



# City of Phoenix

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION</b>	A.R. NUMBER 3.41 Revised
	FUNCTION Financial and Purchasing Page 1 of 10
SUBJECT BUSINESS, CONFERENCE AND TRAINING TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES	EFFECTIVE DATE January 16, 2015
	REVIEW DATE December 13, 2016

## Purpose

The City must engage in travel for a variety of reasons. In our complex and highly technical world, sometimes important training is only available outside the state. The training can be technical (computer language and systems, DNA testing, water chemistry, environmental issues, etc.), administrative (Federal program or grant regulations) or regulatory (firefighting or helicopter certification requirements). Travel is necessary for conferences in which state-of-the-art innovations and practices are shared for improving public service. Sometimes travel is necessary to conduct business (Police Officers who travel to return criminals for trial or to interview witnesses, attorneys who are deposing witnesses or seeking to settle lawsuits, staff inspecting buses or other equipment being manufactured). In addition, international travel may occasionally be warranted to further economic development goals for the community.

***This administrative regulation (AR) applies to all City employees, elected officials, board and commission members and volunteers. Throughout this AR City employees, elected officials, board and commission members and volunteers are collectively referred to as “travelers.”***

## General Policies

Any approval of business travel, conference or training attendance should include the following considerations:

- All approval processes must be consistent, including travel funded by enterprise funds, special revenue funds, general funds, grant funds or non-City funds.
- Business travel, conference or training events must provide a clear and understandable benefit to the City, our employees and the community. If the training or travel did not take place, how would the City be disadvantaged?
- If several potential travelers need the same training, would it be more cost effective to bring in a trainer? Would other departments benefit from this type of training?
- Generally, attendance at professional organization conferences should occur when attendees are active within that organization. Attendance at executive board meetings of professional organizations should occur when the organization is clearly related to the attendee’s usual professional duties.
- Is equivalent training available through Employee Development or a local vendor?
- Is the specific training session or conference appropriate for the person attending? If unsure, departments should consult with the Personnel Department.

## Required Approvals

At a minimum, all budgeted travel including requests to travel, estimated expenses, cash advances and final expense reports must be approved by the department/function head. His or her appointed "acting" department/function head may approve when the department head is unavailable. If the traveler is at a department/function head level or higher the travel must be approved by his/her immediate supervisor.

The City's four largest departments – Police, Parks, Fire and Water will be allowed an exception to this rule. Because these departments each have large workforces assigned to multiple employee worksites, they are permitted, but not required, to name a specific employee to be the assigned alternate to the department head for purposes of this administrative regulation. The name of the employee filling this role must be provided to the City Manager's Office, Finance and Personnel Departments.

Travelers must file all travel documents – requests, expenses, cash advances, final reports – with their assigned department (the department that directly pays the employee or elected official's salary). Board and commission members and volunteers must file their travel documents with the sponsoring department. All travel expenses paid for with City funds will be charged to the traveler's assigned department.

Additional approvals may be required depending on the total cost and location of the event as specified below.

- All travel outside the continental United States requires the City Manager's approval. This includes travel to Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam and any foreign country.
- All travel for which the total cost per person (estimated and/or actual) is above \$4,000 requires the City Manager's approval.
- All travel for which the total cost per person (estimated and/or actual) is above \$2,000 requires the approval of the City Manager or designee.
- All unbudgeted travel requires the approval of the City Manager or designee. Departments that become aware of the need for multiple unbudgeted trips can submit a memo to the City Manager or designee asking for approval for all such trips. The reason for these trips must be clearly explained, cost estimates must be provided, and a travel authorization form must be completed for each trip at the time of travel.
- When the City Manager is out of town, or otherwise unavailable, the Assistant City Manager can provide necessary approvals in his place.
- All travel requiring the City Manager or his designee's approval must be accompanied by a memo specifying the circumstances requiring such an approval.

## Travel Authorization Form(s) – City Funded Travel

- Attendance at training or other professional development events which occur within Maricopa County, for which only registration costs are incurred, is not considered "travel." The authorization and reimbursement form for these events is the "In-county Registration form." The Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form should not be used.
- Events outside Maricopa County are considered "travel" and require the Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form.

- All employees traveling on “City Business” or “City Authorized Education” time, and all other travelers must complete a Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form regardless of funding source. This includes travel funded with Management Development and/or Employee Development funds.
- The proper form(s) must be completed with all appropriate expense estimates and all required signatures prior to the travel taking place. A complete conference agenda or full description of the training program must be attached.
- The same manager(s) that approved the travel prior to its taking place must also review and approve the completed Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form upon the traveler’s return.

### **Department Travel Budgets**

Departments will be provided an annual budget for business travel, conferences and training based upon their unique requirements. Throughout the year departments should monitor their travel and training expenditures to ensure that approved allocations are not exceeded. If the budgeted allocation has been spent, and additional travel is necessary, authorization by the City Manager or his designee is required. The memo requesting authorization to exceed the travel budget must also specify where available funding exists. If additional travel is approved by the City Manager or designee a Budget Adjustment form must be submitted to Budget and Research. Carrying over or encumbering unused travel funds is not permitted.

### **Non-City Funded Travel**

Business travel, conferences or training funded with non-City resources for any part of the total cost also require City Manager or designee approvals. Non-City resources include any funds that do not flow through the City’s SAP accounting system; this includes travel paid for by vendors or professional organizations such as IPMA or ICMA. For purposes of this AR, “vendor” is defined as any individual or organization whose primary business is to sell goods or services.

If non-City resources pay all costs the Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form is not required. However, a memo with the City Manager or designee approval must be attached to the employee’s leave slip. The employee’s department must also retain a copy of the memo in case questions arise about the trip. For those travelers not required to submit a leave slip, a memo with City Manager or designee approval must be retained by their assigned department.

Employees, elected officials, board and commission members and/or volunteers attending a local, in-county training session or event sponsored by another government agency (e.g. City of Glendale, FBI) or one of the City’s employee groups (e.g. ASPTEA, PLEA) do not need City Manager or designee approval. For these in-county, no-cost training sessions where City Business or Education time is used, only a leave slip with the proper signatures is required.

### **City Employee Participation in Third Party Conferences, Events or Activities**

The city, at the sole discretion of the department head or above, may allow staff to attend a conference or other meeting, where a third party has offered to pay the employee’s travel costs, not to exceed the federal GSA rates for meals. Any appearance of a conflict of interest must be avoided.

For the purposes of this section, a “third party” is defined as any person or entity, public or private, other than the City or the employee. Travel costs may include airfare, lodging, transportation, meals and incidentals, or appearances, public events or ceremonies related to official City business. An employee may participate in all events hosted by the conference organizers as part of the scheduled activities and paid admission. City employees may participate in a dinner hosted and paid for by a third party at a conference as long as all attendees have an equal opportunity to participate in the event and attendance at the dinner does not create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest. Optional activities not included with the conference registration, such as golf or tickets to an entertainment event, cannot be accepted.

Except for conference registration and travel-related costs described above, City employees also are not allowed to accept “honoraria,” defined as gifts or money for participating in speaking engagements, lectures, conferences, or a panel while representing the City. Employees may accept incidental items, such as coffee mugs, t-shirts, or pens, only if such items are offered to all attendees and as long as their individual value does not exceed \$50. Employees also may accept prizes or raffle drawings, as long as the opportunity to win the prize or drawing was offered to all attendees.

### **Non-exempt Employees**

If non-exempt employees are conducting business travel or attending a conference or training, departments may need to discuss the potential for overtime pay with the Personnel Department. Overtime costs must be considered when estimating the total travel costs.

### **Estimated Expenses**

The Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form requires that the purpose of the event, destination, the beginning and ending dates of the official leave, and an estimate of costs be provided prior to travel commencing.

The final approving authority will review all estimated expenses for reasonableness. Approved limits for hotel costs are provided in the City’s Lodging Rate Schedule, <http://insidephx/depts/Finance/ccosite/Pages/Travel.aspx>. Approved limits for meals are limited to the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) daily amounts for the destination city (available at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)). Also, lodging and meal expenses may exceed the City’s Lodging Rate Schedule and/or the GSA daily maximum when packaged as part of an approved conference or training session. Refer to the “Expenses Eligible for Reimbursement” section. Estimates for tips are limited to 20% for taxis, and a combined \$5 per day for baggage handling/maid service.

### **Pre-payment of Airfare, Registration and Lodging**

Generally, the Finance Department will pay airfare and/or registration fees, including conference-sponsored meals directly to the travel agency, conference or training vendor. However, in order to maximize savings to the City, travelers may elect to pay airfare, registration and/or lodging expenses directly and be reimbursed. Often less expensive airline and lodging rates are available online and require payment at time of reservation. Many conference registrations are also available online. However, keep in mind that travel expenses for many departments are the only opportunity to use M/W/SBE companies for purchasing. Check with your department before making any reservations online.

To receive reimbursement for these expenses prior to traveling, submit the receipt, Payment Control Document (PCD) and the approved Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form to the Finance Department.

### **Post-travel Requirements**

Within five business days upon return from the event, the traveler must finalize the Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form and forward it to the traveler's department fiscal staff. The department then has five business days to submit the form, verifying attendance and reporting any additional actual expenses, to the Finance Department.

### **Event Cancellation**

In the event that the meeting, training or conference is cancelled and the traveler has been reimbursed, the traveler is responsible for returning the funds received to the City.

### **Cash Advance Payments**

If, in the judgment of the approving authority, the estimated expense for an event is too high to expect the traveler to finance it and receive reimbursement upon return, a cash advance payment of the estimated amount may be made to the traveler. This advance may include meals, ground transportation and lodging expenditures. Whenever possible, the Finance Department will pay airfare and/or registration fees, including conference-sponsored meals, directly to the travel agency, conference or training vendor.

### **Cash advance payments are not permitted for executives and middle managers.**

All other employees, elected officials, board and commission members or volunteers are eligible for cash advance payments. No cash advance payments will be made without a payment request and the Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form properly completed with all required approvals.

After receiving approval to attend a business meeting, conference or training event, the department should execute a PCD for the amount of the advance and submit it with the approved Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form to the Finance Department at least seven business days before the check is needed. The Finance Department will not release a cash advance more than five business days before the departure date, unless specifically authorized by the City Manager or designee.

Reimbursement procedures, described later in this AR, also apply to cash advance payments. Justification and approval of expenditures are necessary. A cash advance does not constitute final approval for expenses. Unused portions must be returned. Also, cash advances, under certain circumstances, are taxable under the IRS code.

### **Expenses Ineligible for Reimbursement**

Items specifically prohibited from reimbursement include:

- Alcoholic Beverages.
- Personal Items – including, but not limited to, toiletries, laundry/dry cleaning not meeting the requirements listed below, mini-bar purchases, snacks and vending machine purchases.
- Entertainment – including, but not limited to, in-room movies and recreational activities arranged by a conference or training provider (e.g. golf or museum tours).
- Personal telephone and/or Internet use.
- Non-City Traveler Expenses – pre-payments and/or reimbursements for expenses associated with members of the traveler's family who accompany the traveler.
- Travel Insurance.

### **Expenses Eligible for Reimbursement**

The following list of expense classifications is for information to determine allowable reimbursements under this regulation. The list is a guide and is not all-inclusive. The City Manager or designee has discretion to approve other expenses in unusual circumstances.

Travelers should demonstrate good judgment in the matter of business expenses and have proper regard for economy when conducting business away from the City.

- Registration – fees charged for registration at appropriate training events, conferences, or meetings are allowable expenses. A receipt or some other proof of the fee and a copy of the conference or training program documenting the fees and included meals must be provided with the Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form.
- Transportation – receipts for transportation expenditures must be maintained and submitted for reimbursement. No allowances will be made in excess of the actual cost of transportation.
  - Air Transportation – economy or discount airline rates are standard transportation costs for out-of-state events. Premium economy airfare may be purchased for international flights over six hours, subject to City Manager approval.
  - Ground Transportation at Travel Destination – expenses for ground transportation at the travel destination (taxis, cars for hire, shuttles or subways/trains) are reimbursable when traveling by air, rail, or bus. However, mileage for personal vehicle use or taxi expenses between home and Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport are not reimbursable expenses.
  - Use of Personal Vehicle – for the traveler's safety, the use of personal vehicles for out-of-state business meetings, conferences, or training is discouraged. However, the approving authority may authorize the use of personal vehicles when use of commercial transportation or City vehicles is not available or is not practical.

Reimbursement for use of a personal vehicle is limited to the current per mile rate authorized by the Internal Revenue Service, and will not be more than the cost of an economy airfare to the same out-of-state destination. In estimating the cost of using a personal vehicle, parking at the destination city must be included. Travelers must receive prior approval from their department to use personal vehicles on City

business. Travelers receiving a monthly transportation allowance will not be reimbursed for in-county business use of their personal vehicle.

- Rental Vehicles – rental vehicles are to be authorized only when their use is less expensive than using taxis, cars for hire, shuttles or subways/trains. In estimating the cost of a rental vehicle, parking at the destination city must also be included. Exceptions to this policy can be approved by the traveler's department head and must be requested prior to any travel.

When renting a car on City business, travelers should name the City of Phoenix as the lessee. Additional insurance coverage, in particular, "collision damage waivers," should not be purchased since the City's Self-Insurance Program provides liability coverage for accidents in the course and scope of employment. Additionally, it provides coverage for damage to the rental vehicle while in the care, custody or control of the City traveler. The City will not reimburse expenses for additional insurance coverage acquired from the car rental company.

- City Vehicle – a notation on the expense report should note that a "City vehicle" was used. Any expenses involved (i.e. gas or emergency repairs) are reimbursable only with receipts. AR 6.11 cites the regulations concerning the use of City-owned vehicles on City business.
- Airport Parking – the City will reimburse airport parking charges up to \$10 per travel day regardless of parking facility used – OR – usage of Super Shuttle (or similar provider) will be reimbursed up to the equivalent of \$10 per travel day. Mileage travel to and from Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport is not reimbursable.
- Lodging – reimbursement for hotel accommodations is limited to the City's Lodging Rate Schedule amounts, plus taxes and gratuities, for the destination city. City Lodging Rate schedules (<http://insidephx/depts/Finance/ccosite/Pages/Travel.aspx>) have been prepared for locations within the U.S. and internationally. Departments that know they will be sending travelers several times to the same destination are encouraged to negotiate with a hotel in the destination city for better rates. The number of lodging nights eligible for reimbursement cannot exceed the number of days of scheduled training, business meetings or conference educational content plus one day.

When lodging is part of the conference or training package, room rates in excess of the City's Lodging Rate Schedule are authorized. For safety reasons, travelers are encouraged to stay at the conference or training host hotel. When accompanied by a spouse or family member, the City will reimburse the single room rate for lodging. The traveler is responsible for the difference in the rates. Overnight lodging for in-state activities outside Maricopa County is authorized if there is a scheduled evening event.

- Meals – reimbursement for meals, including taxes and gratuities, is limited to the daily GSA amount for the destination city, and receipts are required. Meals prepaid by the City and included in the event registration fees can exceed GSA amounts. However, any time meals have been prepaid by the City (excluding continental breakfasts); alternative meals will not be reimbursed (with the exception of those needed due to dietary restrictions). Alcoholic beverage expenses are not reimbursable. The number of days meals are eligible for

reimbursement equals the number of days of scheduled training, business meetings or conference educational content plus one day. For training and conference events within the Phoenix Metro area, meal expenses not included as part of the conference or training program are not reimbursable.

Itemized receipts are not required; however, travelers are strongly encouraged to obtain and provide itemized receipts for reimbursement. Itemized receipts clearly show that unauthorized expenses, such as alcohol, are not being requested for reimbursement.

- Dry cleaning and laundry – costs for dry cleaning or laundry expenses incurred on trips of at least eight days are eligible for reimbursement *on or after the fifth day of travel*. Receipts are required. No dry cleaning or laundry expenses incurred within the first four days of travel will be reimbursed.
- Gratuities – up to 20% is authorized for meals and taxis. Baggage handling and/or maid service are authorized up to a combined \$5 per day. Receipts for taxi, baggage handling and/or maid service gratuities are not required. However, tips not paid must not be submitted for reimbursement. Daily GSA meal amount limits include taxes and gratuities.
- Telephone and Internet Use – travelers should use good judgment when making long distance business calls or using the Internet while away on City business. For example, it may be less expensive to use a personal cell phone rather than the hotel phone. Travelers should also be aware of cheaper rate hours and call during those times if possible. As noted earlier, only business-related use of the Internet is reimbursable.
- Upgrades – travelers may upgrade meals, lodging and/or airfare at their own expense. The base amount eligible for reimbursement by the City and the separate upgraded amounts paid by the traveler must be clearly shown. In addition, information explaining how the base amount was determined must be included.
- International Exchange Rates – the traveler should attempt to document the exchange rate paid through credit card receipts. If that isn't possible then a default source for exchange rates, such as [www.x-rates.com](http://www.x-rates.com) or [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com) should be used.

### **Reporting Business, Training or Conference Expenses**

The expense portion of the Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form shall be filed with the Finance Department no later than ten business days after returning to work for either (a) reimbursement of expenditures or (b) settlement of a business meeting, training or conference expense pre-payment or cash advance. This includes documentation of expenses day by day. Attach expense receipts to the Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form as documentation.

If a receipt for a minor expense, such as parking or a meal, is lost the traveler may submit an affidavit along with their Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form to the Finance Department. The affidavit must indicate which specific expense does not have a receipt, and must be signed by the traveler's department head. Duplicate receipts can be obtained for hotel, air transportation and car rental expenses so, generally, affidavits will not be accepted for

these items. It is expected that the affidavit method will be the exception, and Finance will ensure it is not misused. Receipts are not required for baggage handling, maid service or taxi gratuities.

The approving authority will be responsible for the timely completion and submission of authorization forms for subordinates. The approving authority will check the final expense report statement for reasonableness and compare actual lodging and meal expenses to the City's Lodging Rate Schedule and the GSA daily meal amounts for the destination city. No reimbursement will be made or account settled until proper approvals have been received. Generally, expenses for lodging above the City's Lodging Rate Schedule and meals above the daily GSA amount will not be reimbursed. Exceptions include lodging at the conference hotel, and meals sponsored by the conference. If expenses exceed the budgeted amount allowed for the event, approval must be obtained from the City Manager or designee. After all applicable approvals have been obtained; the report should be submitted to the Finance Department.

The Finance Department will review the expenses and receipts, check accuracy and general reasonableness, check for proper approvals, and process the final expense report for payment. The Finance Department will report submissions that do not conform to this AR to the appropriate department. The Finance Department is not responsible for making corrections.

### **Settlement of Cash Advance Payments**

If a traveler accepted a cash advance, a settlement must be made based on actual expenses paid. If actual expenses are less than the estimated amount, the traveler will write a check payable to the City of Phoenix for the unused balance and submit it with the Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form. This repayment must be made within ten business days of returning to work. If actual expenses exceed the estimate, with appropriate approvals, the City will reimburse the traveler.

Again, cash advance payments do not constitute approval to spend the entire amount advanced. All actual expenditures must be justified, meet the requirements of this AR and be accompanied by receipts. Normally, reimbursements occur within five business days after the Finance Department receives and approves the expense report and hardcopy PCD.

### **Reimbursement by an Outside Agency**

When authorization for an event is secured on the basis of reimbursement of expenses to the City by an outside agency, the department shall be responsible for indicating this fact on the Business Travel, Conference and Out-of-county Training form and also for obtaining reimbursement and applicable supporting documentation. The Finance Department shall be responsible for monitoring the receipt of such reimbursements to maintain an adequate audit trail of the transaction.

### **Other Business Meals and Expenses**

Meetings should not include meals if at all possible to avoid expenses to the City. However, the City may reimburse its employees for meal expenses incurred for meetings arranged to conduct City business with non-City personnel. Reimbursement of expenditures is intended to be limited and should not be considered an "expense account." Significant City business should be conducted to merit the City payment for the City employee(s) and non-City personnel. These

expenditures are most appropriate where an individual or a group of people is giving their personal time or business time to accomplish a City project or objective.

Employees may also participate in periodic or rotating business functions hosted by other agencies at which a meal is served when the meeting is scheduled during a time of day when breakfast, lunch or dinner occurs. City employees also may accept food or refreshments, such as a sandwich or juice and bagels, on infrequent occasions in the ordinary course of a breakfast, lunch or dinner meeting or other meeting where an employee may properly be in attendance.

City employees may not accept a "one-on-one" meal from a third party, regardless of the cost of the meal. "One-on-one" meals may include any situation where one or more third parties host one or a very small number of employees with or without their spouses or partners at a restaurant or private club where the meal is purportedly the reason for the individuals to meet at that time. City employees are prohibited from submitting reimbursement forms for meals, entertainment or other incidentals incurred where only City employees are present. Additionally, expenses for alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed.

#### **Violations of this Administrative Regulation**

- Travelers and/or the approving manager may be disciplined for violating this AR.
- Departments that have significant or repeated violations of travel regulations will be placed on travel probation and will have the travel budget for the department reduced or eliminated.

#### **Interpretations of this Administrative Regulation**

The Finance and Budget and Research Directors will confer and resolve any issues related to administering or interpreting this AR.

#### **Exceptions for Special Circumstances or Needs**

The City Manager may grant specific exceptions or make modifications to the provisions of this AR for a specific travel event, when, in his judgment, it is in the best interest of the City to do so. This includes employees who request reasonable accommodation due to a disability, exceptions due to unique safety concerns and other exceptional employee circumstances. Such exceptions or modifications will be in writing and attached to all other travel forms required in this AR. Exceptions and modifications will apply on a case-by-case basis only. Any other exceptions or modifications will require a revision to this AR.

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