

**Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS)  
Office of Grants & Research  
Homeland Security Division**

**Travel Expenses Reimbursement Guidance**

**March 2016**

This guidance supersedes any and all previous EOPSS guidance regarding homeland security-related travel expenses.

**I. Travel Approval**

All sub-recipients must obtain prior written approval from EOPSS for:

- out-of-state travel expenses; and
- overnight in-state travel expenses.

Travel approval requests must be submitted to EOPSS at least thirty (30) days prior to the departure date. International travel requests require approval by DHS/FEMA, so discuss such travel plans early with EOPSS and submit requests with even more lead-time.

Requests to EOPSS must be from an authorized official for the sub-recipient, on its letterhead, and include:

- Proposed travel date(s) and destination
- Anticipated travel costs
- Funding year and grant program
- Name of individual(s) traveling
- Brief explanation of why travel is necessary
- Supporting documents (e.g., conference brochure or website link)

Please consult with your EOPSS Program Coordinator if you have a question about who is an eligible authorized official to make such a request.

A separate request must be submitted for each proposed trip, but multiple travelers going together to one destination can be included on one request.

As applicable, all out-of-state or overnight in-state travel expenses (except those involving M&A funds) must be approved in advance of being submitted to EOPSS by the respective Homeland Security Council, MMRS Steering Committee, or the Boston Mayor's Office of Emergency Management.

## **II. Auto-related In-State Travel**

Auto-related in-state travel expenses incurred by sub-recipients do **not** need prior EOPSS approval.

Mileage reimbursement is **\$0.45 per mile as of May 22, 2011**. Mileage reimbursement is for personal vehicles only. No mileage reimbursement will be made related to the use of state/municipal or other organization-owned vehicles.

Reasonable rental car expenses are allowable.

Mileage expenses must be based from either the traveler's home or permanently assigned office to a meeting place, whichever is nearer the destination, and back to the starting point if applicable.

For each trip, the starting point, destination(s), and end point must be reported within the reimbursement request. If additional destinations occur during the trip, separately identify the locations visited and the total mileage travelled.

Trip totals must be supported with either actual odometer start/end readings or computed from a recognized mileage chart or online mapping site. The reimbursement request should include a copy of the chart or site used or the start/end odometer readings.

Taxi, shuttle or public transportation expenses within a reimbursement request must be supported with a clear photo-copy of a dated receipt that includes the start and end trip points (if possible), the total fare, and the issuing organization. Tips for taxis and shuttles are reimbursable if reasonable and clearly documented with an itemized, dated receipt.

Toll and reasonable parking expenses within a reimbursement request must be supported with a clear photo-copy of a dated receipt that shows a total charge and the issuing organization. Toll expenses are reimbursable to the driver of a municipal vehicle if a signed statement on municipal letterhead is included with the reimbursement request to indicate the toll expense was paid by the driver and not by his/her municipal employer.

## **III. Overnight In-State Travel**

Reimbursement is allowable for overnight in-state travel expenses (i.e., lodging, meals, and related costs) that involve 180 miles or more of round-trip travel from either the traveler's home or permanently assigned office, whichever is nearer to the destination.

EOPSS may waive this requirement in the case of an unusual early start or late end time or if the meeting, training, exercise, or conference is held on multiple consecutive days. These waiver requests must be submitted to EOPSS at least thirty (30) days prior to the departure date.

Pre-approval of overnight in-state travel expenses is always subject to EOPSS discretion, which depends upon the circumstances of the request.

#### **IV. Lodging & Meals Expenses**

Meal expenses/per diems must be allowable and may not exceed the approved travel expenses policy of the traveler's employer (i.e., municipal collective bargaining agreement) or the state travel expenses policy summarized below, **whichever is the more restrictive**. This use of the more restrictive reimbursement rate is required by 2 CFR Part 200 (the Super Circular), Section 200.474. Other key points:

- Reimbursement for meal expenses will only be made in conjunction with travel that requires the traveler to be away from home for more than 24 hours.
- Meal expenses for travel of more than 24 hours are reimbursable at up to \$30.00 for each whole day of travel. A whole day shall be a 24-hour period commencing at midnight.
- For travel for partial days, individual meal allowances are breakfast up to \$6.00, lunch up to \$8.00, dinner up to \$16.00.
- The rates above shall apply only when meals are not included in the rate charged for lodging or otherwise included in registration or conference fees.
- The duration of travel shall begin from the employee's departure from his/her home or work location directly to the destination of the travel assignment, and shall conclude with the employee's arrival at his/her home or work location directly from such travel assignment.

Lodging expenses must not exceed the applicable federal rates for the location visited. The Government Services Administration (GSA) website ([www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)) lists current and past lodging rates by city, county, and state and time of year.

If obtaining a GSA lodging rate is ultimately not possible, the traveler is responsible for providing an explanation of the following: the amount of the overage (GSA rate vs. obtainable rate), a statement explaining what efforts were made to book lodging at a GSA rate hotel, and why these efforts were unsuccessful. This explanation will need to be submitted by e-mail to EOPSS and approved **before** any reservation is made. The approval e-mail must be included with the associated reimbursement request sent to EOPSS.

Lodging and meal reimbursement requests must be based upon submitted receipts that are adequately detailed and readable to ensure expenses are applicable and allowable.

Lodging and meals tax are allowable.

Meals related tips are **not** reimbursable, but reasonable lodging related tips are if clearly documented on an itemized, dated receipt.

**V. Transportation Expenses**

The means of transportation which is the least expensive and which is in the interest of economy, with proper consideration to the circumstances, should always be used. Mass transit is preferable to taxis or privately-owned automobiles.

Airline baggage handling and re-schedule fees are allowable expenses.

**VI. Unallowable Travel Costs and Other Restrictions**

No reimbursements will be made for car washes, entertainment, and alcoholic beverages.

Receipts that combine travel-related expenses under a single total with no itemization of the expenses involved will not be accepted.

If you have any questions regarding this guidance, please contact your EOPSS Program Coordinator.