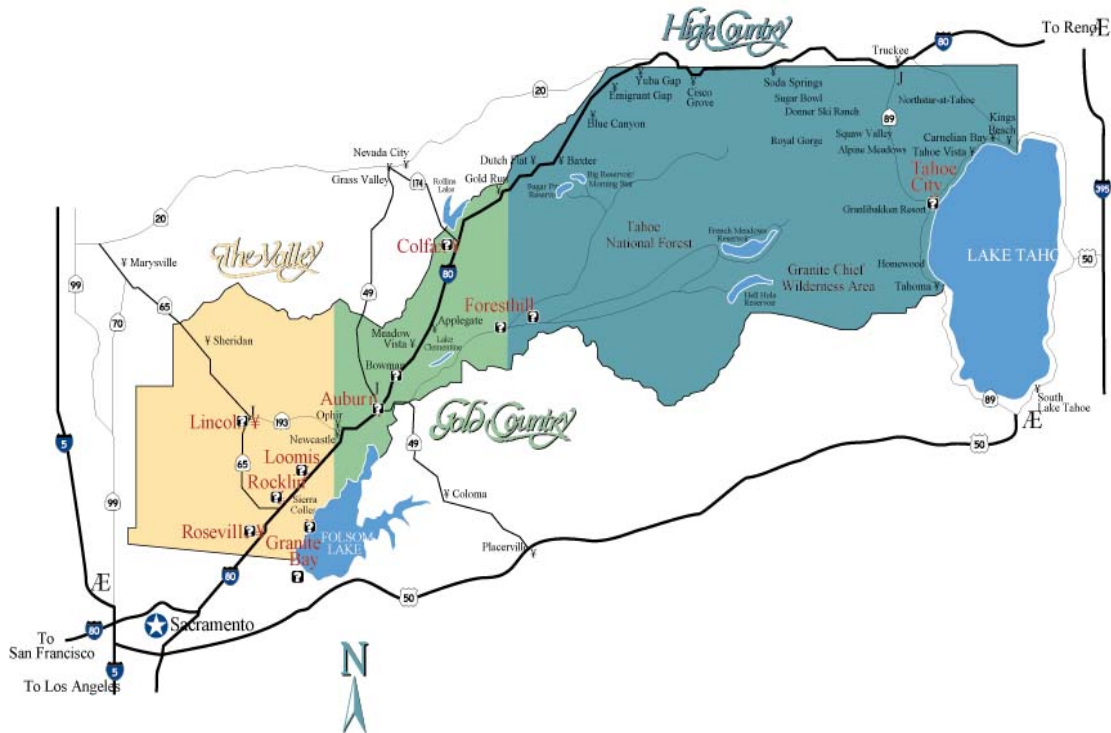


# Placer County

## Administrative Rules, Policies, and Practices



## Chapter 2: Meals, Lodging, Travel, and Transportation

## SECTION I. PURPOSE

The purpose of these policies is to provide written rules and guidelines to Department Heads for expending public funds for meals, lodging, and travel.

## SECTION II. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors that public funds may be expended for meals, lodging, and travel when conducting official County business.

Department Heads are responsible for ensuring that meals, lodging, and travel expenses are incurred only for authorized purposes and at the least possible cost.

The County Executive Officer, in conjunction with the Auditor-Controller, is responsible for developing and administering such policies and procedures as necessary to carry out this Board policy.

The County Executive Officer may waive any requirement or other policy under this chapter as it relates to meals, lodging and travel, and transportation.

## SECTION III. COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE RULES, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES<sup>1</sup>

To carry out the direction of the Board, the County Executive has established the following administrative rules, policies, and practices. For purposes of these administrative rules, policies, and practices, the word employee shall include all County employees, officers, Grand Jurors, volunteers, and persons appointed by the Board of Supervisors to a County commission, advisory board, or joint powers authority governing board.

### 1. GENERAL AND MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES

#### A. Department Head Authority

Department Heads may authorize expenditures of budgeted funds for meals, lodging, and travel when such expenditures are necessary for the conduct of County business and conform to County policies and procedures. They are also authorized to implement additional or more stringent internal expenditure controls for their respective departments than provided for by these rules.

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These policies and practices supersede all previous written policies and practices, including Chapters 2 and 3 of the Administrative Rules.

## **B. Attendance Guidelines**

Department Heads are responsible for determining if it is appropriate for staff to attend conferences and meetings in which costs will be incurred for meals, lodging, or travel. The following are general guidelines for making such determinations:

- 1) Attendance at training or conferences *by more than a single representative of the County is not normally required* and will not usually justify additional travel, lodging, and meal costs. However, attendance by multiple staff of a department to such conferences due to mandatory training, concurrent training schedules, or to gain required continuing educational units (CEUs), meets the general guidelines of this section.
- 2) Attendance at pre-conference dinners, receptions, general opening sessions, introductory sessions, and business meetings at conferences *is not normally required, and will not usually justify additional travel, lodging, and meal costs* to accommodate attendance unless employees are officers, committee chairs, presenters, or involved in conference host activities.
- 3) Attendance at out-of-state training (usually technical or professional in nature) is permitted if such training is not reasonably available in state.
- 4) Travel to attend conferences and training is by the *most efficient and least costly* mode of transportation consistent with time requirements and work schedules.
- 5) Reimbursement of costs for travel between an employee's home and their designated work location is prohibited.
- 6) Travel should *commence the first and last day* of a training session or conference unless there is a valid reason this is not possible, practical, or cost-effective.

## **C. Paying for Meals, Lodging, and Travel**

The preferred method of payment for travel and lodging shall be with a County credit card, however, in the absence of a County credit card, employees may obtain travel advances, or pay costs directly and then be reimbursed. Although Section III.6 (Reimbursement Rates and Conditions) of these policies and practices sets forth basic requirements concerning time frames and information needed when submitting claims for reimbursement of costs paid directly by an employee, the Auditor-Controller's Office prescribes the policies, procedures, instructions, and standard forms for each of these alternatives.

Regardless of the method of payment, a detailed receipt shall support all purchases, except as provided in these rules. In addition, each employee that uses

a County credit card for expenditures shall follow guidelines as set forth in the County Credit Card Policy and these Administrative Rules, Policies and Practices.

**D. Meals, Lodging, and Travel Paid by Vendors**

Upon the *prior approval of the County Executive Officer*, vendors may be required to reimburse the County for the costs of travel (including the cost of transportation, lodging, and meals) necessary for:

- 1) Evaluations, investigations, or inspections related to a contract or bidding process; or
- 2) Staff training related to a contract.

Without such prior approval, any solicitation or acceptance by an employee of travel, lodging, or meals from any person or company in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, or preparation of any part of a program requirement, specification, standard, or contract is prohibited.

With *prior approval by the County Executive Officer*, other vendor-paid or organization-paid travel may be authorized including travel, lodging, and meal expenses for the following:

- 1) Training, conferences, or trade shows that offer information and benefit to the County and its operations.
- 2) Professional seminars or workshops used to update the knowledge and administrative practices of employees.

**E. Persons Providing Uncompensated Services**

Department Heads, *with the prior approval of the County Executive*, may authorize the expenditure of budgeted department funds to furnish or reimburse the costs of transportation, meals, and lodging for persons providing uncompensated services to the County if:

- 1) The person is required to travel on behalf of the County to provide such services or will receive training that will benefit the County; and
- 2) Transportation, meals, and lodging are necessarily incidental to the performance of such services or training.

**F. County Executive Office Oversight**

If a department fails to exercise proper control of its travel budget or the appropriate nature of the travel including the number of employees, their classification, and the frequency of the travel, the County Executive Officer may decide to review all travel requests of the department before approval is granted.

In addition, the County Executive Officer may request the Auditor-Controller to conduct audits of approved travel to determine compliance with these rules, policies, and practices.

#### **G. Emergency Circumstances**

Expenditures made under emergency conditions, or other unusual circumstances, may be authorized by the following:

- 1) Department Heads, *with the prior verbal approval of the County Executive*, may authorize the expenditure of department funds for lodging, meals, and related needs for employees and volunteers during emergencies or unusual circumstances such as natural disasters, severe inclement weather, or extended search and rescue activities. Such verbal approval is effective for not more than 72 hours but may be extended by written approval of the County Executive for an indefinite period.
- 2) Incidental and emergency expenditures made directly by an employee may be reimbursed when supported by receipt, vouchers, or other documentation, except as otherwise provided by these rules. Such delegated and emergency expenditures must comply with the County Purchasing Manual.
- 3) An exemption to the provisions of this section is made for the Sheriff's Department when conducting emergency operations.

## **2. MEAL POLICIES**

#### **A. Department Head Authority**

The Department Head or designee must authorize all meal allowance expenditures in advance for the following:

- 1) Non-Taxable Meal Allowance for Meals Directly Related to County Business. Attending a breakfast, luncheon, dinner or other meal meeting or gathering where the main purpose is to conduct business directly affecting the County, County business is actually conducted during the meal period, and there is some specific County business benefit contemplated by County employees at some future time.
  - a) There must be a specifically identifiable reason for conducting the County's business during the meal. Examples of allowable business meals include when it is impractical to meet during normal working hours, or a meeting does not adjourn during lunch, or an employee is required to go to lunch as a member of a group, such as a Board or Commission where official business is conducted, or when the meal otherwise takes place in a clear business setting.
- 2) Non-Taxable Meal Allowance for Overnight Travel. Employees will receive a non-taxable per diem rate for meals when traveling on County business on a

temporary basis (one year or less), that results in the employee being away from the location of his or her principal place of business overnight.

- a) For these purposes, there are two principal places of business for employees. They are the Western Slope of the County (defined in Placer County Code section 4.16.030.E) or the Eastern Slope of the County (defined in Placer County Code section 4.16.030.D). Examples of situations covered by the allowance include: an employee stays overnight in a County other than Placer County, or an employee who is permanently assigned to the Western Slope of the County stays overnight in the Eastern Slope of the County and visa versa.
- 3) Non-taxable Meal Allowance due to Emergency Situations. Department heads, with the prior verbal approval of the County Executive, may authorize meal allowance expenditures for employees during emergencies or extraordinary or unusual circumstances such as natural disasters, severe inclement weather, imminent or actual failure of county facilities, systems or processes, a health or safety emergency or threat, or extended search and rescue activities. Such verbal approval is effective for not more than 72 hours but may be extended by written approval of the county executive for an indefinite period.
  - 4) Non-taxable Employer Provided Meals. With the prior approval of the County Executive, the Department Head may provide, on County facilities, meals to employees when such meals are provided for a substantial non-compensatory reason and are provided in one of the following circumstances:
    - a) Employees need to be on call for emergencies during the meal period (examples: A Correctional Officer, Sheriff's Deputy or Sergeant working in the jail; a Public Safety Dispatcher in the Dispatch Center; a Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator covering a flood assignment, etc.);
    - b) The nature of the assignment (not merely a preference) requires a short meal period;
    - c) There is an absence of available eating facilities in the area of the work assignment; or,
    - d) The meal is furnished immediately after working hours because the employee's duties prevented him or her from obtaining a meal during working hours.
  - 5) Taxable Meal Allowance. Employees may receive a taxable meal allowance when required to:
    - a) Work more than two hours before or after a normal shift and it is impractical or would be an inconvenience or imposition for the employee to go home for a meal and return to work.

- b) Travel on official business, i.e. training, that results in the employee being more than thirty (30) miles away from his or her primary work location.

Allowance Amount. The meal allowance amount will be that amount set by and contained in the Federal Domestic Perdiem Rate for breakfast, lunch and/or dinner, in effect on the date the meal allowance is incurred for the geographical location that the meal allowance is incurred in. A receipt is not necessary to receive the per diem meal allowance amount. Information sufficient for the Auditor to determine that the allowance is being paid under one of the above provisions will be required prior to the allowance being paid.

Incidental Expenses. Reasonable and necessary incidental expenses will be reimbursed for the amount incurred upon presentation of a receipt evidencing the expense. An employee traveling overnight may instead opt to receive the combined meal and incidental expense Federal Domestic Perdiem Rate instead of receipted reimbursement for incidentals.

#### **B. Meals Provided as Part of a Fee, Lodging, or Flight**

Meal related expenses are not reimbursable *if meals are provided as part of a tuition or registration fee*, with lodging or during an airline flight unless the meal was a separate cost above and beyond the cost of the airline ticket. However, incidental meals, such as continental breakfasts provided as part of lodging, will not be counted as a pre-paid meal and employees may be reimbursed for regular meals.

#### **C. Incidental Expenses for Meetings and Special Events**

Department Heads may authorize other incidental expenses (e.g., coffee, non-alcoholic beverages, and food), for special events if, in the opinion of the Department Head, such expenses would be conducive to the efficient conduct of County business, and the cost is reasonable. For example, it may be appropriate to provide beverages and food at board or commission meetings, seminars, and workshops that extend over normal "break" periods, or when it is to the benefit of the County to keep the participants together and not have them disperse for breaks. However, public funds may not be expended to purchase beverages and food for normal day-to-day County operations or routine staff meetings.

#### **D. Expenses for Employee Morale Events**

The County Executive Officer may approve Department Head requests for funding of employee morale events. The County Executive Officer is responsible for developing guidelines for approval of Department employee morale events.

### **3. LODGING POLICIES**

#### **A. Department Head Authority**

Department Heads may authorize the expenditure of public funds for lodging expenses for a County employee if because of official business:

- 1) The employee is more than 75 miles from home and being detained so that the employee would not normally reach home until three hours after the normal work assignment ending time, or 10:00 p.m., whichever is later; or
- 2) The employee is more than 75 miles from home and duties require remaining at that location the following day; or
- 3) Severe inclement weather, physical exhaustion, or other circumstances pose a compelling safety hazard that would warrant overnight lodging to ensure the safety of the employee.

<b>SUMMARY OF WHEN LODGING EXPENSES MIGHT BE AUTHORIZED</b>	
Department Head may authorize:	Employee is more than 75 miles away from home and would not normally reach home until 3 hours after work assignment has ended or 10:00 p.m. (whichever is later).
Department Head may authorize:	Employee is more than 75 miles away and duties require remaining at that location the following day.
Department Head may authorize:	Severe inclement weather, physical exhaustion, or other circumstances pose a compelling safety hazard to the employee.

**B. Lodging Guidelines**

Department Heads should use their best judgment about determining the appropriateness of lodging accommodations. The following are general guidelines for making such determinations:

- 1) Lodging should be in a safe location.
- 2) Lodging should be reasonably and competitively priced, given the location and the circumstances related to the need for lodging.
- 3) Lodging should usually be at the same location of a training or conference meeting (e.g., the host hotel) if a lodging discount has been arranged and additional travel can be avoided.

**C. Special Rates, Discounts and Transient-Occupancy Tax Exemption**

Departments and travelers *should ask for government rates, group rates and conference rates and request a Transient-Occupancy Tax exemption.* Employees are cautioned to confirm special rates, discounts, tax exemption requirements, and identification requirements when making reservations.

**4. TRAVEL POLICIES<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>2</sup> For purposes of these administrative policies and practices, overnight travel means travel that requires overnight lodging.

**A. Department Head Authority**

1) *The Department Head* may authorize one-day travel to any location in the United States as long as overnight lodging *is not required*.

2) *The Department Head* may authorize overnight travel, and any related expenditure of public funds or related employee reimbursements (including transportation, lodging, meals, and conference or training costs), if:

- a) The overnight travel is *within* California and/or Washoe County-Douglas County (Carson City, Reno) area of Nevada, and requires overnight lodging *of five or less nights*; or
- b) The overnight travel is *within* the United States and is for the purpose of conducting criminal investigations, extraditing fugitives, transporting prisoners or court wards, and interviewing juvenile wards.

**B. County Executive Office Approval Required**

1) The Department Head, *after prior approval of the County Executive Office*, may authorize overnight travel and any related expenditure of public funds or related employee reimbursements (including transportation, lodging, meals, and conference or training costs), if:

- a) The travel requires overnight lodging of *six or more nights* within California and the Washoe County - Douglas County (Carson City, Reno) area, for purposes not included in Section III. 4A.2.b.
- b) The travel is outside California and the Washoe County - Douglas County (Carson City, Reno) area for purposes not included in Section III. 4A.2.b.
- c) The overnight travel is within the United States and the cost of such travel, including tuition and registration fees, but excluding staff costs, does not exceed \$3,500 and such travel does not entail the absence of an employee from a normal work location for more than five consecutive work days.

**C. Board of Supervisor Approval Required**

1) *The Department Head, after prior approval of the Board of Supervisors*, may expend public funds for overnight travel, and any related employee reimbursements (including transportation, lodging, meals, and conference or training costs), if:

- a) The overnight travel is for a person appointed by the Board of Supervisors to a County commission or advisory board, and requires overnight lodging of *six or more nights*.
- b) The overnight travel is outside the United States.

- c) Overnight travel is within the United States but exceeds \$3,500 in costs.

<b>SUMMARY OF APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR TRAVEL</b>	
<b>Department Head Approves</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-day travel to any location in the United States as long as overnight lodging is <i>not</i> required.</li> <li>• Overnight travel of <i>5 nights or less</i> within CA and Washoe County–Douglas County (Carson City, Reno).</li> <li>• Overnight travel within the U.S. for the purpose of conducting criminal investigations, extraditing fugitives, transporting prisoners or court wards, and interviewing juvenile wards.</li> </ul>
<b>County Executive Office Approves</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overnight travel of <i>6 or more</i> nights within CA and/or Washoe County–Douglas County (Carson City, Reno) of NV.</li> <li>• Overnight travel outside CA and Washoe County–Douglas County (Carson City, Reno) of NV for purposes not included in bullet 3 above.</li> <li>• Overnight travel within the U.S. and the total cost (excluding staff costs) does not exceed \$3,500 and does not detain the employee from their normal work location for more than 5 consecutive work days.</li> <li>• Per diem allowance for employees working a temporary assignment. See section III.4.G.</li> <li>• Temporary assignments of more than 31 days or training of more than 14 days. See section III.4.G.</li> </ul>
<b>Board of Supervisors Approves</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overnight travel outside the United States.</li> <li>• Overnight travel for a person appointed by the Board of Supervisors to a County commission or advisory board requiring overnight lodging of 6 or more nights.</li> <li>• Overnight travel is within the United States but exceeds \$3,500 in costs.</li> </ul>

**D. Travel in Conjunction With Vacation, Compensatory Time Off, or Leave Without Pay**

- 1) Department Heads may authorize an employee to take vacation leave, compensatory time off, or leave without pay in conjunction with official County travel if the employee files a written travel plan with the department. The travel plan must clearly identify which portions of travel-related costs (including staff time) are related to County business.
- 2) Department Heads are responsible for setting up departmental procedures to document the location and activities of staff for workers' compensation purposes and to ensure that public funds are not expended for private purposes.

**E. Travel Involving Spouses, Companions, or Other Family Members**

- 1) Department Heads may authorize an employee to be accompanied by a spouse, companion, or other family members in County vehicles, or private vehicles used for County business, if public funds are not expended for costs associated with the travel of such individuals. However, in no instance shall an employee routinely travel with such individuals as in the course of their day-to-day assignments that may require frequent travel.
- 2) Employees are responsible for ensuring that adequate receipts (such as a lodging receipt noting the cost of a single occupancy room) are obtained to clearly document that public funds are not expended for the spouse or companion.

**F. Travel Involving Returns During Non-Workdays and Holidays**

When job requirements do not require that a traveler remain at a temporary work location over a non-workday or holiday, the Department Head may exercise discretion and direct or authorize the employee to return home if the travel cost of the return trip is the same as or less than the estimated expense of having the employee remain at the temporary work location.

**G. Long Term Travel/Per Diem Expenses**

The Department Head, *after prior approval of the County Executive Office*, may authorize overnight travel, *of a long-term nature*, and any related expenditure of public funds or related employee reimbursements (per diem) (including transportation, lodging, meals, and conference training costs) as indicated below.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter, including incidental expenses described in Sections III.2.C. and III.6.B., an employee authorized to travel under the following conditions may claim up to **\$70.00 per day** for lodging, meals, and other related expenses:

- 1) The travel involves temporary assignment of an employee at least 50 miles from the normal work location, and the assignment is expected to last more than 31 consecutive days.
- 2) The travel involves extended training of more than 14 days.

To receive reimbursement the employee must submit a claim to the County Auditor-Controller by itemizing claimed expenses, and attaching receipts, except where receipts are not required by these rules, and other documentation as required by that office.

- 3) An exception to the limit of the daily reimbursement rate for lodging, meals, and other related expenses may be granted by the County Executive Officer if the cost for such expenses is paid by another agency or jurisdiction and its reimbursement rate exceeds the daily rate established by this section. An

example may be training costs of law enforcement officers reimbursed by state or federal funds. However, in no instance shall an employee claim or receive the daily reimbursement rate established by (G) *in addition* to the reimbursement of expenses by state or federal agencies.

## 5. TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

### A. General

- 1) Employees on out-of-town trips *should use public conveyances* (e.g., airport and hotel shuttles, buses, and taxis) whenever such uses are more economical than a rental car.
- 2) *All persons operating vehicles on County business must be insured and properly licensed.* Departments may require a record of automobile insurance coverage for each employee using a private vehicle for County business. When an employee uses a private vehicle for County business, the employee's insurance coverage will be the primary coverage.
- 3) Fines and penalties imposed by a court for a traffic violation while on County business are the personal responsibility of the driver.

### B. Use of Rented Vehicles

- 1) Generally, a rental car *should not* be requested unless public conveyances are unavailable or impractical.
- 2) If a rental car is necessary, it should be for the *least expensive available* vehicle that is appropriate for the intended use; e.g., one or two people should use a subcompact car; three or four people may use a mid-size car. Luxury cars are not authorized under any circumstances.
- 3) Employees are required to purchase additional insurance offered by automobile rental companies. This is a reimbursable travel expense. Contact the Risk Management division for current instructions regarding this purchase.

### C. Use of County Vehicles

The following rules are applicable to the operation of County vehicles on County business:

- 1) County officers and department heads shall be responsible for the proper use of vehicles by departmental personnel.
- 2) County vehicles, including leased vehicles, shall be used only for official County business. Personal use of a County vehicle is forbidden.

- 3) All County vehicles shall be operated courteously, and in a manner consistent with all safety and legal requirements of the county, state, or jurisdiction in which they are located.
- 4) Employees shall be responsible for proper use, care, and operation of an assigned County car.
- 5) Permanent overnight assignment of County vehicles, including leased vehicles, shall be authorized only upon request of the department head, recommendation of the Director of Public Works, and approval by the County Executive Office. The Director of Public Works shall maintain and annually update a list of all such permanently assigned vehicles. *Department heads shall report all overnight assignment of County vehicles to the Director of Public Works on January 1 of each year.* (Reference: Placer County Code, Chapter 2, Sec. 2.100.040.)
- 6) All employees who operate a County vehicle (including a private vehicle used for County business) must have a valid operator's or chauffeur's license, issued by their state of residence.
- 7) All persons operating County vehicles shall be County employees or such other persons acting on behalf of the County as the Board of Supervisors may designate.
- 8) Employees are prohibited from carrying, in County vehicles, passengers who are not a party to County business except as provided for under these policies when the travel involves spouses, companions, or other family members, citizen ride-alongs, or when providing emergency assistance to the public.

**D. Use of Private Vehicles**

The use of privately owned vehicles on official County business shall be allowed and encouraged when such use is determined to be in the best interest of the County. This shall not be construed, however, to apply to those situations in which the vehicle would be used on County business on a frequent or daily basis, nor shall use of a privately owned vehicle for official County business be mandatory unless specifically stated as a condition of employment. Prior to use of a private vehicle on County business, the following conditions must be met:

- 1) County officers and department heads shall be responsible for authorization and accountability relating to privately owned vehicle use on County business.
- 2) A valid driver's license, issued by the employee's state of residence, shall be in the driver's possession at all times.
- 3) Vehicles shall be adequately insured.
  - a) The liability insurance coverage on any private vehicle used on County business must conform to the requirements as set forth in the financial

responsibility section (16020) of the California Vehicle Code (\$15,000/\$30,000 public liability and \$5,000 property damage).

- 4) The vehicle shall be in sound, mechanical condition adequate for providing required transportation in a safe manner. If the department head or the Safety Coordinator has reason to believe a safety inspection is necessary, either may order an inspection, *at the expense of the department*, at an appropriate facility to determine the safety of a private vehicle used on County business.
- 5) An employee who operates a private vehicle on County business in violation of the license or insurance requirements will immediately lose authorization for such use.

**E. Airline Travel**

- 1) Air travel should be "air coach" via regularly scheduled commercial airline flights.
- 2) Reservations should be made as far in advance as possible to take advantage of available discounts.
- 3) Employee use of owned or rented private aircraft for County business purposes is prohibited.

**F. Purchase of Airfare**

- 1) The most cost-effective method of purchasing airfare will depend on flexibility (ability to make changes or cancellations without a fee or penalty), and/or the number of days the airline ticket is being purchased in advance.
- 2) Recommended best practice is to purchase an airline ticket more than 14 days in advance of the required travel. If there are no anticipated changes or cancellations to the purchased ticket, it is recommended that the ticket is purchased through the airline direct website or through a discount airfare website.
- 3) If travel is required **within** 14 days of the purchase of the airline ticket, the recommended method of purchase is to use a Travel Agency. A service charge will be assessed, however, the pricing in most cases will be more favorable than other methods.
- 4) If the nature of the travel requires the ability to make changes to or cancel the airline ticket, the recommended method of purchase is to use a Travel Agency. A service charge will be assessed, however, the pricing in most cases will be more favorable than other methods.

## 6. EXPENSE & REIMBURSEMENT RATES AND CONDITIONS

### A. Expenses not Eligible for Reimbursement

Expenses not eligible for reimbursement under these policies include:

- 1) Personal care items
- 2) Traffic and parking violations
- 3) Airline, travel, or personal property insurance
- 4) Entertainment
- 5) Fees, service charges, and interest related to personal credit cards even if they are used exclusively for County business
- 6) Lodging with relatives or friends while on approved County travel
- 7) Fuel for privately owned vehicles unless emergency circumstances exist
- 8) Any expenditure not directly related to official County business

### B. Lodging, Travel and Incidental Expenditures

- 1) Costs will be allowed only for actual travel costs, bridge tolls, parking, lodging, and registration fees. Receipts are preferred but not required for parking, tolls, tips and other incidental items individually costing less than \$7.00. After the second day of approved travel, employees are eligible to be reimbursed \$3.00 daily to defray miscellaneous expenses.

Reimbursement for items purchased or services paid for must be itemized, including the date, time, location and purpose of the expense.

- 2) Employees traveling away from their offices should use a County telephone charge card for telephone calls. However, employees will be reimbursed for the actual cost of telephone charges, facsimile charges, and copying costs related to County business.

### C. Meals, Lodging, and Transportation

Reimbursement will be allowed only for actual travel costs, bridge tolls, parking, lodging, and registration fees. Meal reimbursement will be that amount set by and contained in the Federal Domestic Perdiem Rate for breakfast, lunch and/or dinner, in effect on the date the meal allowance is incurred for the geographical location that the meal allowance is incurred in. A receipt is not necessary to receive the per diem meal allowance amount. Information sufficient for the Auditor to determine that the allowance is being paid under one of the above

provisions will be required prior to the allowance being paid in accordance with the federal per diem rate for the location of the travel.

Exceptions may be permitted when attending an official luncheon or banquet at a specified facility and the luncheon or banquet offers a menu selection that exceeds the maximum federal per diem rate. However, any amounts claimed above the federal per diem rate may be taxable. Exceptions may be permitted for other special circumstances when approved in advance by the County Executive Officer.

**D. Private Vehicles**

- 1) Reimbursement is limited to the non-taxable rate permitted by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as promulgated from time to time from their regulations.
- 2) Reimbursement at the IRS rates will be considered complete payment of expenses incidental to the use of a privately owned vehicle, including insurance, repairs, fuel, and other related costs except that employees will be reimbursed for the actual cost of toll fares, installing and removing tire chains in inclement weather, and insurance deductibles in case of an accident that is not the fault of the employee.
- 3) When an employee uses a personal vehicle to travel between home and a training or meeting site at a location other than a designated work location, the mileage reimbursement *is calculated upon the distance measured from the employee's home or designated work location, whichever is less.*

**E. Recreational Vehicles**

Reimbursement for the use of a privately owned recreational vehicle cannot exceed the least costly alternative mode of transportation and lodging expenses.

## **F. Reimbursements for Travel Expenses for Interview Candidates**

The County Executive Officer is authorized to reimburse those reasonable, actual, and necessary travel expenses incurred by candidates interviewing for department head positions. Additionally, County department heads, if they so choose, may authorize the reimbursement of the reasonable, actual, and necessary travel expenses for candidates interviewing for their assistant department head positions as well as management and professional level positions that pose recruiting challenges. The only recruitments eligible for this reimbursement are those that the Personnel Director and the department head agree should be reimbursed. Interviews include both oral examinations and selection interviews. All associated costs will be reimbursed to the Personnel budget from the budget of the department where the vacancy exists.

Applicants will be responsible for their own travel arrangements and will be reimbursed for their expenses through the claim process.

### **1) Procedures for Claims**

Applicants must complete a Travel and Reimbursement Claim form, and original receipts must be provided for:

- a) Any single expenditure over \$25
- b) All lodging expenses
- c) Expenditures for vehicles (e.g., gas, parking, etc.)
- d) Vehicle rental agreements
- e) Air travel

Claim forms must be submitted to the County within ten working days of the interview. Claim forms will include the name and address of the departmental representative who will receive and process the form and submit it to the Auditor-Controller.

### **2) Reimbursable Expenses**

#### **a) Lodging Costs**

1. The County will reimburse for the cost of lodging, not to exceed \$125 per night (excluding tax) at the single occupancy rate. If the bill is for double occupancy, single rate will be noted on the bill.

2. Original hotel/motel bill must be provided.

#### **b) Transportation Costs**

1. The County reimburses for the most economical mode of transportation suitable to the interview.

2. Private Car- mileage reimbursement; mileage reimbursement paid for use of private vehicles is adjusted by any periodic change to Internal Revenue Service allowable non-taxable mileage rates.

3. Airline travel - The County will reimburse the cost of a round-trip coach or economy ticket, not to exceed \$1,000. A copy of airline ticket or invoice must be submitted.

4. Rental Car - The County will reimburse the actual cost of a compact car, not to exceed \$60 per day plus mileage. Original receipt must be provided.

c) Meal Costs

The County will reimburse meal costs at the federal per diem meal rate effective for the location and the date of the incurred meal expense and will be that amount set by and contained in the Federal Domestic Perdiem Rate for breakfast, lunch and/or dinner, in effect on the date the meal allowance is incurred for the geographical location that the meal allowance is incurred in.

d) Miscellaneous Travel Costs

1. Parking fees - actual cost of parking (submit receipt).

2. Transportation costs from airport to lodging or interview site by most economical method (e.g., shuttle, taxi, rental car, etc.). For rental car, receipt must be submitted. For other modes of transportation, submit a receipt, if available.

Sample form: **Memorandum to Interview Candidate**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

To \_\_\_\_\_

The \_\_\_\_\_ has authorized reimbursement up to \_\_\_\_\_ for  
(Department Head, County Executive.)  
your travel expenses related to the \_\_\_\_\_ recruitment.

Please complete the attached claim form and return it to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Department)

(Address)

A copy of the County's travel reimbursement policy is attached. Thank you.

**G. Reimbursement of Relocation Expenses**

- 1) This policy is aimed at improving Placer County's ability to recruit and hire well-qualified employees by providing for the partial payment of moving expenses for new County employees in executive/management or hard to recruit for classifications who are moving to the area to accept employment with the County.
- 2) Reimbursement of moving expenses may be authorized in those instances where it is necessary to employ well-qualified candidates who might not otherwise accept employment with the County.
- 3) Expense Reimbursement Procedure
  - a) The County Executive Officer may authorize reimbursement of not more than 50% of the costs of moving, not to exceed \$3,000 in any one case. If an employee chooses to leave County employment prior to completing two full years of employment, such employee will reimburse the County for all moving expenses paid by the County.
  - b) Costs covered by this policy include direct moving costs such as a moving van, rental trucks, related moving equipment and mileage fees for the truck or van used during the process of moving. Indirect costs such as storage fees and repairs are not reimbursable.
  - c) Advance authorization in writing from the County Executive Officer is required. Payment will be made when receipts or other evidence of costs incurred are received and verified by the Auditor-Controller.

**H. Reimbursements for Department Heads and Members of the Board of Supervisors**

- 1) Notwithstanding other provisions of these policies and practices, Department Heads, Assistant County Executive Officer, Deputy County Executive Officer, and members of the Board of Supervisors who do not have permanent overnight assignment of a county vehicle shall receive \$6,600 per calendar year as reimbursement for all private vehicle mileage on official County business, unless they elect not to receive such flat rate reimbursement<sup>3</sup>
  - a) Such officials electing to receive the flat rate reimbursement may, in addition, receive mileage reimbursement at the IRS rate for mileage driven within the county east of Baxter and outside the boundaries of Placer County.
  - b) The flat rate reimbursement shall be payable no later than the tenth day of each calendar month for mileage expenses incurred the previous calendar month.

c) The flat rate reimbursement shall not be payable to elected officials electing to receive additional hours of administrative leave per Section 14.450(d) of the Placer County Code.

d) For officials whose employment begins or ends during a calendar year, there shall be a prorated reduction in the flat rate reimbursement.

e) Officials electing to receive the flat rate reimbursement shall not use County vehicles on official County business except as required in extraordinary circumstances.

2) Each Supervisor shall receive reasonable expenses, including expenses for meals incurred when attending meetings of the Board and on County business, both within and outside of the County. Each Supervisor, in addition to other expenses, shall receive the current standard mileage reimbursement rate for travel to and from their residence to the place of meeting of the Board at the county seat, and for travel within and without the county on County business.

#### **I. Time Frames for Claims for Reimbursement**

Claims for employee reimbursements shall be submitted to the Auditor-Controller's Office not later than the 120th calendar day after the employee incurred the expense. Claims for employee reimbursements submitted after the 120th calendar day shall require a letter from the employee's department head explaining the reason for the lateness of the claim and the corrective action taken to prevent a recurrence, and the subsequent written approval of the County Executive or his designee. No claim shall be accepted for payment more than one calendar year after the expense was incurred, unless approved for payment by the Board of Supervisors.

#### **J. Combined Claims of Multiple Employees and Departments**

Claims of employees of one department or of two or more departments may be *combined* on one claim form if:

- 1) One employee has paid the expenses for all such employees and there is only one supporting receipt, where a receipt is necessitated by these rules;
- 2) Such expenses are itemized by individuals and dates, and are payable out of a single account.

#### **K. Claims Information**

- 1) Except for meal expenditures made directly by a department head or their chief assistant, claims for reimbursement of costs incurred for meals, lodging, and transportation provided to non-County employees must include a summary explanation of the reason, and the names and organizations of the non-County employees.

- 2) Claims for reimbursement of costs related to travel (including combined claims for meals, lodging, and transportation) must include a brief statement of the purpose of the travel, the position of the employee, and the dates, duration and destination of the travel.

**L. Personal Property Losses**

Personal Property Losses will be reimbursed to employees pursuant to Chapter 3 of the County Code, Section 3.04.140.

**Administrative Rules, Policies, and Practices**  
**Chapter 2: Meals, Lodging, Travel and Transportation Policies**

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**Administrative Rules, Policies, and Practices**  
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County Executive Office  
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