employee may claim reimbursement for lunch only when being on assignment, located over thirty-five (35) miles from his/her temporary or permanent work station, with the work assignment extending over the normal noon meal period.

3) Meals for meetings that occur after typical work hours will be handled on a case by case basis.

**EXAMPLE 1**  
**EXAMPLE 2**

If the City official from the previous example has normal working hours 8:00 am – 4:30 pm and has to be in St. Cloud by 8:00 AM, he/she would need to leave the residence at around 6:30 AM – an hour and a half prior to his/her normal start time. In this case breakfast is reimbursable.

A City police investigator needs to respond to an urgent call in Sandstone, MN. The investigator leaves the Minneapolis City Hall (permanent place of business) at 10:00 am. He/she works with the local police team until 2:00 PM and then returns back to the office by 4:00 PM. He/she buys lunch while working in Sandstone. Lunch expense is reimbursable because:

- a) The assignment took place more than 35 miles away from the usual place of business.
- b) The assignment extended over the normal lunch break at 12:00 PM.

### **7.0 Lodging Reimbursement Rules**

Travel involving overnight stay is discussed in the Overnight Business Travel Procedure for City of Minneapolis. Lodging reimbursement is not allowed for local non-overnight travel.

### **8.0 Submission Guidelines**

Complete expense reimbursement requests must be fully supported by mileage calculations and original receipts for parking and tolls and forwarded to the Payroll Department no more than 45 days from return of travel. Receipts for meal expenses are not required. Reimbursement requests with incomplete documentation will be returned. Reimbursement requests submitted past the 45 day period will not be processed.

### **9.0 Forms**

Mileage Reimbursement

Request Per Diem Worksheet