



**CITY OF SAN RAFAEL
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Subject:	Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy
Resolution No.	11914
Issue Date:	March 2006
Revision Date:	April 2008
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Approved By:	Ken Nordhoff, City Manager
Approved by City Council:	March 6, 2006

TRAVEL AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish equitable standards and to achieve reasonably consistent and fair treatment insofar as the reimbursement of expenses incurred in the service of the City of San Rafael. It is intended as a guide for City elected and appointed officials and all City employees for the preparation of expense reports and use of credit cards. Further, it is a means of informing all concerned of their privileges and obligations in the use of City funds for travel, entertainment, and other expenses.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Mayor and City Council Members, and other elected City Officials, all Boards and Commissioners, and all City Employees, except for sworn police personnel. All Police Department personnel shall follow the Police Department’s established travel expense and reimbursement procedures set forth in the Police Department Directives.

Unless otherwise specified, this policy applies to all elected, appointed officials and all city employees, herein referred to as “city officials.”

REFERENCES:

AB 1234 (Salinas 2005) (Government Code Sections 53232 et seq.)

DEFINITIONS:

None

POLICY:

It is the policy of the City of San Rafael to ensure that City resources are being used in an efficient manner in keeping with community standards.

PROCEDURES

It is the intent of this policy to reimburse City elected and appointed officials and all City employees (“city officials”) for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. Individuals are expected to exercise good and judicious judgment in the expenditure of city funds. All City funds, equipment, supplies (including letterhead), titles, and staff time must only be used for authorized City business.

Expenses submitted for reimbursement must be substantiated with receipts and/or other documents and must have the date, place and business purpose for the expense.

Approved Expenses

Expenses incurred in connection with the following types of activities generally constitute approved expenses, as long as the other requirements of this policy are met:

1. Communicating with representatives of regional, state and national government on City adopted policy positions;
2. Attending educational seminars designed to improve official’s skill and information levels;
3. Participating in regional, state and national organizations whose activities affect the City’s interests;
4. Attending City events;
5. Implementing a City-approved strategy for attracting or retaining businesses to the City, which will typically involve at least one staff member.

International Travel

Expenses in connection with international travel by elected and appointed officials shall require prior Council approval.

Non-Reimbursable Expenses

Examples of non-reimbursable personal expenses include, but are not limited to:

1. The personal portion of any trip;
2. Political fundraising or charitable contributions or events;
3. Family expenses, including partner’s expenses when accompanying a city official on City related business, as well as children- or pet-related expenses;
4. Entertainment expenses, including theater, movies (either in-room or at the theater), sporting events, travel gym, massage and/or golf related expenses, other cultural events or personal reading material;
5. Alcohol/personal bar expenses;
6. Non-mileage personal automobile expenses, including repairs, traffic citations, insurance or gasoline; and
7. Personal losses incurred while on City business, such as clothing and personal effects.

Travel Expenses

To conserve city resources and keep expenses within community standards, expenditures shall adhere to the following guidelines. In the event that expenses are incurred which exceed these guidelines, the cost borne or reimbursed by the City will be limited to the costs that fall within the guidelines.

Transportation

The most economical mode and class of transportation reasonably consistent with scheduling needs and cargo space requirements must be used, using the most direct and time-efficient route. Government and group rates must be used when available.

- **Airfare.** The cost of airline tickets will be reimbursed or paid for when traveling on City business. It is expected that city officials will travel by coach or economy class.
- **Automobile.** Automobile mileage will be reimbursed at Internal Revenue Service rates presently in effect (*see* www.irs.gov.) **For 2008, the rate is 50.5 cents per mile***. These rates are designed to compensate the driver for gasoline, insurance, maintenance and other expenses associated with operating the vehicle. This amount does not include bridge and road tolls, which are reimbursable.
- **Car Rental.** Rental rates that are equal or less than those available through the State of California's website (<http://www.catravelmart.com/default.htm>) shall be considered the most economical and reasonable for purposes of reimbursement under this policy.
- **Taxis/Shuttles.** Taxis or shuttles fares may be reimbursed, including a 15 percent gratuity per fare.

Hotels/Motels

Hotel or Motel expenses will be reimbursed or paid for when travel on official City business reasonably requires an overnight stay.

- **Conferences/Meetings.** If such lodging is in connection with a conference, lodging expenses must not exceed the group rate published by the conference sponsor for the meeting in question if such rates are available at the time of booking. If the group rate is not available, see next section.
- **Other Lodging.** Travelers must request government rates, when available. A listing of hotels offering government rates in different areas is available at <http://www.catravelmart.com/lodguideframes.htm>. Rates that are equal to or less than government rates are presumed to be reasonable and hence reimbursable for purposes of this policy.

Meals

The actual cost of meals, including tips, is reimbursable up to the current Internal Revenue Service rate in effect for San Rafael. Receipts must be provided for all meals and shall note the purpose of the meal, and when the meal took place. If the receipt is for more than one individual or the purpose of the meal included more than one individual, the receipt must also note those in attendance. The receipt must be signed and contain all of the preceding information before any reimbursements will be made.

* Rates for mileage will be updated annually by the Finance Department as an attachment to this policy

Individual meal reimbursement allowance is as follows:

Meal Period	Reimbursable
Breakfast	Actual cost
Lunch	Actual cost
Dinner	Actual cost
Total	Actual cost up to \$54.00 per day

The City will not pay for alcohol/personal bar expenses.

Telephone/Fax/Cellular/Internet

City officials will be reimbursed for actual telephone, fax and internet expenses incurred on City business. Telephone bills should identify which calls were made on City business. For cellular calls when the city official has a particular number of minutes included in the city official's plan, the city official can identify the percentage of calls made on public business.

Internet access connection and/or usage fees will be reimbursed if necessary to conduct city-related business. The amount shall not to exceed \$15.00 per day and a receipt must be submitted for reimbursement.

Airport Parking / Baggage

Long-term parking must be used for travel exceeding 24-hours. Baggage handling fees of up to \$1 per bag and gratuities of up to 15 percent will be reimbursed.

Other

Expenses for which City officials receive reimbursement from another agency are not reimbursable.

Cash Advance Policy

From time to time, it may be necessary for a city official to request a cash advance to cover anticipated expenses while traveling or doing business on the City's behalf.

A completed Cash Advance Form shall be submitted to the Finance Department no later than 10 days before the advance is needed by the requesting city official. The Cash Advance Form shall have the following information: *(Forms are located in the Finance Resource file on the city's network.)*

1. The purpose of the expenditure(s);
2. The benefits of such expenditure to the City;
3. The anticipated amount of the expenditure(s) (for example, hotel rates, meal costs, and transportation expenses); and
4. The dates of the expenditure(s).

Any unused cash advance must be returned to the Finance Department within seven (7) business days of the city official's return from the trip or return to work, along with an Expense Report and receipts documenting how the advance was used in compliance with this policy.

In the event the Finance Director or designated Finance Manager is uncertain as to whether a request complies with this policy, resolution will be sought from the City Manager.

City Credit Card Use Policy

The City of San Rafael does not issue credit cards to individual elected or appointed officials. The City Manager may approve the use of a city credit card for transportation, lodging and conference registration for elected and appointed officials.

The City of San Rafael does issue credit cards to city employees for approved expenses. Receipts documenting expenses incurred on a city credit card shall be in compliance with the credit card and use policy approved by the City Manager.

City of San Rafael credit cards may not be used for personal expenses under any circumstances.

Expense Report Content and Submission Deadline

All expense reimbursement requests must be submitted on the City's Expense Report Form located on the Finance page of the City's Intranet website at <https://intranet.cityofsanrafael.org/finance>.

Expenses submitted for reimbursement must have receipts supporting the expense. *A complete and accurate Expense Report shall be submitted within 30 days of an expense being incurred.* Restaurant receipts, in addition to any credit card receipts, are part of the necessary documentation. Receipts for gratuities and tolls under \$5.00 are not required. If a receipt is lost, a memorandum to the Finance Director or designated Finance Manager detailing the information required in the cash advance section of this policy must be submitted or payment will be rejected.

Inability to provide such supporting documentation within the time frame stated above, shall result in the expense being borne by the city official.

In the case of a city employee, Expense Reports shall be submitted to the employee's supervisor for approval. In the case of an elected and appointed official, Expense Reports shall be submitted to the City Manager or designee for approval.

In case of a question regarding a report, the Finance Director or designated Finance Manager and/or the City Manager shall make the final determination.

Reports to City Council by Elected and Appointed Officials

At the next regular City Council meeting following the date of the expenditures, each elected and appointed official shall briefly report on meetings/conferences attended at City expense. If multiple elected and appointed officials attended, a joint report may be made. These reports may be done verbally or in writing.

Audits of Expense Reports

All expenses are subject to verification that they comply with this policy.

Compliance with Laws

Elected and appointed officials and all city employees should keep in mind that some expenditures may be subject to reporting under the Political Reform Act and other laws. All City expenditures are public records subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act.

Violation of This Policy

Use of public resources or falsifying expense reports in violation of this policy may result in any or all of the following:

1. Loss of reimbursement privileges,
2. Demand for restitution to the City,
3. Disciplinary action,
4. Civil penalties of up to \$1,000 per day and three times the value of the resources used, and
5. Prosecution for misuse of public resources.

Fraudulent Activity in Violation of this Policy

It is the City's intent to fully investigate any suspected acts of fraud, misappropriation, or other similar irregularity in violation of this policy. An objective and impartial investigation will be conducted regardless of the position, title, length of service or relationship with the City of any party who might be or become involved in or becomes the subject of such investigation.

APPROVED BY:



3/06/06

Ken Nordhoff, City Manager

Date