

Policy Title:	Travel Approval and Reimbursement				
Policy Number:	DHS-040-009	Version:	4.0	Effective Date:	Upon Approval

Signature on file in the office of the Chief Administrative Officer

05/12/2008

Approved By: DHS Deputy Director of Finance

Date Approved

Overview

Description: The Department of Human Services (DHS) is a statewide organization that requires its staff and business partners to travel in performing the business operations of the department. The rules for traveling are governed by the policies administered by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and the Oregon Accounting Manual (OAM) Travel Chapter ([40.10.00.PO](#)).

Purpose/Rationale: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines, to DHS employees and other individuals authorized to travel on official state business, for both in-state and out-of-state travel. This policy defines the DHS practice based upon DAS travel related policies. This policy is intended to provide consistency throughout the agency, uniform standards of practice, common forms, and adequate internal controls in the approval process.

Applicability: All DHS employees and other individuals authorized to travel on department business.

Failure to Comply: Claims submitted that fail to comply with this policy do not meet the criteria of a claim against the department ([ORS 293.295](#)). These claims will not be processed for payment. The claimant will be notified.

Policy

1. General

- a. This policy applies to all in-state and out-of-state travel; whether it incurs an expense or not.
- b. There must be pre-approval for all in-state and out-of-state travel.
- c. All airfare must be purchased through the state [travel management contract](#).

2. In-State/Day Travel Authorization

- a. Pre-approval can be either verbal or written (e-mail or fax responses are acceptable) from the supervisor (or responsible fiscal manager).
- b. Statewide fleet vehicles, carpooling, videoconferences, and teleconferencing should be used whenever possible or feasible instead of using a personal vehicle to conduct state business.
- c. Use of a private vehicle requires prior approval, see section 5.e.A. below.

3. Out-of-State Travel Authorization

- a. Authorization for out-of-state travel must be approved using a DHS 1293 form, for each adult, prior to travel, except:
 - A. When there is no over-night stay in the state of travel where the traveler leaves and returns to Oregon in the same day (prior authorization may be obtained using section 2. In-State/Day Travel Authorization above); or
 - B. When a client is being transported out-of-state, and
 - C. The trip is not overnight or is an emergent overnight trip necessary to carry out essential casework, which couldn't otherwise be accomplished.
 - D. In these cases, the authorization form must be completed immediately upon return and can be approved by the manager with this specific delegation of authority, see the [DHS-040-009-01: Travel Approval and Reimbursement Procedure](#).
 - E. If two or more travelers request to attend the same event a [DHS 1293](#) form must be completed for each adult traveler in advance of the travel.
- b. If a child is transported out-of-state, a CF0002 & CF0002A must be completed for the child and a DHS 1293 for each adult traveler, see the [DHS-040-009-01: Travel Approval and Reimbursement Procedure](#).
- c. Every effort should be made to secure full or partial reimbursement/direct payment of costs from the event sponsor.

4. General Reimbursement of Travel

- a. State employees and other authorized individuals are eligible for travel reimbursement when traveling on official state business and other conditions are satisfied.
 - A. Certain conditions apply to Board and Commission Members depending upon their appointment type (e.g., the Governor or the DHS Director). Please review the [OAM 40.10.00](#) section .124 for clarification of reimbursement rates.
- b. DHS will reimburse or make payments for travel expenses in accordance with DAS [OAM](#) and [DHS operating policies](#).
- c. Travel expenses may include mileage, meals, lodging and certain other miscellaneous items.

- d. All state employee travel expenses will be processed through the Travel Reimbursement Information Processing System ([TRIPS](#)), unless an exception is granted. See section 7. Making a Reimbursement Claim below.

5. Conditions for Eligibility and Eligibility Exceptions

These conditions apply to both in-state and out-of-state travel:

a. Lodging Eligibility

A. A traveler is eligible for lodging reimbursement when the one-way distance from their home or workstation (whichever is closer) is 70 miles or more.

i. Exception: Managers may grant exceptions to this policy for medical conditions, travelers who must work before and after their regular work schedule, travelers who are conducting business in the same area for more than one day, or weather conditions. Such exceptions must be in writing prior to the travel, except in unforeseen events, and included with the travel reimbursement request.

b. Lodging Rates

A. Lodging rate per diems vary depending on locations. Rates (for both standard and high-cost location) can be obtained from the [U.S. General Services Administration \(GSA\) Continental U.S. \(CONUS\)](#) site for out-of-state per diem rates.

i. Individuals will be reimbursed at the GSA per diem rate, unless one of the following situations apply:

- I. An individual traveling on official state business shares lodging with one or more others traveling on official state business. In this case the traveler will be reimbursed for their equal share of the cost, up to the allowed per diem for that location.
- II. An individual traveling on official state business who shares lodging with a family member or friend. In this case the traveler will be reimbursed at the single room rate, up to the allowed per diem for that location.
- III. An individual traveler chooses to use non-commercial lodging (stays with friends; family; or in a motor home, tent or trailer). The allowable per diem rate is \$25 as described in DAS [OAM 40.10.00.PO](#) section .116.
- IV. An individual traveler requests and is granted an exception to the per diem rate by the division's assistant director, or delegate, where the traveler has provided documentation that the lodging is the most economical option for the department (e.g. through a good faith estimate).

c. Meals Eligibility and Rates

A. Meal per diem rates vary depending on departure/arrival times and whether the trip is overnight or non-overnight. Rates (for both standard and high-cost location) can be obtained from the [U.S. GSA CONUS](#) site for out-of-state per diem rates.

i. When a traveler covers multiple areas with different reimbursement rates in one day, the city where lodging is obtained for the night will determine the meal per diem for that day.

ii. When a traveler covers multiple areas with different reimbursement rates on the last day of travel, the location prior nights stay before returning to their home or work station will determine the rate used for the eligible meals that day.

iii. When a traveler covers multiple areas in the same day with no overnight stay (non-overnight travel), the highest per diem of the multiple locations is used to determine the rate used for the eligible meals that day.

d. Non-overnight Travel Meal Reimbursement

A. Meal reimbursement for non-overnight travel is taxable.

i. Under certain circumstances, when travel is within a "tax home", meals are not reimbursable. Tax home is generally the employee's regular place of business or official duty station, regardless of where the employee maintains a family home. An employee's tax home is not limited to a particular building or property, but includes the metropolitan area or other general locality in which the employee conducts business.

e. Mileage Reimbursement

A. Eligibility for mileage reimbursement, for using a private/personal vehicle for state business, depends upon whether the traveler received prior permission from their manager/supervisor and whether the traveler was within their "tax home."

i. Normal commute miles are not generally reimbursable.

B. An employee wishing to use their private/personal vehicle for state business must complete a [request](#) to use their private vehicle on state business.

i. Travelers are required to read this form carefully, before using a private vehicle for state business, to learn about insurance and liability issues.

C. The reimbursement rate for private vehicle mileage is based set using the U.S. GSA rate. Please reference the [DHS Travel Matrix](#) or the [OAM Travel Policy Appendix A](#) for the current rate.

i. A [mileage chart](#) for cities in Oregon is available through the Oregon Department of Transportation.

6. Miscellaneous Items

- a. Miscellaneous travel expenses
 - A. Claims for miscellaneous travel expenses must be business related. If any individual expense exceeds \$25, an original receipt must be provided. Attach receipt(s) to travel claim.
- b. Travel Advances
 - A. Travel advances are not authorized except under specific conditions. When an exception is made the travel advance applies against your potential reimbursement. Please see the [DHS Travel Advance and Travel Card Policy](#).
- c. Direct Deposit of Reimbursement
 - A. State Employees may choose to have their expense reimbursements [direct deposited](#) into their personal bank account. This is a separate matter from any payroll choices that have been made.

7. Making a Reimbursement Claim

- a. TRIPS Claims
 - A. TRIPS is the department's electronic travel reimbursement. All claims are created and reported electronically for reimbursement.
 - i. All receipts supporting the claim must be verified and maintained by the approving manager or designee and a printout of the electronic claim that was submitted for reimbursement should be attached to all backup documentation. Divisions must maintain all documentation for audit purposes. Refer to [the State Agency General Records Retention Schedules](#), section 166-300-0025 item 34.
- b. Paper Claims
 - A. When a traveler does not have access to use TRIPS, travel expenses must be reported on the [DHS 1297: Travel Expense Claim form](#). All receipts supporting the claim must be submitted with the claim for reimbursement to the Office of Financial Services Disbursement Unit Travel Section.
- c. Travel Expenses
 - A. Expenses must be adequately accounted for within 60 days from the date the travel occurred.
 - i. Expenses adequately accounted for within the 60 days are considered reimbursed under an accountable plan and are not taxable.
 - ii. Expenses not adequately accounted for within the 60 days are considered reimbursed under a non-accountable plan and may be considered taxable under [IRS rules and regulations](#).
- d. Travel Awards
 - A. Travelers who indicate on their TRIPS or Travel Expense Claim form that travel awards have been or will be accepted must also submit a [Report of Travel Awards form](#). Claims will not be processed until the form is received.

e. Travel Advances

- A. Travel expense reimbursements to be applied toward travel advances must be claimed by the 10th of the month following travel month.
- i. A personal check for any excess advance remaining must be sent to the Office of Financial Services, Receipting Unit within the same time period. Check must reference travel advance number (fax copy to Travel Unit).
 - ii. All outstanding Travel Advance balances must be repaid by 90 days after issuance. If the advance is not repaid within the time period, it will be reviewed for taxability and will be submitted to the Office of Financial Services Financial Recovery Section for collection only if it cannot be deducted from payroll.

Policy Exceptions

Policy exceptions must be approved by the Director or designee as described in [DAS OAM 40.10.00.PO](#).

Procedure(s) that apply

[DHS-040-009-01: Travel Reimbursement Procedure](#)

[DHS-040-009-02: Out-of-State Travel Authorization Procedure](#)

Form(s) that apply

DHS 1293: Out-of-State Travel Authorization - [Word](#)

[TRIPS OR](#) DHS 1297: Travel Expense Claim - [PDF](#) or [Excel](#)

DHS 2404: In-State Travel Matrix - [PDF](#) or [Word](#)

DHS 2406: Employee Report of Travel Awards - [PDF](#) or [Excel](#)

DAS Form: [Request to Use My Personal Vehicle on State Business](#)

CF002: Consent to Travel – Travel Approval Procedures - [PDF](#) or [Word](#)

Reference(s)

[DAS OAM Travel Policy 40.10.00.PO – Statewide Travel Policy](#)

[DAS OAM Travel Policy 40.20.00.PO – Travel Advances and Corporate Travel Card](#)

[DHS-040-008: DHS Travel Advances and Travel Card Policy](#)

[Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children](#)

[International Placement of Children](#)

[TRIPS](#)

Definition(s)

Traveler - A DHS employee or other authorized individual traveling on official state business.

Meal Per Diem - Daily allowance for meals based on the Federal Government Reimbursement Rates

Out of State Travel - All travel from a point of origin in Oregon to a point of destination in another state and the return to Oregon. Traveling through another state to reach an Oregon destination is not considered out-of-state travel.

Travel Advance - Exception process – A cash payment for authorized travel expenses, in advance of travel, available only to new employees or those employees who do not have a Corporate Travel Card.

Accountable Plan (Non-taxable to employee) - An allowance or reimbursement program where amounts are non-taxable to the recipient if required rules are met:

- A business connection to the expenditure;
- Adequate Accounting by the employee within 60 days of the end of the event or 60 days of the end of the travel month;
- Excess reimbursements or advances must be returned within 30 days of receipt.

Non-accountable Plan – A non-accountable plan is an arrangement that does not meet the requirements for an accountable plan. All amounts paid, or treated as paid, under a non-accountable plan are reported as wages on the traveler's W-2.

See [Common Terms](#) for all Finance policies

See [Common Terms](#) for all department-wide support services policies.

Contact(s)

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