

TRAVEL COORDINATION

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Omaha Police Department (OPD) to provide subsistence and travel reimbursement to employees engaged in authorized official City business that requires absence from the City of Omaha for a period of one night or longer. Employees will be compensated for travel time in accordance with the City of Omaha Human Resources "[Fair Labor Standards Act \(FLSA\)](#)" policy.

PROCEDURE:

I. General Guidelines

A. Air Travel.

1. Employees will strive to obtain the least expensive airline tickets.
2. Airline reimbursement will be provided for coach fares only.
3. For pre-arranged travel, travel plans may not be changed once the travel itinerary is established unless employees receive approval from their Bureau Deputy Chief/Director or their designee.
4. Employees seeking reimbursement for grant-funded air travel costs in excess of \$500 shall be required to provide documentation showing that the most economical route/fare was selected.
 - a. If airfare costs exceed \$500, employees shall obtain three (3) different flight options and choose from the most cost-effective option. See the [City of Omaha Grants Management Handbook](#) for more information.

B. Vehicle Travel.

1. City-owned Vehicle.
 - a. A City-owned vehicle will be used, if available.
 - b. The vehicle will be checked for fluids prior to departure and have its gas tank filled at a City of Omaha gas pump to reduce expenses on the trip.
 - c. Any purchase of fluids and gas while out of the city is eligible for reimbursement.
 - d. Only City of Omaha employees with a valid operator's license are authorized to operate City-owned vehicles.
 - e. City-owned vehicles shall not be used for personal trips, such as sightseeing.
2. Personal/Private Vehicle.
 - a. If an employee needs to drive a private vehicle, the employee shall obtain the approval of their Bureau Deputy Chief/Director or designee prior to the trip.
 - b. Reimbursement will be paid in accordance with the current Standard Mileage Rate set by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and will be paid only for miles driven directly to and from work-related destinations.

- (1) Mileage for side trips will not be reimbursed.
 - (2) If more than one (1) employee travels in a single vehicle, only one (1) person is entitled to reimbursement of transportation expenses. Employees will decide in advance which employee is responsible for vehicle expenses.
- c. Reimbursement for private vehicle travel will not exceed the price of standard coach airfare to the same location, including the subsistence allowance.
 - d. If an employee is reimbursed for private vehicle travel, no other transportation expenses will be reimbursed.
 - e. Employees shall provide documentation (such as printouts from Google Maps, MapQuest, etc.) as proof of mileage to be reimbursed.
 - f. Employees shall submit mileage reimbursements through their OPD timesheet once approved by their Bureau Deputy Chief/Director or designee.
- (1) Employees shall provide documentation with the [City of Omaha Form A130](#) and shall include in the comments section of their OPD timesheet that the mileage is for A130 travel reimbursement. Travel dates and purpose of the business trip/event name shall also be included in the comments.

3. Rental Vehicle.

- a. The cost of a rental vehicle will only be reimbursed if circumstances require the use of a rental vehicle.
- b. The rental vehicle shall be preapproved by the employee's Bureau Deputy Chief /Director or designee.
- c. Estimates of the total rental cost shall be submitted when the employee requests approval.
- d. The employee shall justify use of a rental vehicle.

EXAMPLE: If the employee's lodging is at or near the training or conference location, there is no justification for rental car reimbursement.

- e. The rental vehicle will be used ONLY for work-related purposes.

C. Lodging.

1. Lodging allowances are set by Federal Per Diem guidelines, which can be found at the U.S. General Services Administration [\(GSA\) website](#):
 - a. Lodging funded by the Federal Equitable Sharing Funds Committee shall be reimbursed only up to the Federal Per Diem rate provided on the GSA website.
 - b. Lodging costs funded by a grant shall be reimbursed only up to the Federal Per Diem rate provided on the GSA website. Lodging above these rates must be approved in advance via the OPD Grant Coordinator/City Grants Administration Office. The additional overage amount may be paid out of the Department's General Fund.

2. Employees will strive to obtain the least expensive hotel reservations.
3. Airbnb or other similar lodging sites may be used in lieu of a traditional hotel room as long as the cost is at or below the approved City GSA Per Diem for lodging.
 - a. If multiple employees are staying in the same room/house, the rate may be divided by the number of City employees to verify the GSA rate guidelines.
4. When employees coordinate travel for a seminar or conference, hotel reservations will be made at the seminar or conference location.
 - a. If that hotel is full, reservations will be made at another facility as close as possible to the seminar or conference location.
 - b. If the conference/seminar hotel rate is higher than the Federal [Per Diem](#) rate employees will:
 - (1) Contact the conference/seminar hotel and request the Federal Per Diem rate.
 - (2) If the conference/seminar hotel will not provide lodging at the Federal Per Diem rate, employees will attempt to find alternative lodging at the Federal Per Diem rate as close as possible to the seminar or conference location.
 - (3) If the anticipated lodging costs exceed 20% of the GSA Per Diem rate, then the City of Omaha Finance Department [Form A-131](#) will need to be completed at the time the employee later completes their City of Omaha Finance Department Form A130 and travel estimates.
5. The City will pay the equivalent of a single room rate, unless the room is shared with another authorized individual.
 - a. Employees may have their own hotel room and are not required to share a room with other OPD employees, unless the hotel does not have a single room available.
 - b. Employees will ensure the rate for their hotel room falls under the Federal Per Diem guidelines, unless the employee is willing to pay the difference in cost.
7. The City will not pay any cash in advance for lodging expenses for pre-arranged travel.
 - a. The use of third-party booking services that require advance payment of lodging expenses is discouraged.

D. Meals and Incidentals.

1. When an employee travels out of town on official City business, their meal and incidental expenses will be paid at the applicable Federal Per Diem rate. Receipts for meals and incidentals do not need to be submitted for reimbursement.
 - a. Employees will be reimbursed after travel has taken place.

- b. For employees to receive reimbursement, they must either travel out of the city overnight or for a longer period, OR they must be absent from the city for a significant portion of the business day if they travel by airplane.
 - c. For each full day an employee is out of town, they shall receive 100% of the daily Per Diem rate. This is described as the "M&IE Total" on the GSA Per Diem website.
 - d. For the first and last day of travel, employees shall receive 75% of the daily per diem rate. This is described as the "First and Last Day of Travel" on the GSA Per Diem Website.
 - e. The per diem amount budgeted/allocated for any meals that are provided at the event(s) will be removed from the budgeted/maximum per diem initially allocated for that travel day.
 - f. Federal Per Diem guidelines can be found at the U.S. [GSA web site](#). These guidelines provide daily meal and incidental expense amounts.
2. Alcohol expenses are not reimbursable.
 3. OPD employees shall purchase their own meals. Combining meals or purchasing meals for others is prohibited.
 4. Incidental expenses include gratuity, bottled water, small snacks (such as granola bars), bottled or canned soda, and other similar items.
- E. Other Daily Expenses.
1. All expenses will be directly related to the trip's official purpose and evidenced by supporting documentation.
 2. Itemized receipts will be totaled by the day, and clearly show all claimed expenses.
 3. Expenses for alcohol, entertainment, social activities, or sightseeing trips shall not be reimbursed. Expenses for unauthorized individuals shall not be reimbursed.
 4. Employees will use a City-issued or personal cellular telephone to make business phone calls while traveling.
 - a. If the employee must use a landline to make a long-distance telephone call while traveling for which they are charged (i.e., hotel room phone), the employee will submit a formal letter to OPD's Fiscal Affairs via chain of command to explain why they had to use the landline telephone rather than a cellular telephone (i.e., cellular telephone was broken, lost, etc.). The employee will also provide a receipt that shows the cost of the call that was paid by the employee in order to request reimbursement for the call.
 5. Reimbursement requests that contain questionable items will be returned to the employee for clarification/correction.

II. Pre-Arranged Travel

- A. Travel coordination is the responsibility of each assigned OPD employee with the assistance primarily of their supervisor and OPD Fiscal Affairs. OPD Bureau Deputy Chiefs/Directors may designate employees within their bureau to assist others within the same bureau.

- B. OPD employees are responsible for contacting their supervisor to advise of upcoming travel needs/opportunities.
- C. Employees whose travel will be grant-funded in full or in part shall notify their Bureau Deputy Chief/Director and the OPD Grant Coordinator of the upcoming travel.
1. Additional documentation may be requested prior to or after travel for grant tracking or compliance purposes.

EXAMPLE: Grant funded travelers may be required to complete a post-travel report or other documentation for grant tracking or compliance purposes.
 2. The OPD Grant Coordinator will coordinate with the employee to ensure the travel planning and reimbursement requested is in accordance with requirements of not only OPD policy and procedures, but also the City of Omaha's Grant Administration Office and/or Finance Department.
- D. All requests for funding from the Federal Equitable Sharing Funds must first be pre-approved by the Federal Equitable Sharing Funds Committee (See OPD "[Federal Equitable Sharing Program](#)" policy).
- E. Prior to pre-arranged travel:
1. Employees will review the Travel Guidelines Checklist ([OPD Form 109A](#)) form that provides instructions that employees will follow in order to be reimbursed for pre-arranged travel and this policy.
 - a. Employees who feel they cannot comply with these instructions will contact their supervisor for assistance. If further assistance is needed, the supervisor may contact OPD Fiscal Affairs.
 2. Travel expenditures shall be authorized prior to travel as described in this policy. Unauthorized expenses may be denied for reimbursement.
 3. Any exception shall be approved in advance by the employee's Bureau Deputy Chief/Director or their designee.
 4. Employees shall identify the funding source through their supervisor (General Fund, Federal Equitable Sharing Program Funds, grant funds, etc.).
 - a. Funding source must be identified prior to submitting a request to attend.
 - b. All requests for funding from the Federal Equitable Sharing Funds must be pre-approved by the Federal Equitable Sharing Funds Committee via an Inter-Office Communication (See the "[Federal Equitable Sharing Program](#)" policy for details).
 - c. All requests for grant-funded travel shall be submitted to the OPD Grant Coordinator for verification.
 5. Prior to making travel arrangements, employees will complete an OPD Training Proposal Form ([OPD Form 108A](#)). The purpose of this form is to request chain of command approval of the proposed training and to confirm the availability of funds via OPD Fiscal Affairs.

- a. Copies of flight, hotel, and other screens/printouts used to estimate the travel costs shall be attached to the Training Proposal Form ([OPD Form 108A](#)).
 - b. Any pamphlets, brochures, etc., used to plan or account for the travel purpose or needs shall be attached to the Training Proposal Form ([OPD Form 108A](#)).
 - c. If the travel will be grant funded the OPD Grant Coordinator shall be consulted to ensure costs are within grant budgets and any other grant-related considerations are addressed in the planning stage.
 - d. The completed form shall then be submitted to the employee's supervisor. Supervisors shall review and sign the [OPD Form 108A](#) if the proposed training is approved.
 - e. Supervisors will submit [OPD Form 108A](#) to OPD Fiscal Affairs to verify the availability of funds.
 - (1) OPD Fiscal Affairs will return the [OPD Form 108A](#) to the employee. If funding is confirmed, the funding source details will be provided on the form and Fiscal Affairs will sign the form.
 - f. The employee shall then forward the form up their full chain of command for signatures as described in the OPD "[Training Attendance](#)" policy. Part of the process described in that policy is that an Information Order to announce the training/travel will be issued.
6. Once the Information Order announces the activity, submit the Training Attendance Application and Employee Acknowledgements Form ([OPD Form 108B](#)) via chain of command to the Training Unit.
- a. Bureau Administrative Assistants shall maintain a copy of the signed [OPD Form 108B](#) for their Bureau's records.
7. After the employee receives notification from the OPD Training Unit they have been approved to attend the training/conference and/or the Personnel Order is issued by the Office of the Chief, the employee will:
- a. Complete and submit the "Combined Subsistence and Transportation Authorization and Expense Report" ([City of Omaha Form A130](#)).
 - (1) If/when lodging costs will be more than 20% above the GSA [Per Diem](#) amount, the "Travel Request Affidavit – Anticipated Hotel Costs Exceed 20% of GSA Per Diem" ([City of Omaha Form A131](#)), shall be submitted via chain of command to Fiscal Affairs along with their A130 form.

NOTE: If the travel is grant funded, the employee will also consult with the OPD Grant Coordinator to prepare/submit the form.
 - (2) Employees will estimate the cost of meals, airfare, lodging, etc. based on the guidelines noted in this policy.
 - (3) All costs submitted on the [A130](#) should have documentation supporting the amount of the cost. This should include documentation of GSA per diem rates and any registration fees.

NOTE: Employees may direct questions regarding the completion of the “Combined Subsistence and Transportation Authorization and Expense Report” ([City of Omaha Form A130](#)) to OPD Fiscal Affairs.

- (4) Employees will not sign the [A130](#) form at this time. Employees shall send the [A130](#) form and required documentation to OPD Fiscal Affairs.
 - (5) OPD Fiscal Affairs will obtain the required signatures from the employee’s command, the Chief of Police, and the Mayor.
8. Employees shall consult with OPD Fiscal Affairs to determine if registration fees, if any, will be pre-paid by voucher or reimbursed.
 9. If applicable, employees shall obtain approval for Special Duty status from the Chief of Police via their chain of command.
 10. The City will not provide reimbursement in advance for anticipated travel costs.

NOTE: Employees may request reimbursement for certain expenses, such as plane tickets or conference registration costs after they have paid for and received a receipt for the expense, as long as the [City of Omaha A130](#) form has all approval signatures. The employee does not have to wait until after they have returned from the trip to request reimbursement for these expenses.

III. Travel to Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center (NLETC) in Grand Island

- A. When traveling to the NLETC, OPD employees will complete all paperwork and follow all guidelines as they would for other pre-arranged travel as described in this policy, with the following exceptions:
 1. When traveling to the NLETC in Grand Island, reservations will automatically be made for room and board at the NLETC by the NLETC when they register the employee for the training.
 2. The only expenses that will be reimbursed for travel to the NLETC are for the purchase of fuel, if necessary, before returning to Omaha and/or GSA [Per Diem](#) meal costs.
 3. When employees complete the “Combined Subsistence and Transportation Authorization and Expense Report” ([City of Omaha Form A130](#)), they will only estimate the cost of meals and fuel in the “Estimated Costs” section of the form. These costs will be estimated based on the GSA [Per Diem](#) amounts and the approved mileage rates, as described in this policy.

IV. Travel at the Request of an Outside Agency

- A. Travel coordination for official City business that occurs at the request and expense of an outside agency (i.e., assessment center, accreditation assessment, etc.) will be the responsibility of the assigned employee and the outside agency.
- B. Non-exempt employees will adhere to FLSA guidelines for travel.

V. Investigative Travel for Criminal Investigations

- A. When an officer must travel outside the City as part of an ongoing investigation or to extradite a suspect, travel coordination will be the responsibility of that officer.

- B. If petty cash is unavailable for approved investigative travel, the requesting officer will pay for all travel expenses up front and will request reimbursement upon return.
1. If officers are traveling for extraditions, they will fill out the “Report for Reimbursable Travel Expenses” form ([Douglas County Form T-57](#)) for reimbursement.
 2. For all other types of investigative travel, officers will fill out the Report for Reimbursable Travel Expenses – Investigative Travel Form ([OPD Form 133](#)) for reimbursement.
- C. Investigative Travel during Normal Working Hours (daytime hours, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays):
1. The CIB Deputy Chief or designee will approve the travel request on a Petty Cash Voucher ([OPD Form 107](#)).
 2. The requesting officer will provide the following:
 - a. Names of all officers traveling.
 - b. Destination.
 - c. Reason for travel.
 - d. The RB Number.
 3. The officer will submit the approved Petty Cash Voucher ([OPD Form 107](#)) to the Police Supply Unit to receive a cash advance.
 4. For extradition travel, the Police Supply Unit will provide the officer with a “Report for Reimbursable Travel Expenses” form ([Douglas County Form T-57](#)) with the cash advance.
 - a. The “Report for Reimbursable Travel Expenses” ([Douglas County Form T-57](#)) will be completed by the officer upon their return.
 5. Once the officer receives the cash advance, the officer will be responsible for completing all travel arrangements (i.e., flight, hotel, etc.).
 - a. Airline ticket costs may be submitted prior to travel to expedite reimbursement.
- D. Investigative Travel during Non-Business Hours and/or Holidays:
1. When the need for investigative travel develops during non-business hours and/or holidays, and the urgency of the situation dictates an immediate departure, the CIB Deputy Chief or designee will be contacted via chain of command for approval.
 2. Upon approval, the officer will be responsible for completing all travel arrangements (i.e., flight, hotel, etc.).

NOTE: The Police Supply Unit will likely be unavailable to provide a cash advance.

VI. Post-Travel Procedures

- A. Reimbursement may be cancelled if proper documentation is not received by the Police Supply Unit or Fiscal Affairs within ten (10) working days of travel completion.

B. Pre-Arranged Travel.

1. When employees request reimbursement, they will submit the following documents to OPD Fiscal Affairs via chain of command:

- a. Copies of their original itemized receipts for all claimed expenses, except for meals and incidentals. Scanned copies via email are preferred. Employees should keep their original receipts for their records.

NOTE: If the travel is grant funded, the OPD Grant Coordinator shall be copied on the reimbursement communications/emails.

- (1) Proof of payment is required for reimbursement of purchased items and/or services. If the itemized receipt does not include proof of payment, the employee shall also submit the receipt showing proof of payment.

- b. The completed and signed “Combined Subsistence and Transportation Authorization and Expense Report” ([City of Omaha Form A130](#)).

- c. If a personal/private vehicle was used, the City of Omaha [Mileage Reimbursement Form](#) shall be submitted to the employee’s supervisor for approval and entered into their timesheet to be reimbursed through payroll.

NOTE: Employees should keep a copy of the [A130](#) and original receipts for their records. If an employee submits original receipts, these will be scanned and electronically stored/maintained by Fiscal Affairs, then returned to the employee.

2. Reimbursement will be paid to the employee, normally by check to the employee’s home address or by automatic deposit to the employee’s bank account, if the employee has completed a City of Omaha [Employee ACH Enrollment Form](#) and provided the form to OPD Fiscal Affairs.

C. Investigative Travel (CIB).

1. Within ten (10) working days of returning from Investigative Travel, officers will:

- a. Return any unspent petty cash to the Police Supply Unit.

- b. Submit one of the following forms, as applicable, to the Police Supply Unit:

- (1) If the travel was not for extradition purposes, a “Report for Reimbursable Travel Expenses – Investigative Travel” form ([OPD Form 133](#)).

– OR –

- (2) If the travel was for extradition purposes, the “Report for Reimbursable Travel Expenses” form ([Douglas County Form T-57](#)).

- c. Submit both the original and a copy of all original itemized receipts for all claimed expenses, except for meals and incidentals, to the Police Supply Unit.

2. When additional funds are needed to cover Investigative Travel expenses that were incurred, the employee will:

- a. Request an additional “Petty Cash Voucher” ([OPD Form 107](#)) form from the CIB Deputy Chief’s office.

- b. Submit the completed “Petty Cash Voucher” ([OPD Form 107](#)), along with either the “Report for Reimbursable Travel Expenses – Investigative Travel” ([OPD Form 133](#)) or the “Reimbursable Travel Expenses” form ([Douglas County Form T-57](#)), to the Police Supply Unit to receive additional petty cash funds.
- 3. If travel funds are not available from petty cash, employees will submit all required forms and receipts to Fiscal Affairs via chain of command for reimbursement.
 - a. In this case, reimbursement will be paid to the employee, normally by check, mailed to the employee’s home address or by automatic deposit to the employee’s bank account, if the employee has completed the City of Omaha Employee ACH Enrollment Form and provided the form to OPD Fiscal Affairs.
- D. If an itemized receipt is not available for expenses incurred during any type of travel, employees will need to contact the business to obtain a duplicate receipt for reimbursement.
- E. When two (2) or more employees travel together, employees will separately submit their own individual receipts and paperwork for reimbursement.

REFERENCES:

I. Previous OPD Orders

- A. Previous General Orders: #25-93, 7-02, 42-03, 10-08, 18-11, 21-11, 7-16, 24-19, 24-19 Supplement #1, 17-22, 11-23, 11-23 Supplements #1 and 2, and 75-25.
- B. Previous Information Orders: #179-22.

II. City of Omaha Policies

- A. City of Omaha Human Resources policies: “[Fair Labor Standards Act](#) (FLSA)” and “[Employee Reimbursement of Training Expenses.](#)”
- B. Mayor’s Executive Orders: #S-40-18, #[S-42-18](#).
- C. City of Omaha Finance Department: “Summary of Grant Funded Travel Policy for City Employees: Rev 02/12/19” and “[Travel Guidelines: Revised 5/2023.](#)”

III. Accreditation Standards

- A. Relevant CALEA Accreditation Standards: 33.1.3.

IV. Other

- A. PPM Monthly Updates: #12-2016, 4-2021, and 11-2022.