

# BURKBURNETT INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## TRAVEL PROCEDURES

Revised December 2018

### Travel Authorization

Professional employees wishing to travel on school business must submit a Time-Off request through Skyward using the appropriate time-off code, reason code, and comment that describes the travel event. The Request for Travel Advance is used to request money for lodging and registrations. After approval by the campus principal or director, the Superintendent may approve or deny any request to travel.

All travel costs must be covered by the traveler's budget, and must be reasonable and allowable. Within three days of return from the trip, the employee must submit the Travel Expense Report form with all **original detailed** receipts in **paper form** to the Business Office. The principal or director must approve this prior to submitting the form to the Business Office. The Director of Business and Finance may determine appropriate reimbursement. District policy concerning travel is located in Policy DEE Local.

### Travel from Special Revenue Funds or Activity Funds

When employees travel on funds provided by grants and special revenue funds, the reimbursement rates for those funds will apply if they are lower than the District rate. When students and sponsors travel on Student Activity Fund money, the District travel guidelines and rates apply without exception.

Lodging rates allowable are found by going to the U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA) website at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120> and the Travel Reimbursement rates at <https://fm.cpa.state.tx.us/fm/travel/travelrates.php>.

### Federal Guidelines (EDGAR):

- All travel expenses paid with federal grant funds (typically funds 2XX) shall meet the new EDGAR requirements (200.474) such as: 1) all travel costs must be reasonable and necessary; 2) all travel costs must be consistent with the district's travel policy; 3) all travel costs must be directly related to the grant award; and 4) all travel costs must meet the obligation of expenses rules.
- In addition, all federally-funded travel expenses must meet the TEA's Current Travel & Mileage Reimbursement Rates (as published in the most recent TEA Correspondence).
- **Out-of-State Travel is an unallowable cost from federal funds with the exception of HeadStart Funds-Fund 205** unless prior approval from granting agency is obtained.

### Lodging

Employees traveling on school business will be reimbursed reasonable lodging expense. All employees should choose lodging that offers the best value to the District.

The District has an arrangement with LaQuinta hotels to provide lodging at a discounted rate. For lodging reservations made through LaQuinta, no District check is required, as LaQuinta will bill the Business Office directly. Ask the Accounts Payable Clerk in the Business Office for details.

Advances to other hotels will be made only **when necessary**. Advances will not be issued to “guarantee” reservations. Reservations must be guaranteed by the traveler’s personal credit card or a District credit card. Employees are responsible for making their own reservations at reasonably priced locations.

The District will reimburse the employee for lodging plus local hotel tax. State tax is not reimbursable if the employee failed to utilize the exemption form. The employee will bear the cost of any hotel expenses such as movies and room service surcharges.

Receipts are required for lodging expenses, whether or not an advance check was issued. Travelers utilizing the LaQuinta services must also submit a receipt and include the costs on the Travel Expense report as an advance.

Tips made at hotels for bellhops, baggage handlers, valets, room service, movie rental, and other services are at the cost of the traveler and will not be reimbursed by the District. Regular parking will be reimbursed with a parking ticket receipt. Valet parking will not be reimbursed unless it is the only option.

Costs of entertainment such as movies, theme parks, and other attractions not related to the purpose of the travel will not be reimbursed.

### **Staff Meals for Overnight Travel**

Daily meal expense reimbursements are capped at \$36.00 per day. Each day is limited to \$36.00. This reimbursement limit applies without a carry-over from one day to another.

- Meal costs will not be advanced to employees traveling on District business, unless approved by Superintendent. Meals will be reimbursed to a maximum of \$36.00 (\$7 breakfast, \$11 lunch, and \$18 dinner) per day as noted on the Travel Expense Report form. When traveling with Federal Funds **original detailed** receipts must be provided with the Travel Expense Report form. This is an actual expense maximum, and is not a per diem allowance. **Tips and tax are an unallowable cost for reimbursement from all funds, with one exception of large student groups that require an automatic gratuity.** Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable by state law. Costs of between-meal snacks such as candy, soft drinks, ice cream, etc., are not reimbursable as meal expenses. Meal expenses not supported by detailed receipts will not be reimbursed when traveling with Federal Funds.

### **Staff Meals for Day Trips**

In the event that a Burkburnett Independent School District employee travels on school business for less than overnight, the District will not reimburse for meal expenses.

The Internal Revenue Service considers these payments taxable income.

### **Student Meals**

Employees traveling with student groups will receive a check for meal advances when necessary. Receipts should be obtained if available. If receipts for student meals are not available, a list of students and the amount of their meals must be submitted with the travel report. In many cases, student meals may be charged at restaurants in our area, making the meal advance unnecessary. All student travel requests must include a list of students that participated in the event/travel. **Tips are an allowable cost for reimbursement for large student groups that require an automatic gratuity.**

### **Mileage**

When an employee is required to use a personal vehicle, mileage will be reimbursed for city-to-city travel at the current rate. The current reimbursement rate is listed on the IRS website. The State Comptroller has designated that the official website to calculate mileage is **Mapquest.com**. Attach a printout from Mapquest.com showing mileage from your campus to your destination or hotel and return. Do not include any mileage for daily commuting from the hotel to the meeting site or any other location.

Mileage will not be reimbursed for travel to destinations within a 50-mile radius of Burkburnett ISD. For example, no mileage will be paid for travel to Region 9, Iowa Park, Henrietta, Vernon, or Lawton.

### **Out of State Travel**

Advance approval by the Superintendent is required for travel to any destination outside the state of Texas by either employees or students.

- **Out-of-State Travel is an unallowable cost from federal funds with the exception of HeadStart Funds-Fund 205 unless prior approval is obtained through the granting agency.**

### **Traveling in Groups**

When groups of employees are attending the same event, the campus principal is responsible for coordinating the travel so that all employees use the same lodging location. If employees from more than one campus attend the same event, the principals or directors must coordinate their travel to prevent duplication of expenses.

Vehicle reimbursements are made for one vehicle for each four employees traveling to the same location. Rental cars must be used if the best value for the District.

Employees attending the same convention or meeting must travel together and combine lodging when reasonable. Use of multiple cars for personal reasons will not be reimbursed.

Use of air travel for some attendees and vehicles for others will not be reimbursed when the destination is the same.

### **Rental Cars**

In most cases, it is less expensive for the District to rent an automobile than pay mileage for personal vehicles. The employee will be reimbursed for the transportation that is the best value to the district. The District has a rental agreement with Enterprise and Avis under a State of Texas contract. At the option of the District, employees may be assigned the use of a rental car rather than using their personal vehicle. Contact the Business Office, Accounts Payable, phone 569-3326, for information concerning renting a vehicle from Enterprise or Avis.

### **Airfare**

In some cases travel by air may be more economical than travel by automobile. In such cases, the District may approve air travel. Air travel is not reimbursable if other employees are attending the same convention or meeting at the same time and are traveling by vehicle. The Director of Business and Finance must approve all airfare in advance.

### **Travel Expense Report**

**All** travel expenses must be documented on the Travel Expense Report. Expenses must be supported by **original detailed** receipts. Receipts are to be attached to the travel expense report and all submitted in **paper form** to the Business Office. The report is due to the Business Office within three days after the employee returns from the travel.