

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

DEE
(REGULATION)

TRAVEL
PROCEDURES

All travel is to be encumbered, with exceptions noted below. An approved Purchase Order must be received online two weeks before the meeting dates. Travel requests must still be approved prior to initiation of the requisition process. Travel requests received within two weeks of the trip must be approved by the Superintendent. This requirement does not apply to employees travelling with students (see FMG Regulation).

Purchase orders for employee travel, as well as local registrations for employees, must be received online within the check cut off schedule provided by the Accounts Payable Department. Manual checks for these events will not be issued if not received within the timeframes indicated on the check cut off schedule, unless approved by the CFO. The CFO will provide a listing of all manual checks to Cabinet.

A completed Travel Request (TR) Form (Exhibit A) must be attached to the requisition with the exception of Region 19 registrations. Please submit agendas and brochure information from the organization holding the meeting/conference. The destination and dates of the meeting/conference must be listed.

1. List the employee's name on the Travel Request (TR) Form. If multiple employees are traveling under the same travel request, a complete list must be provided. The first employee listed will be considered the responsible party for all lodging documentation related to the trip. The responsible party will not be reimbursed until all lodging documentation is submitted. A Travel Justification Form (Exhibit F) must be submitted for all travel.
2. List the destination and dates of the conference.
3. List the purpose of the trip
4. List the account number to be used to fund the trip on the TR. If a second account is being used to pay for the excess cost of the hotel, only enter the primary account on the requisition. If multiple groups (administrators, counselors, teachers, etc.) using multiple accounts are traveling, then a separate TR (and requisition) must be submitted for each group/account. If a TR is submitted for a future fiscal year, note that all travel will be charged to that future fiscal year, as per Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).
5. Indicate the estimated costs in the appropriate column. The total of the estimated cost column shall be used as the total amount of the requisition.

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6. List each check that is needed as well as the vendor number and name. Please include all supporting documentation for checks required before the trip. If a registration check is being requested, please attach documentation indicating the registration amount. If a hotel check is being requested, please indicate the room amount, tax rate percentage, number of rooms and number of nights.
7. A requisition shall be entered using vendor 112951 (SISD Travel). The procurement method is the TR number. The commodity code is 390 (Travel Services). The special commodity code is SC12. The requisition should then be released, which will follow the established workflow rules in Munis.
8. For local registrations, the object code should be 6499 and the vendor on the requisition shall be the vendor holding the event/conference.

EXCEPTIONS

If a TR is submitted in which a District account is used to fund part of the trip, or if a TR is submitted for travel for a future fiscal year, then a requisition is not needed. The paper copy of the TR will be submitted and all approvals will be obtained as outlined below.

ROUTING
PROCEDURES

The TR must be routed to acquire the necessary approvals **before** being routed to the Financial Services Department:

Requestor's Signature

The requestor must first sign the TR. All travelers must sign the TR acknowledging that they have read and will adhere to the travel policy. If there is not enough room on the TR for the travelers' signatures, then an additional travelers list (Exhibit G) may be attached.

Immediate Supervisor/Director

If local funds are being used, then the immediate supervisor or principal (or assistant principal) will sign. If a grant or state money (Bilingual, GT, CATE, etc.) is being used, then the request must be routed to the respective director (or assistant director) for approval, as well. By signing the TR, the principal (or assistant principal) verifies that the travel is necessary to accomplish the goals/mission/directives of the District, which is detailed on the Travel Justification Form (Exhibit F) provided by the traveler. By signing the TR, the director (or assistant director) verifies that the travel is necessary to meet the goals/mission/directives of the grant or state requirements, and is therefore an allowable expenditure.

Cabinet Member

The request must then be routed to the respective member of Cabinet for approval. By signing the TR, the Cabinet member verifies that the

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travel is necessary to accomplish the goals/mission/directives of the District or the grant, which is detailed on the Travel Justification form (Exhibit F) provided by the traveler. If the Cabinet member is unavailable, then another available Cabinet member will sign in their place.

Superintendent

The Superintendent's signature is required for out-of-state travel, as well as travel for non-exempt employees. If the Superintendent is unavailable to sign the TR, an email from the Superintendent approving the out of state travel will be sufficient.

The Superintendent's signature is also required for travel for members of Cabinet. If the Superintendent is unavailable, and the TR needs immediate approval, the Chief Financial Officer may sign.

Grant Accountant (Travel funded by grants)

The request must then be routed to the respective accountant overseeing the grant. The grant accountant will verify that account code being used is correct and that funds are available.

The Financial Services Department will approve the funds being used and check the request for appropriate documentation, as well as assure that the Travel Policy **financial** guidelines are being followed. The Financial Services Department will keep the white copy of the request and will return the remaining carbon copies to the department/campus. The yellow copy must then be re-submitted after the trip in order to process any reimbursements and close out the TR.

LODGING RATES
FOR STATE AND
FEDERAL FUNDS

District employees must use the U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA) website to determine the lodging amount allowed for **all federal and state grants as well as state funds**. These rates can be found at <https://fm.xcpa.state.tx.us/fm/travel/travelrates.php>. Once on this page, click on **Domestic Maximum Per Diem Rates**, find the state the employee is traveling to, and the maximum lodging rates will be listed for each city. If the lodging rate is being exceeded, then local funds must be used to pay for the difference. **This site is to be used for lodging limits for federal grants, state grants and state funds only.** This site is not to be used for local funds.

For cities not listed, please refer to
<https://fm.xcpa.state.tx.us/fm/travel/travelrates.php>

Socorro ISD does not pay the state sales tax portion of the hotel occupancy tax in the state of Texas. The employee must take the state sales tax exemption form and provide it to the hotel. Employees will not be reimbursed for the state sales tax if this expense is incurred.

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AIRFARE

Employees must book their flights according to the conference/event dates. If the employee needs to make a change later due to a personal/business reason, they need to request the CFO's approval.

MEAL
REIMBURSEMENT

Socorro ISD will only reimburse meals at **actual cost, not to exceed the state rate in effect at the time of travel** (please refer to <https://fmx.cpa.state.tx.us/fm/travel/travelrates.php>).

Receipts are not required for meal expenditures. However, employees are required to submit only the actual amount spent on meals for reimbursement.

Tips and gratuities are not allowed. Meals provided by the vendor, conference, or meeting sponsor should be reduced from the reimbursement request.

Meal reimbursements for partial days will be based on departure and arrival times. The daily allowance for meals for partial days is as follows:

12:00 AM – 10:59 AM	20%
11:00 AM – 5:59 PM	30%
6:00 PM – 11:59 PM	50%

The Financial Services Department will provide an updated meal reimbursement sheet (Exhibit C) with the dollar breakdown each time the meal reimbursement state rate is updated.

Employees will not be reimbursed for meals if an overnight stay is not required.

REIMBURSEMENT
OF TRAVEL
EXPENSES

Employees will be reimbursed for expenses that are reasonable and necessary to accomplish the objectives of the District. Travel reimbursements must be submitted 2 weeks after the trip, whenever possible. Reimbursements for any given fiscal year must be submitted with proper documentation by August 15th (or next business day) of the following year. Reimbursements received after this deadline will not be processed. Travel reimbursements will not be accepted without a "Reimbursement of Travel Expenses" form (Exhibit B).

Employees must reserve airfare with the District's travel agents in order to secure the best rate. However, if it is necessary to purchase airfare out of pocket, the lowest available fare must be purchased.

Employees will not be reimbursed until after the trip for any out of pocket purchases, unless approved by the CFO prior to the purchase.

If a hotel check was requested before the trip, an itemized hotel receipt must be provided with the responsible party's reimbursement request.

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A copy of the employee's airline itinerary must be submitted along with a completed meal reimbursement sheet and Purchase Order for each reimbursement request. The meal reimbursement sheet will be used to calculate the maximum allowable reimbursement per day. The employee will be reimbursed the lesser of the actual amount spent or the maximum allowable amount shown on the meal reimbursement sheet per day.

Meals from El Paso may not be claimed for reimbursement.

Include receipts for gas, parking, taxi and shuttle expenses. Tips are not allowed. Credit card statements are not considered appropriate documentation if it can't be reasonably determined what the charge is for.

Baggage fees will be reimbursed, within reason.

If an employee pays for any expenses before the trip, the employee will be reimbursed for these expenses after the trip only. The District is not responsible for interest accumulated on personal credit cards. If an employee incurs expenses on a trip that is not approved, then no reimbursement will be made.

If an employee books a room via an online website (such as Expedia), the District will not reimburse the full amount of taxes and surcharges. The employee will only be reimbursed based on the amount of the city tax rate.

The District will pay for one copy of the conference information (handouts/CD) if offered on the registration form. However, supplies (reading materials, books, workbooks, etc.) will not be paid/reimbursed as these items must be purchased with a purchase order.

If an employee pays for airfare, and the trip is canceled for any reason; the employee will not be reimbursed since the trip was not taken.

Employees will not be reimbursed for airfare purchased with points.

Employees of the District must bear the cost of their own individual dues for memberships in professional organizations, unless the membership resides with the District.

Any reimbursement for phone charges and internet use must be approved prior to the trip by the employee's immediate supervisor. If no approval is given, then no reimbursement will be made.

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DIRECT DEPOSIT REIMBURSEMENTS Employees will be reimbursed for tolls paid when the employee travels in a rental or personal vehicle. However; if the rental cost or mileage is not being paid by the District, then the tolls may not be reimbursed.

Travel reimbursements will be paid only via direct deposit. Reimbursements will be directly deposited to the employee's primary payroll account. Employees must fill out the Employee Agreement Form for Travel and Business Expense Reimbursement (Exhibit I).

BUS DRIVER MEAL REIMBURSEMENTS The Transportation Department will process all bus driver meal reimbursements. However, the campus/department will still be charged for the actual cost of the meals. Due to the timing of assigning bus drivers to trips, the bus driver will not be required to sign the TR form issued by the campus/department. A Payment Authorization (PA) Form will be submitted for meal reimbursement instead. The PA Form will be submitted along with a completed meal reimbursement sheet, and the Transportation Department printout indicating the beginning and ending dates and times of the trip. The Transportation Department staff will adhere to all other regulations set forth in this document.

UNALLOWABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

- Luncheons and banquets at out-of-town conferences
- First class airfare
- Tips, gratuities, and delivery fees (room service will only be reimbursed for the cost of food items only)
- Alcoholic beverages
- Entertainment/recreation
- Taxi or mileage incurred to and from the El Paso International Airport
- Parking or speeding violations
- Medicine

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

Socorro ISD reimburses mileage based on the state rate in effect at the time of travel. Please refer to <https://fmx.cpa.state.tx.us/fm/travelrates.php>. The Financial Services Department will inform all departments each time the state rate is updated.

If an employee takes a personal vehicle on a trip, a quote must be obtained indicating how much the District would have paid had the employee traveled by air. An online mapping tool, such as Map Quest, must also be used showing the total number of miles traveled to and from the travel destination. The employee will be reimbursed the lesser of the airfare or the total number of miles traveled multiplied by the state rate.

Employees must follow the four-per-car rule. When four or fewer employees travel on the same itinerary, only one may be reimbursed for mileage. When more than four employees travel on the same itinerary, only one out of every four may be reimbursed for mileage.

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IN-CITY MILEAGE For travel between District sites please use the Mileage Chart (Exhibit D) provided by Technology Services and record travel in the Mileage Log Sheet (Exhibit E). For all other destinations not listed on the chart, beginning and ending odometer readings or Map Quest printouts must be provided to justify the total number of miles traveled. Reimbursements will not be processed without this information.

An open Purchase Order shall be submitted for each person requesting in-city mileage. On a monthly basis, each department shall submit the Mileage Log Sheet to Accounts Payable for payment.

PERSONAL TIME If an employee chooses to take extra time off from work and stay at the destination for longer than is required, this must be at the employee's expense. All checks must be requested as if the employee was traveling the day before the conference and returning the day after, within reason. However, the employee shall return the same day the conference ends, whenever possible. Socorro ISD will not pay any additional hotel, car rental, airfare, or meal expenses incurred as a result of personal vacation time. All reimbursements will be based on flight times as if the employee traveled by air at the necessary times.

Reimbursements will not be processed until the employee turns in a receipt, showing payment for any extra cost in airfare that the District incurred due to the personal time taken.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT In most cases non-exempt employees are not allowed to travel out of town on overnight trips due to problems in tracking the number of hours worked. Therefore, all out of town travel by non-exempt employees will be looked at closely and must be approved by the employee's respective Assistant Superintendent as well as the Superintendent.

Travel that keeps an employee away from home overnight is considered travel away from home and is work time if it encompasses the hours of the work day. This does not only apply to hours worked during regular work days, but also applies to corresponding hours on non-working days. For example, if an employee's regular working hours are from 8 AM to 4:30 PM from Monday through Friday, travel time during these hours on Saturday and Sunday is also considered work time. However; work time does not include time spent in travel away from home outside regular working hours as passenger on an airplane, train, boat, or automobile.

Consequently, if a non-exempt employee is granted permission to travel, then the appropriate steps must be taken with the employee's department in determining how the hours worked will be compensated (See DEA Local).

Socorro ISD
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Approved:
Marta C. Carmona, Interim Superintendent
July 21, 2021

Board Committee Review:
September 13, 2021