

City of Minneapolis

OVERNIGHT TRAVEL POLICY For City Employees and Officials

Title	Travel Policy - Overnight Travel Section
Origin	Council approved policy
Dates	Approved as of 4/4/03, Effective as of 6/1/03
Links	Overnight Travel Procedures
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1.0 Policy Purpose

The City of Minneapolis recognizes the need for business travel by its employees and its elected or appointed officials (hereafter “officials”) and through this policy, assigns the responsibilities connected with overnight business trips.

2.0 Policy Scope

This Travel Policy applies to all overnight business trips by City of Minneapolis employees or officials. The City’s Ethics Policy shall be incorporated into this Travel Policy by reference.

3.0 Public Interest Requirement

The primary purpose of all 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 as a City of Minneapolis representative.

5.0 Policy Responsibilities

5.1 Mayor/City Council

The Mayor and City Council will set travel policies for the City of Minneapolis employees and officials.

5.2 Finance Officer

The City Finance Officer shall propose travel policies to the Mayor and City Council. The City Finance Officer shall also develop, revise and publish administrative rules and procedures to implement the adopted policies. Those rules and procedures shall be incorporated into the Overnight Travel Policy by reference. The Finance Officer is responsible for interpreting the Travel Policy and for making recommendations to the elected officials on methods of purchasing travel services. The Finance Officer will ensure that employee reimbursements are timely, and that travel expense reports and payments are periodically reviewed for financial accuracy and for consistency with City policies. The Finance Officer must report information to the Mayor and City Council regarding material violations of the City's Travel Policy or other related financial policy covering the expenditure of public funds.

5.3 Department Heads

Department heads are responsible for ensuring that employee travel is for City business and is consistent with City policies and procedures. This responsibility includes directing the trip timing, transportation and lodging choices so as to maximize savings and employee safety, while providing for reasonable convenience for the traveler. Department heads shall authorize travel within and outside the continental U.S., authorize travel for prospective employees, and approve travel expense payments. Department heads may choose to implement more stringent travel policies and procedures for management purposes.

5.4 Traveler

Before the business trip, the traveler must review the City's Overnight Travel Policy and Ethics Policy, as well as the related procedures. The traveler shall maximize the benefit of business travel by attending all official events or conference sessions that accomplish the primary purpose of the trip. Travelers are responsible for following the City's policies and procedures and must promptly submit Travel Expense Reports with the appropriate documentation. Failure to comply with the City's policies and procedures could result in payroll deductions and IRS tax consequences. Travelers are also responsible for obtaining refunds, exchanges or credits for unused travel-related items. This responsibility includes taking all reasonable steps to insure that the City does not incur unnecessary expenses due to changes in travel plans.

6.0 Effect on Other Policies

This policy supersedes any and all previous City of Minneapolis policies on business travel unless the exception is listed below.

- 6.1** City Council Resolution 98R-499 encouraging City employees to schedule their business flight arrival and departure times during the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. The Resolution's goal is to prevent public dollars from paying for flights that disturb residential neighborhoods during sleeping hours.
- 6.2** Local travel for business purposes is governed by the City's Local Travel Policy.
- 6.3** This Policy does not apply to the Police Department's business travel account for crime investigations.
- 6.4** This Policy does not apply to travel expenses incurred by consultants performing work on behalf of the City of Minneapolis. Those items are governed by the City's contract management policies and procedures.