

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA TRAVEL POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura (HACSB) and its affiliates (collectively referred to as HACSB) recognize the constructive value of professional conferences and training seminars for professional development and to represent HACSB's interests. Funding for travel shall be part of annual HACSB budget processes, and travel approvals will be based on the availability of funds in respective budgets. It is the policy of the HACSB to manage travel expenses efficiently, limit such expenses to necessary matters, and provide a direct benefit to the HACSB. The HACSB shall reimburse allowable travel expenses directly related to travel by HACSB staff and HACSB Commissioners on approved HACSB business. All HACSB Board of Commissioners may participate in one HACSB-funded conference, per year, unless otherwise agreed upon by the CEO or designee. All reimbursable travel expenses incurred are subject to budgeted amounts and approval by the appropriate department Director, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or designee. HACSB staff and Commissioners shall be expected to exercise good judgment and act as stewards of the public trust when incurring expenses in connection with official HACSB business.

PRUDENT JUDGMENT

It is important to remember that reimbursable travel expenses are paid almost entirely from government funding and the records of such expenses are public records subject to disclosure upon request. Employees are expected to act as stewards of the public trust and to exercise prudence in incurring reimbursable travel expenses and to consider the lowest-cost travel option.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all HACSB staff and the Board of Commissioners.

REASON FOR POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to establish a travel and expense policy for HACSB personnel and commissioners attending business or professional conferences, training seminars, or other travel on authorized HACSB business and for which the traveler will seek reimbursement. This policy does not cover contract employees unless it is a term of their contract.

EXCEPTIONS

The CEO, or designee, may provide exceptions to this policy at any time. Such exceptions shall be in writing and provide justification for the exception.

SEMINARS, WORKSHOPS, TRAINING SESSIONS ATTENDANCE

An employee may request and/or a supervisor may direct an employee to attend a seminar, workshop, and/or training session. Approval of such attendance shall be based on the supervisor/manager's determination and the Department Director's approval that attendance will be in the best interest of the HACSB.

CONFERENCE/ MEETING ATTENDANCE

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The HACSB maintains memberships in a wide variety of professional associations and encourages staff to actively participate in those associations concerned with the work in which they are engaged. It is generally accepted that attendance at professional conferences, seminars, and meetings is beneficial to both the employee and the HACSB. Therefore, when it is determined by the Director and approved by the CEO that an employee's participation in an event will be in the best interest of the HACSB, attendance is, when not mandated, encouraged.

The CEO or designee may authorize attendance at conferences/seminars/meetings held by organizations in which the HACSB is not a member when justified by the employee's active participation as an officer or board member of the association, or when attendance at a specific event is in the best interest of the HACSB.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

If a person subject to this policy seeks reimbursement for travel to or attendance at an event, such travel must be approved by the employee's manager or Director.

MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of management personnel in each department to ensure that attendance at conferences and training events is scheduled to meet budgetary constraints, to provide employees with opportunities to attend events when in the best interest of the HACSB and to assure employees have turned in completed travel expense forms no later than 30 days following the conference or training event.

TRANSPORTATION

Employees shall use the most efficient and cost-effective mode of transportation for an authorized business trip. In determining the type of travel consideration shall be given to the following factors:

- Estimated transit time cost
- The most efficient arrival and departure time

If the mode of transportation is commercial air, the class of travel shall be the lowest cost economy class available at the time of booking and will be consistent with the lowest reasonable rate for a direct flight or the flight with the fewest number of transfers available for the desired departure and arrival times based on the above factors. A Director or respective Department Manager must approve any changes to flights wherein the HACSB incurs a cost of over \$100 before making the change. If based on the circumstances getting approval before making a change is unreasonable, the responsibility for any costs over \$100 will be subject to the Director or Department Manager's approval, upon returning from the trip.

If the mode of transportation is a vehicle, the use of a HACSB vehicle is encouraged but cannot be used to transport anyone other than HACSB employees. If the Director or Department Manager (supervisor) states that a HACSB vehicle is not available, the employee may use a personal vehicle and mileage will be paid in accordance with the current IRS-approved rate.

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Before a personal vehicle is used for HACSB business, the employee is required to have proof of insurance coverage up to the state-mandated levels of liability insurance.

Car rentals may be allowed under specific circumstances, pre-approved by the CEO or Designee. If a rental car has been preapproved by the CEO, the car rental insurance option, which should be refused by the employee at rental time, will not be reimbursed by the HACSB. The HACSB will not reimburse any excess mileage fees incurred non-related to HACSB business.

At destination airports, public transportation, Taxis, and Ride-Share apps are acceptable forms of transportation when the transportation is to and or from the airport to the location of the meeting/ event or conference. Any customary tips to drivers shall not exceed 20% of the fare.

Transportation costs incurred outside of HACSB business are not allowable expenses and will not be eligible for reimbursement. See below for examples of reimbursable and non-reimbursable travel expenses.

COMPENSATION DURING TRAVEL AWAY FROM THE HACSB ON BUSINESS

*For employees classified as **non-exempt** under the Fair Labor Standards Act:*

When the trip originates from the employee's home, time, more than the employee's normal commute time, spent traveling to and from an authorized business event is considered time worked and will be compensated.

When the trip originates from the employee's work location, all time spent commuting to and from an authorized business event is considered time worked and will be compensated.

Time spent in attendance at an authorized business event is considered time worked and will be compensated. In all instances, receptions/ networking events (unless the event/ reception is conference-sponsored), entertainment, and bona fide meals, sleep, or rest time, are not considered time worked and will not be compensated.

If an employee is offered public transportation but requests and is permitted to drive a vehicle instead, the time worked is the lesser of the time spent driving the car or the time that would have qualified as work time if the employee had used the public transportation.

Time spent outside regular work hours in preparation for attendance at an authorized business event may be compensated for with appropriate management approval in advance.

If an employee is offered overnight accommodations in accordance with this policy but chooses to commute to and from the location, the employee will not be compensated overtime for the additional non-business travel time or additional mileage, unless approved in advance by a Director based on a business need.

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*For employees classified as **exempt** under the Fair Labor Standards Act:*

Employees will be compensated for their normal salary. Exempt employees are not authorized to receive any further compensation than their regular salary.

LODGING

When away from the HACSB on business, an employee may engage rooms for overnight lodging during multi-day events when there is a reasonable expectation that the day will exceed ten (10) hours or the start time of a same-day event is 8 am or earlier and the travel distance exceeds 50 miles. For this purpose, the day includes all time spent in transit, work, conference sessions, meetings, breaks, lunch, and participation at conference-sponsored events open and available to all attendees (e.g. welcome receptions and evening networking events).

Lodging in connection with a conference or training activity shall not exceed the group rate published by the conference or training activity. If a group rate is not available, the lodging cost shall be at the Government Rate for said location. The accommodation shall be at a commercial hotel or motel convenient to the location of the business event.

If the employee is accompanied on the trip by another person who is not an employee of the HACSB, the HACSB will only be charged for the amount equal to a single room rate.

A Travel Day may be approved by a Director, CEO, or designee before and/or after the scheduled event if reasonably necessary to ensure full participation. Approval of a Travel Day will consider the location of the event and the timing of reasonable travel options.

Except as provided above, if the employee chooses to arrive early, stay additional days, or use extra days to drive rather than fly to an event, additional lodging expenses incurred as a result of these choices will not be reimbursed by the HACSB.

Daily Travel (No Overnight Stay)

Employees will be reimbursed for actual expenses up to the pro-rated per diem rate if the daily travel meets the following criteria:

- Breakfast –Employee departs from their duty station or home before 7:00 a.m. as a result of travel. Meal times are not inclusive of this time.
- Lunch – Reimbursement only when the conference, meeting, or training extends up to and beyond the lunch period for that day
- Dinner (evening) – Employee is not able to return to their home before 7:00 P.M. as a result of travel. Meal times are not inclusive of this time.

Meal reimbursements for daily travel are taxable income under IRS regulations.

Per Diem Reimbursement for Overnight Travel

An employee who is authorized to travel will be provided the per diem amount designated for the destination by the GSA per diem rate for meals and incidental expenses. Current rates can be

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found at www.gsa.gov/perdiem. Receipts are not required to receive payment of the per diem rate. The HACSB will authorize the entire Per Diem amount as allowed by GSA with no exclusions¹.

Employees are also eligible to receive Per Diem reimbursement on days of travel. The rate for per diems on travel days is set by GSA at 75% of the Meals & Incidentals rate based on the location traveling to. If the Travel Day is also the first or last day of the event/ conference or training, the employee will be reimbursed the greater of the Travel Day reimbursement or the pro-rated per diem rate for the covered meals.

The HACSB will allow Per Diem requests to be submitted before the day of travel. If a Per Diem is requested in advance of the day of travel, the HACSB will authorize up to 75% of the allowable Per Diem. The remaining balance will be paid upon returning from travel, no later than 30 days after returning from travel. The remaining balance will reflect adjustments to the Per Diem request if the HACSB covered any of the meal expenses for an individual while on travel.

OTHER EXPENSES

The HACSB will pay or reimburse for the following business expenses incurred while traveling when incurred to conduct HACSB business:

- Airport Parking will be paid at the following maximum rates²:
 - \$15 per day for Hollywood Burbank Airport or the maximum daily rate for Economy Lot A, whichever is higher.
 - \$30 per day for Los Angeles International Airport or at the non-discounted drive up rate for LAX Economy Parking, whichever is higher.
 - \$18 per day for Santa Barbara Airport or at the non-discounted drive-up rate for Economy Lot Parking, whichever is higher.
- Mileage to and from an airport or destination will be paid for the shortest distance from the assigned work location or the employee's home, whichever is less.
- Verification of mileage calculation must accompany the reimbursement request (e.g. calculation from Google Maps, Yahoo Maps, Mapquest, or similar).
- Baggage fees for up to one checked bag.
- In-room basic internet service
- Inflight internet service, only when there is an expectation that a task must be completed during the time of travel (e.g. sign a document, submit a time-sensitive document, etc.)
- Photograph, fax, photocopy service, and other presentation-related materials
- Hotel parking as required by travel.
- Road tolls

¹ An exception to this would be when: 1) the Conference/ Training explicitly identifies that the registration fee includes specific meals. Continental breakfast by the hotel is not considered a provided meal. 2) a meal is paid for by the HACSB while on travel.

² These rates will be updated yearly and updated accordingly. Updating these rates will not require an amendment to this policy.

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- Meals on the agency credit card³

Non-Reimbursable Expenses

The HACSB shall not pay for any personal expenses incurred by an employee while traveling on HACSB business. Examples of such expenses are:

- Movie rentals in hotel rooms
- Garment cleaning or pressing services.
- Alcoholic beverages
- Personal toiletry articles
- Entertainment
- Travel within locations at the destination (e.g. from hotel to restaurant) that does not have a business purpose.
- Travel or rental car insurance.
- Seat upgrades or other travel add-on, such as priority boarding, mileage booster, etc.
- Fines or penalties
- Cancellation or change fees except where such cancellation is at the direction of the HACSB.
- Excess baggage fees

EXPENSE REPORTING

A "Travel Authorization Form" form must be completed no later than 30 days following each travel event where any costs are to be paid by the HACSB. Travel includes all work away from the HACSB, such as attendance at meetings (both formal and informal), conferences, and seminars; "travel expenses" include transportation, per diem, lodging, registration, and any related incidental or additional expenses (such as telephone, tips, or car rental). The destination can be a location close by (e.g. lunch after a meeting at a restaurant), or at a great distance (e.g. training out of state). Proper completion of this form requires the employee to gather together and report on all expenditures relative to the travel experience. All expenses, whether personally incurred, charged to a HACSB credit card, or paid through a HACSB check request, must be reported on this form after completion of the trip. Personally incurred expenses will be reimbursed from this form, but if no business expenses are personally incurred, the report is still required in order to provide a complete accounting of travel expenses as analysis of HACSB travel and conference expenditures is frequently required. Documentary evidence of expense for which reimbursement is requested, such as receipts, paid bills, or similar evidence sufficient to support each expense, shall be attached to the form, except for items covered under the per diem payment. Each receipt or bill shall include detailed information to assure the employee is only reimbursed for those expenses consistent with this policy.

³ All meals on the agency Credit Card must comply with the HACSB Credit Card Policy. The cost of meal(s) paid for on the HACSB credit card will be deducted from the *per diem* amount owed to the traveler receiving the meal(s).

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All expense reports and supporting documentation are subject to the Public Records Act and may be disclosed. Also, all expenses are publicly reported annually pursuant to Federal and State law.

COST EXCEEDING ALLOWABLE AMOUNTS

Employees may, at their discretion, exceed the allowable amounts herein. In all cases where expenses exceed the allowable amount, the employee must pay for the excess amount or reimburse the HACSB for all excess costs within 30 days of the last day of travel. The HACSB will pay expenses up to the allowable amount.

RECEIPTS REQUIRED

Detailed receipts are required for all travel expenses paid by the HACSB except for expenses covered under the per diem. For example, a hotel receipt must break down all charges. Receipts may be electronic or printed. Any charges to a HACSB credit card must be substantiated by a receipt or specified to be included as part of the per diem allowance. Employees are responsible for all costs that are not supported by a receipt.

CREDIT CARDS

Employees with HACSB credit cards are encouraged to make all approved HACSB travel on the HACSB credit cards, as long as these purchases are consistent with HACSB's travel and expense reimbursement policy.

All credit card purchases should be supported with receipts and proper documentation no later than seven (7) days from return from travel. If receipt(s) are misplaced, the employee may submit a detailed written expense description.

For any expenses incurred on the HACSB credit card, that are considered non-reimbursable expenses, the employee must reimburse the HACSB within thirty (30) days of when the expense was made.

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