

608 TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND TRAVEL EXPENSES

- I. DISCUSSION: Travel for official business must be authorized by a division commander and approved by the Chief of Police. Travel expenses will be paid by the City of Tampa through reimbursement to the individual or through cash travel advance under certain circumstances. These procedures also apply to grant-related travel or travel that is reimbursed by other agencies.

Policy on reimbursement and advance pay is dictated by the Chief Financial Officer with the approval of the Mayor (refer to the current City of Tampa Travel Manual). Questions about that policy should be directed to the Revenue and Finance Department.

II. PROCEDURE:

- A. Upon approval of the affected division commander, a written request for travel authorization will be forwarded to the Chief of Police via the appropriate Deputy Chief and Assistant Chief. Requests should be submitted through SIRE within 6 weeks of any registration deadline and/or travel date. The mode of transportation must be documented in the request for travel.
1. City vehicle: Most travel will be via the employee's assigned city vehicle. If the employee does not have an assigned vehicle, the employee shall contact the department's fleet services technician to obtain the use of a city vehicle.
 2. Commercial airline: For commercial airline travel, the employee is required to fly using the most economical airfare available. The traveler may select any travel agent or obtain the ticket directly through the airline of choice. The employee must obtain authorization to travel before purchasing the airline ticket.
 3. Rental car: If an employee needs to utilize a rental car for department-authorized travel, the employee must request authorization in advance. The employee will not be reimbursed for the cost of the rental car without obtaining prior approval.
- B. If a travel request is denied by the Chief of Police or designee, the request will be so noted and returned to the originating division.
- C. Upon approval of the Chief of Police, the travel request will be forwarded to the Professional Standards Bureau for drafting and routing of an appropriate order to include the following:
1. Officer affected;

2. Destination;
 3. Purpose of travel;
 4. Method of travel;
 5. Duration of the trip; and
 6. Attendance status during the time period affected.
- D. The Chief of Police may, at his or her discretion, direct the Professional Standards Bureau to complete an order authorizing the travel of an employee without a written request.
- E. Once approved, the traveler shall coordinate arrangements with their division Office Support Specialist IV.
1. If the traveler is assigned a current city-issued procurement visa card, that card may be used to coordinate arrangements.
 2. If the traveler is not assigned a city procurement visa card, then their division or bureau commander will assist in making certain arrangements.
- F. Upon return, the traveler shall contact their division Office Support Specialist IV for completion of paperwork for reimbursement of funds expended.
1. The traveler should be prepared to provide receipts for any expenses other than the standard meal allowances.
 - a. Meal allowances WILL NOT be reimbursed:
 - 1) Travel is one day or less in duration; and/or
 - 2) Travel is within: Hillsborough, Pinellas, Polk, Manatee, Sarasota, Hernando, and/or Pasco County.
 2. Once complete, the reimbursement paperwork shall be routed to the Professional Standards Bureau commander for review and approval.
- G. If the travel requested is for a school or course, which requires payment of a tuition fee, several weeks are necessary for the City to process such a fee request; therefore, any employee who has been approved for attendance at

such a course should immediately notify their division Office Support Specialist IV. If the institution will bill the department for the tuition, there is no urgency, and paragraph E. above will be followed. Employees are responsible for ensuring the existence of funding for such schools and courses.

- H. Investigative travel is handled as a separate category and is accomplished through personal contact between the traveler, with the approval of their division commander, and the Office of the Assistant Chief of Police.

Supersedes SOP 608, dated 5/19.