

City of Los Alamitos

Administrative Regulation

Regulation:	6.1	
Title:	Travel Policy	
Authority:	City Manager	
Date:	December 4, 2004	_____ City Manager
Revised:	February 21, 2006	

1. Purpose: The purpose of this “Travel and Reimbursement Policy” (“Policy”) is to establish guidelines for the reimbursement of certain actual and necessary expenses, incurred in the performance of assigned and/or official duties, by the City Council Members, Officials and Employees of the City of Los Alamitos.

2. Application: This regulation applies to:

- (A) “City” shall refer to the City of Los Alamitos.
- (B) “City Council Members” shall refer to the individuals who comprise the legislative body of the City.
- (C) “City Manager” shall refer to the City Manager of the City of Los Alamitos, or his or her designee.
- (D) “Department Director” shall refer to the director of a department of the City.
- (E) “Employees” shall refer to all subordinate employees in the City. For the purposes of this policy, the City Manager is not considered a subordinate employee.
- (F) “Officials” shall refer to the City Clerk and the City Treasurer of the City.

3. Regulation:

TRAVEL AND REIMBURSEMENT POLICY FOR CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE CITY OF LOS ALAMITOS

A. Intent

It is the intent of the City of Los Alamitos that this section of the Policy complies with the travel and reimbursement policies for City Council Members set forth in section 53232 et seq. of the California Government Code.

B. Authorized Expenses

City Council Members are allowed their actual expenses for travel to, attendance at, and return from state or regional association meetings; their actual and necessary traveling expenses when traveling outside of Orange County on official business; and their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official duties. The following types of expenses generally constitute authorized expenses, as long as the other requirements of this Policy are met:

1. Communicating with representatives of regional, state and national government on City policy positions.
2. Attending organized educational seminars, conferences or activities designed to improve the City Council Member's skill and information levels.
3. Participating in regional, state and national organizations whose activities affect the City's interests.
4. Attending City events.
5. ***Recommend Removal of #5Meetings with consultants, professionals, or other governmental entities or agencies that are necessary for the performance of the City Council Member's official duties.***
6. ***All travel for state or regional association meetings must be presented as an agenda item to the City Council prior to the event for approval by unanimous vote.***

C. Unauthorized Expenses

Personal expenses that the City will not reimburse include, but are not limited to:

1. ***All out of state travel. Added and begin renumbering***
2. The personal portion of any trip.
3. Political or charitable contributions or events ***including charitable event tickets.***
4. Family expenses, including a partner's expenses when accompanying the City Council Member on City-related business, as well as children or pet-related expenses.
5. Entertainment expenses, including theater, movies (either in-room or at the theater), sporting events (including gym, massage and/or golf-related expenses), or other cultural events. However, where the City is acting in a host capacity, those host-related expenses,

including entertainment expenses and meals, may be reimbursed with prior approval from the City Manager.

6. Non-mileage personal automobile expenses, including traffic citations.
7. ***Mileage expense to Regional Boards meetings that pay a stipend, ie: OCFA, OC SANITATION, SCAG, etc.***
8. Personal losses incurred while on City business.
9. ***Any Clothing.***

Any questions regarding the propriety of a particular type of expense should be resolved with the Director of Finance before the expense is incurred.

D. Other Expenses

Expenses that do not fall within the scope of this Policy shall be approved by the City Council, in a public meeting, before the expense is incurred. However, the City Council shall not approve any expense in violation of Section C or any other section of this Policy.

E. Documentation of Expenses; Expense Reports

1. City Council Members shall submit expense reports on the "EXPENSE REPORT" form provided by the City to the Director of Finance within ten (10) days of incurring the expense. A copy of the "TRAVEL ADVANCE AND AUTHORIZATION REQUEST," as described in Section G of this Policy must be attached.
2. In order to qualify for reimbursement, expense reports must be accompanied by documentary evidence, such as a receipt, canceled check or bill, for each expense. The documentary evidence should show the amount, date, place, and essential character of the expense.
3. ***If a City Council Member cannot produce documentary evidence, he or she must:***
 - (a) Submit a written statement containing information about the expense, as specified in subsection 2; and***
 - (b) Any other available supporting evidence, which may include, but is not limited to, written statements or oral testimony from the City Council Member's guests or other witnesses, setting forth detailed information about the expense.***

Remove this section

4. If the Director of Finance finds that the City Council Member's aggregate reimbursable travel expenses were greater than the amount of any travel advance, as provided under section G, ***up to the budgeted***

amount of said trip, the City shall pay the difference between the travel advance and the reimbursable expenses within thirty (30) days of submission of the “EXPENSE REPORT” form.

5. The Director of Finance shall review all forms and documentary evidence for appropriateness and compliance with this Policy. Any disputed costs should be discussed between the Director of Finance and the City Manager, who shall make a final determination as to whether reimbursement shall be made. ***Suggest a council discussion to any additional City Manager recourse for disputed costs .***
6. All documents related to reimbursable City expenditures are subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 6250) of Division 7 of Title 1).

F. Cost Control

To conserve City resources and keep expenses within reasonable standards for City Council Members, expenditures should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. **Lodging.** Actual lodging costs will be reimbursed or paid for when City Council Member travel on official City business reasonably requires an overnight stay. In addition:
 - (a) If the lodging is in connection with a conference or other organized educational activity, lodging costs shall not exceed the maximum group rate published by the conference or activity sponsor, provided that lodging at the group rate is available to the City Council Member at the time of booking. If the group rate is not available, then the City Council Member shall use comparable lodging that is consistent with the rates for lodging published by the conference or activity sponsor.
 - (b) If the lodging is not in connection with a conference or other organized education activity, or if the City Council Member is unable to secure the group rate published by the activity sponsor, then City Council Members shall use government and group rates offered by a provider of lodging or lodging that is consistent with the conference or activity.
2. **Transportation - General**
 - (a) The most economical mode and class of transportation, which is reasonably consistent with scheduling needs and cargo requirements, and the most direct and time-efficient route, must be used by City Council Members.
 - (b) When available, City Council Members shall use government and group rates offered by a provider of transportation.

(c) Incidental Expenses. Bridge, road tolls, parking fees, and other similar costs, are considered reimbursable expenses.

(d) Expenses for which City Council Members receive reimbursement from another agency are not reimbursable.

3. **Automobile Travel**

(a) City Vehicle. When using a City vehicle, City Council Members shall be reimbursed for the actual costs of fuel, oil and emergency repairs. City vehicles should be fueled at the City service station whenever possible.

(b) Private Vehicle. Automobile mileage is reimbursable at the Internal Revenue Service rates presently in effect. The reimbursable amount shall be based upon the actual mileage traveled for the purposes of the City Council Member's official duties. In no case shall the amount of reimbursement exceed the cost of the least expensive ticket available via commercial air travel and, if applicable, the cost of a standard size rental car.

(c) Rental Vehicle. City Council Members shall be reimbursed for the cost of a standard size vehicle with the usual and customary levels of insurance. When demonstrable circumstances dictate necessity, City Council Members may be reimbursed for upgrading to a larger vehicle.

4. **Air Travel**

(a) Airfare shall be reimbursed at the actual ticket cost as stated on the receipt. The City will only reimburse up to the cost of a coach class ticket available via commercial air travel.

(b) Change of flight Fees are not reimbursable.

(c) Long-term parking shall be used for travel exceeding twenty-four (24) hours.

5. **Other Transportation.**

Taxi, bus, train, shuttle, or other similar fares, including associated gratuities of up to 15 percent, shall be reimbursed at their actual cost as stated on the receipt.

6. **Meals**

(a) Meal expenses and associated gratuities up to fifteen (15) percent will be reimbursed at their actual cost or at the Internal Revenue Service rates currently in effect, as set forth in Publication 1542, as

amended, or any successor publication, whichever is less, subject to the following restrictions:

(i) Breakfast will be reimbursed only when travel begins before 7:00 a.m. and extends beyond 8:00 a.m.

(ii) Lunch will be reimbursed only when travel begins before 12:00 p.m. and extends beyond 2:00 p.m.

(iii) Dinner will be reimbursed only when travel begins before 6:00 p.m. and extends beyond 8:00 p.m., unless otherwise approved pursuant to section C(4).

(b) Meals provided for as part of the cost of the travel, including, but not limited to, conference, complementary, or in-flight meals, are not eligible for travel advances or reimbursement.

(c) Except as provided in Section C(4), the City will not pay for alcohol or other personal bar expenses.

7. Telephone/Fax/Cellular/Personal Communication Device/Internet Expenses

(a) City Council Members will be reimbursed for actual telephone and fax expenses incurred on City business. Telephone bills should identify which calls were made on City business.

(b) City Council Members will be reimbursed for actual cellular, personal communication device and internet expenses incurred by the City Council Member on City business.

(c) For cellular calls, or costs incurred as a result of the usage of other personal communication devices, where the City Council Member has a particular number of minutes included in his or her plan, the City Council Member shall identify the percentage of communication conducted on public business and shall be reimbursed accordingly.

(d) If the length of the City Council Member's travel is twenty-four (24) hours or greater, he or she will be reimbursed for two personal phone calls of a reasonable length per 24-hour day of travel.

G. Travel Advance Policy

From time to time, it may be necessary for a City Council Member to request a cash advance to cover anticipated expenses while traveling or doing business on behalf of the City. Such request for an advance shall be submitted to the Director of Finance on the "TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND ADVANCE REQUEST" form, as provided by the City. All relevant documentation relating to the proposed expenses must be attached to the form.

1. No advance will be authorized in an amount less than one hundred dollars (\$100).
2. Any unused advance, or portion of an advance, must be returned to the Director of Finance within ten (10) business days of the City Council Member's return, along with a completed and signed expense report, pursuant to section E. City Council Members who do not return the unused portion of a cash advance within ten (10) business days are ineligible for any additional advances until such time as the unused amount is returned.
3. A travel advance shall not, under any circumstances, be considered a personal loan to the City Council Member.
4. Any expenditure of a travel advance, other than for the approved purpose of the advance, shall be considered a misappropriation of public funds.
5. Funds for prepaid items, such as airfare and registration, are not considered cash advances.

H. City Council Member Reports

At the next City Council meeting, each City Council Member shall provide a brief report on any meeting attended at the City's expense. If more than one City Council Member attends the same event, the Mayor shall designate one attendee to give the report. The other attendees will be permitted to briefly report on any topics omitted by that designated City Council Member.

I. Penalties

Pursuant to California Government Code section 53232.4, penalties for misuse of public resources or falsifying expense reports in violation of expense reporting policies, may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The loss of reimbursement privileges.
2. Restitution to the City.
3. Civil penalties for the misuse of public resources, pursuant to California Government Code section 8314.
4. Prosecution for misuse of public resources, pursuant to section 424 of the California Penal Code.

TRAVEL AND REIMBURSEMENT POLICY FOR THE CITY MANAGER, EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS OF THE CITY OF LOS ALAMITOS

The City Manager, Officials and Employees are subject to Sections B through G of this Policy, which detail the rules for authorized and unauthorized

expenses, documentation, expense reports, the guidelines for travel advances and Section I, which sets forth the penalties for violating this Policy.

A. Travel Authorization

Officials and Employees must obtain advance written approval for travel from the appropriate person indicated in this section using the "TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND ADVANCE REQUEST" form, as described in Section G, prior to incurring any costs.

1. Authorization Levels:

(a) For aggregate travel expenses equal to or less than five hundred dollars (\$500):

(i) Employees require the approval of their Department Director.

(ii) Department Directors and Officers require the approval of the City Manager.

(iii) The City Manager does not require approval of the City Council.

2. Any aggregate travel expenses approximated to be over five hundred dollars (\$500) must be approved in advance by the City Manager. The City Manager shall notify the City Council in advance of any anticipated travel exceeding \$500.

3. Incidental or Day Travel. Verbal approval for Employees' incidental or day travel, which includes, but is not limited to, local meetings, can be obtained from the Employee's Department Director. Officials and Department Directors do not require approval prior to incidental or day travel.

4. International or Out-of-State Travel. International and out-of-state travel for Officers and Employees must be approved in advance by the City Manager. International travel by the City Manager shall be approved in advance by the City Council.

CITY OF LOS ALAMITOS
TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND ADVANCE FORM INSTRUCTIONS

Background Information Section

1. **NAME**: Name of the City Council Member, Official or Employee requesting travel authorization and/or a travel advance.
2. **DATE**: Date the form is submitted.
3. **DEPARTMENT/DIVISION/POSITION/TITLE**: The department and/or division, if applicable, and, if applicable, the individual's position or title.
4. **TRAVEL DATES**: The scheduled beginning and ending dates of the proposed travel.
5. **PURPOSE OF TRAVEL**: Pursuant to Section 3.02 of the Policy, state the purpose of the travel. For example, a meeting, training, seminar, conference, or continuing education.
6. **BENEFIT TO CITY**: Pursuant to Policy Sections 3.01 and 3.02, briefly state the anticipated benefit to the City as a result of the proposed travel.
7. **TRAVEL DESTINATION**: Location of the meeting, training, seminar, conference, continuing education, etc., including the city and state, and the name of the hotel.
8. **AVAILABLE FUNDS**: Check the appropriate box indicating whether or not funds are available in the City Budget for the fiscal year in which the travel will take place. If funds are not available, please indicate how the travel will be funded.
9. **MODE OF TRANSPORTATION**: Check the mode of transportation that the City Council Member, Official or Employee plans to utilize for the proposed travel.

Estimated Costs and Advance Requested Section

10. **ESTIMATED COSTS**: An Official or Employee requesting travel authorization must complete the estimated costs for transportation, meals, registration, lodging and other incidental expenses. This section does **not** apply to City Council Members.
11. **ADVANCE REQUESTED**: A City Council Member, Official or Employee wishing to obtain a travel advance must complete the "Advance Requested" column, indicating the individual's anticipated costs for the proposed travel. If using a personal vehicle, please multiply the estimated number of miles by the current mileage reimbursement rate as set forth by the Internal Revenue Service. If you cannot obtain the rate, you may contact the Finance Department for assistance. Please calculate the amount to be advanced for meals based on the proposed times of departure and return.

NOTE: There will be no travel advance or reimbursement for meals that will be otherwise provided.

NOTE: Typically, expenses for registration, lodging and airfare will be prepaid and, therefore, should not be included in the total amount of advance requested. If you need assistance in determining whether these expenses have been prepaid, please contact the Finance Department.

12. AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: As indicated in the Policy, the approving authority should mark the travel authorization and/or advance request as approved or denied.

NOTE: If the travel is authorized, and/or the advance is approved, you must prepare a separate Purchase Order for the advance amount granted and each of the prepayments, such as registration or airfare, if applicable. Attach the "TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND ADVANCE" form to the Purchase Order and process in the usual and customary manner. A copy of the approved form should be maintained in the originating department's files, or, if applicable, in the City Manager's Office, in the case of a City Council Member or Official, to be attached to the "EXPENSE REPORT" form when the travel is completed.

**CITY OF LOS ALAMITOS
EXPENSE REPORT FORM INSTRUCTIONS**

Background Information Section

1. NAME: Name of the City Council Member, Official or Employee requesting travel reimbursement.
2. DATE: Date the form is submitted.
3. DEPARTMENT/DIVISION/POSITION/TITLE: The department and/or division, if applicable, and, if applicable, the individual's position or title.
4. DATE AND TIME OF DEPARTURE/DATE AND TIME OF RETURN: The departure and return dates of the travel.
5. PURPOSE OF TRAVEL: Pursuant to Section 3.02 of the Policy, state the purpose of the travel. For example, a meeting, training, seminar, conference, or continuing education.
6. BENEFIT TO CITY: Pursuant to Policy Sections 3.01 and 3.02, briefly state the benefit to the City as a result of the travel.
7. TRAVEL DESTINATION: Location of the meeting, training, seminar, conference, continuing education, etc., including the city and state, and the name of the hotel.

Summary of Expense Reimbursement Request Section

8. TRANSPORTATION: If a personal vehicle was used, enter the actual number of miles used and multiply by the established current reimbursement rate per mile, as established by the Internal Revenue Service. If you cannot obtain the rate, please contact the Finance Department for assistance. *NOTE: This amount cannot exceed the cost of the least expensive available airplane ticket.*
9. MEALS: Indicate the number of breakfasts, lunches and/or dinners, not otherwise provided for, and calculate the total amount for each meal. You will only be reimbursed for the actual cost of your meal, or the per diem rates as provided in Section 3.06 of the Policy, whichever is lower. For example, if your breakfast was \$4 on Day #1 and \$6 on Day #2, the total amount you would enter for breakfast for your two-day trip would be \$10, whether or not the per diem amount would have provided a greater reimbursement. Please do not include meals that were otherwise be provided for, e.g., conference luncheons, complementary meals, or in-flight meals, or meals included in a prepaid cost, such as those included in a registration fee.
10. REGISTRATION: In addition to the receipt, or other documentary evidence, please attach the agenda or outline for the conference or seminar attended.
11. LODGING: Attach a receipt, or other documentary evidence, as set forth in section 3.05, which shows all charges incurred. Deduct all personal and/or non-reimbursable charges, as indicated in the Policy.

12. INCIDENTALS: List the actual amounts for miscellaneous items, as expressly mentioned in the Policy, including, but not limited to, telephone and internet costs incurred for official business purposes, or a maximum 15 percent gratuity for a necessary taxi ride. For more information, please see Section 3.06 of the Policy or contact the Finance Department.

Add the amounts for lodging, meals, transportation, registration, and incidentals. Then, subtract the amount of any advance and/or prepayment to arrive at the balance due to the City Council Member, Official or Employee. Once approved, a Purchase Order should be prepared and forwarded to the Finance Department for processing. The “TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND ADVANCE REQUEST” form, if applicable and the “EXPENSE REPORT” form must be attached to any check request.

NOTE: All EXPENSE REPORTS are subject to an audit by the Department of Finance to ensure compliance with the Policy, as well as relevant state and federal law.