

Charles County Department of Standard Operating Policy and Procedure

Title:	Expense Reimbursements, Travel Requests and Advances	SOP #: FAS.2.002
Division:	All Departments & Agencies as identified in Chapter 1 of the Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual	Effective Date: 5/6/10
		Revision Date: 6/17/14
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Purpose:	To expand the policy contained in the personnel manual on Charles County's policy on travel and reimbursable expenses.	
References:	Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual – Chapters 1 and 21	
Policy:	These procedures provide guidelines to help ensure uniform application and administration of travel and expense reimbursement and to reduce and control the County's costs related to travel.	
Procedure:	<p>The following shall apply to all full time, full-time reduced hours, part time and seasonal County employees on official business for the County.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employees seeking approval to travel on official County business to attend conferences and meetings shall do so as far in advance as possible. Out of state travel requests must receive both Department Head and County Administrator approval. In addition, any travel request in excess of \$1,000 dollars in gross individual and/or department/division expenses must do the same. All County employees are expected to conduct his/her business travel at a minimum cost while striving to achieve the success of the mission or goal. Use of early bird registration rates and hotel discounts is encouraged. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Out of State Travel is defined as travel outside of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. 2. Travel requests shall be submitted on the attached form FAS-100 and should indicate all the necessary required information including, but not limited to: dates of travel, location, reason, actual and estimated costs involved, method of travel, and source of paying funds. Approved requests shall be attached to all additional check requests, invoices and expense reimbursement requests. 	

3. Travel Advances – the request and use of travel advance funds is encouraged prior to the departure on approved travel. The check request to cover meals and mileage reimbursement shall be submitted no later than three weeks prior to departure.
 - 3.1 Charles County adheres to the IRS business standard mileage reimbursement rates, as adjusted and announced periodically and is available upon request from the Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services.
 - 3.2 Charles County will adhere to the Federal IRS Per Diem Rates and guidelines as outlined in Publication 1542. A link is provided on the County's ICG Fiscal and Administrative Services main page on the left side border.
 - 3.3 All costs are to be itemized and reconciled by the employee on the attached expense report form **FAS-101**. **All receipts are required.** Expenses that exceed the actual travel advance, as reviewed and authorized by Department Head, will be reimbursed from available budgetary funds once submitted to Accounting. If the travel advance exceeded the actual costs, the employee shall return such payment attached to the report, approved by Department Head, and submitted to Accounting for deposit and reconciliation.
4. Air and Rail Travel – Reservation of air and rail travel tickets shall be purchased as far in advance and at the lowest logical fares available. Payment for reservations can be made by the employee approved for travel via personal credit/debit card. Difficulty in finding appropriate arriving/departure locations, carriers, and times of travel should be documented and taken into account. Proper identification on the Travel Authorization Form **FAS-100** is required and can be explained in the comment section of the form or attached separately.
 - 4.1 Upgrades of reserved tickets are the sole responsibility of the individual employee and are not reimbursable.
 - 4.2 Participation in any promotional plan, such as frequent flyer miles, is not applicable if by doing so, the participation entails foregoing a more favorable fare rate.
5. Insurance – officials and employees on official County business are protected by the County's participation in the Local Government Insurance Trust and Worker's Compensation policies. NO additional insurance coverage should be purchased for luggage or rental cars.

6. Reimbursable Expenses – in general, the County shall reimburse County employees for authorized travel and related expenses incurred, however no such reimbursement will occur for a spouse, child, or additional person not essential to or approved for the business travel.

6.1 Mileage – For the use of a personal vehicle on official County business, employees and officials will be reimbursed for the prevailing rate set by the IRS on form **FAS-101**.

6.2 Rental Vehicle – subject to pre-travel approval, employees may rent proper vehicles when on Out of State travel as a means of transportation to locations when not available or impractical. The lowest cost vehicle necessary to achieve the travel shall be reserved.

6.2.A – Additional costs typically associated with a rental vehicle and applicable to reimbursement are: gasoline, oil, emergency repairs, parking and toll charges.

6.3 Lodging – for approved travel requiring an overnight stay, lodging will be reimbursed or prepaid at the actual cost not to exceed the maximum per diem lodging rates as published in the Federal IRS Per Diem Rates and guidelines outlined in Publication 1542.

6.3.A – Lodging that exceeds the maximum per diem rates must be disclosed and obtain approval via form **FAS-100** before travel takes place in order for them to be prepaid or reimbursable.

6.3.B – Lodging costs should be directly paid to the facility by submitting a check request form in advance of scheduled travel or via the reimbursement process.

6.3.C - Actual itemized receipts must be submitted on the expense report form **FAS-101** whether lodging is prepaid or reimbursed to the employee.

6.3.D – Reimbursement shall be in an amount equal to the actual cost of the least expensive available rate for reasonable accommodations based on single occupancy.

6.3.E - In cases of double occupancy, each employee shall be reimbursed 50 percent of the total room charge unless documentation provided for reimbursement dictate otherwise.

6.3.F – In cases of double occupancy when one of the occupants is not on official county business, the lodging reimbursement shall be on the basis of 8.3.D above.

6.4 Meals – meal expenses while on official county business or travel are reimbursable (including tips up to 15%), up to the maximum per diem rates established and published in the Federal IRS Per Diem Rates and guidelines outlined in Publication 1542.

6.4.A – Meals are to be broken down into breakfast, lunch and dinner as submitted on form FAS-100 for the first and/or last days of travel.

6.4.A.a – the cost of breakfast is reimbursable when an employee or official in travel status has to leave home 2 hours or more before the normal starting time of the employee's place of business. The cost of dinner is reimbursable when an employee in travel status cannot get home within 2 hours after the employee's normal ending time.

6.4.A.b – if the registration fee for a conference, convention, seminar or training includes meals, the employee or official may not request reimbursement for separate meals outside of those offered unless documented for medical or dietary reasons.

6.4.B – Reimbursement will not be made for the cost of alcoholic beverages.

6.4.C – Working lunch – Any and all requests by an employee or group of employees thru their Department Head to hold County business during normal lunch hours and wishing to provide food and refreshment shall require pre-approval utilizing form **FAS-100** by the County Administrator. This shall be kept to minimum and avoided, if at all possible to limit the impacts on annual budget funds.

6.4.D – Meal reimbursement above the standard rate is allowable when conducted in high cost areas or locations when there are limited options to the individual. Pre-approval of such receipts should be noted prior to submission of form **FAS-101**.

6.5 Conference Registration Fees, Course and Seminar Fees – each are fully reimbursable with submission of receipts on form **FAS-101**.

6.6 Cancellation Charges – fees incurred due to documented and authorized emergency cases that lead to partial or complete cancellation of travel are fully reimbursable based on available departmental budget funds. All other causes are the personal responsibility of the employee(s).

7. Exceptions: Any and all exceptions to this policy/procedure must be approved in advance by the County Administrator.

Authorized:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. C. [unclear]', written over a horizontal line.

Date:

7/17/14



TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION FORM

DEPARTMENT(s): _____

EMPLOYEE(s): _____

NAME OF CONFERENCE/TRAINING/MEETING : _____

LOCATION: _____ OUT OF STATE: _____

DATES OF ATTENDANCE: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

JUSTIFICATION FOR ATTENDANCE: _____

Attach any brochures or literature that detail conference events or session information please.

EXPENSES

REGISTRATION: _____ Funds budgeted in current fiscal year? Yes No

TRAIN/AIRFARE: _____ CLASS: _____ Account No. _____

LODGING: _____ Account No. _____

RENTAL CAR: _____ Alternate Funding Source? _____

MEALS: _____ BREAKFAST: _____ LUNCH: _____ DINNER: _____

MILEAGE: _____

OTHER: _____ (please identify): _____

TOTAL: _____

COMMENTS: _____

DEPARTMENT HEAD

DATE

All out-of-state travel and/or travel in excess of **\$1,000** gross expected costs require County Administrator approval.

APPROVED

DENIED

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

DATE

