



**NCDENR**

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

# TRAVEL

Policies

&

Regulations

# TRAVEL POLICIES and REGULATIONS

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

REVISED: 12-27-13 EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2014

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The policies and regulations in unshaded text below were issued by the Office of State Budget and Management and apply to all state agencies.

**DENR policies and procedures are inserted in shaded areas following each topic as appropriate to ensure DENR compliance with state policies and regulations, and sound management practices.**

## PURPOSE

Statutory regulations for per diem, transportation, and subsistence allowances for state departments, agencies, boards, commissions, committees, and councils are contained in G.S. 138-5, 138-6, and 138-7. It is the intent of this section to provide statements of policy to enable state departments and agencies a comprehensive reference for uniform interpretation to pay or reimburse allowable state travel expenses pertaining to official travel and subsistence.

## EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

An employee traveling on official state business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds. Excess costs, circuitous routes, delays, or *luxury accommodations* and services unnecessary, unjustified, or *for the convenience or personal preference of the employee* in the performance of official state business are *not acceptable* under this standard.

*Employees will be responsible for unauthorized costs and any additional expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience*

## TRAVEL AUTHORIZATIONS

Approval of travel authorizations will follow policy as stated in the DENR Financial Services Division (FSD) Travel Policy and Regulations. The only travel authorization to be submitted to the Secretary's Office is as follows:

1. Out-of-Country

The only travel authorizations to be submitted to the FSD Budget section for approval are as follows:

1. Charter Aircraft
2. Use of Non-State Facilities
3. Retreats

**The Supervising Assistant Secretary may elect to require scanned copies of all approved travel authorizations be sent via email within 24 hours of approval.**

## TRAVEL POLICIES FOR STATE EMPLOYEES

### Per Diem Compensation

Per Diem compensation is not applicable for state employees.

### Subsistence Rates (Meals & Lodging)

Pursuant to G.S. §138-6(5), the maximum allowable statutory rate for meals and lodging is \$103.20 per day for in-state travel and \$117.70 per day for out-of-state travel.

- **The Payment of sales tax, lodging tax, local tax, or service fees applied to the cost of lodging is allowed in addition to the lodging rate and is to be paid as a lodging expense.**

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- **The employee may exceed the part of the ceiling allocated for lodging without approval for over expenditure provided that the total lodging and food reimbursement does not exceed the maximum daily subsistence for which the employee is eligible (according to time leaving and returning, etc.).**

The following schedule shall be used for reporting allowable subsistence expenses incurred while traveling on official state business:

	<u>In-State</u>	<u>Out-of-State</u>
Breakfast	\$ 8.20	\$ 8.20
Lunch	\$10.70	\$10.70
Dinner	\$18.40	\$20.90
Lodging (actual, up to)	\$65.90	\$77.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$103.20</b>	<b>\$117.70</b>

## Out-of-State Travel

Out-of-state travel status begins when the employee leaves the state and remains in effect until the employee returns to the state. However, in-state allowances and reimbursement rates apply when employees and other qualified official travelers use hotel and meal facilities located in North Carolina immediately prior to and returning from out-of-state travel during the same travel period.

## Authorization for Lodging

Written approval by the department head or his or her designee must be obtained in order to qualify for reimbursement for overnight stays. Supervisory personnel certifying the reimbursement request as necessary and proper must require documentation from the traveler to substantiate that the overnight lodging was necessary and accomplished. The travel must involve a travel destination located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned duty station (vicinity) **or home, whichever is less**.

DENR Division Directors are designated by the Secretary of the Department to approve authorization for lodging. Division Directors may delegate this authority to supervisors as appropriate within their organizational structure. Approval of the "Travel Reimbursement Request" form is acceptable, when there are **no excess charges**. This delegation of authority must be provided to the DENR Controller's Office. For routine business travel, employees must stay within the **total daily rate** for food and lodging. See "Excess Lodging" below for new temporary policy: **Only the State Budget Officer may grant exceptions.**

## Reimbursement for Lodging

Each employee is responsible for his or her own request for reimbursement. The travel must involve a travel destination located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned duty station (vicinity) **or home, whichever is less**. Requests for reimbursement should be filed within 30 days after the travel period ends for which the reimbursement is being requested. Specific dates of lodging must be listed on the reimbursement request, and **substantiated by a receipt** from a commercial lodging establishment, **not to exceed \$65.90 per night** for in-state lodging or **\$77.90 per night** for out-of-state lodging.

Reimbursement for lodging in an establishment treated as an apartment building by state or local law or regulation is **not allowed** unless approved by the Office of State Budget and Management in advance.

Telephone access fees for business calls are considered a miscellaneous expense. Telephone access fees for **personal calls are not reimbursable**. Baggage handling tips and other tips (except tips for

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meals or food service) may be claimed as "Miscellaneous." Excessive tips must be documented with a receipt.

DENR employees **will not be reimbursed** for tips of more than \$2.00 per bag round trip or \$1 per bag each way, limited to 2 bags for a maximum total of \$4.00. DENR employees **will be reimbursed** for the actual cost of checking 2 bags (maximum); receipt is required when filing for travel reimbursement.

## Excess Lodging

A "Travel Authorization" (form DENR-OC10) must be completed **and approved in advance** for each trip involving excess.

Excess Lodging authorization for in-state, out-of-state, and out-of-country travel must be obtained in advance from the department head or his or her designee. Excess lodging is allowed when the employee is in a high cost area and unable to secure lodging within the current allowance, or when the employee submits in writing an opinion that his/her personal safety or security is unattainable within the current allowance. Excess lodging authorization is not allowed for reason of convenience or personal preference for the employee. The employee may exceed the part of the ceiling allocated for lodging without approval from department head of his or her designee provided that the total lodging and food reimbursement does not exceed the maximum daily subsistence.

## Penalties and Charges Resulting from Cancellations

Penalties and charges resulting from the cancellation of travel reservations (including airline or hotel reservations and conference registration) shall be the department's obligation if the employee's travel has been approved in advance and the cancellation or change is made at the direction of and/or for the convenience of the department. If the cancellation or change is made for the personal benefit of the employee, it shall be the employee's obligation to pay the penalties and charges. However, in the event of accidents, serious illness, or death within the employee's immediate family or other critical circumstances beyond the control of the employee, the department may pay the penalties and charges.

DENR Division Directors are designated by the Secretary of the Department to approve payment of penalties and charges when the above conditions are met.

## Authorization for Meals

Written approval by the department head or his or her designee must be obtained in order to qualify for reimbursement for meals. Supervisory personnel certifying the reimbursement request as necessary and proper must require documentation from the traveler to substantiate that the payment for meals was necessary and accomplished.

DENR Division Directors are designated by the Secretary of the Department to approve authorization for meals. Division Directors may delegate this authority to supervisors as appropriate within their organizational structure. Approval of the "Travel Reimbursement Request" form is acceptable, when there are no excess charges. This delegation of authority must be provided to the DENR Controller's Office.

## Reimbursement for Meals

Each employee is responsible for his or her own request for reimbursement. **Tips for meals are included in the meal allowance.** Each meal reimbursement rate must be listed on the reimbursement request. Times of departure and arrival must also be listed on the reimbursement request. The costs of

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meals included in other related activities (registration fees, conference costs, hotel registration, etc.) may not be duplicated in reimbursement requests. If requested, each employee may be reimbursed for breakfast even if their lodging establishment offers a free continental breakfast.

DENR Directors/Supervisors approving reimbursement for meals are certifying that all state policies and regulations have been met, and that meal costs are not duplicated.

## Meals during Overnight Travel

A state employee may be reimbursed for meals including lunches, while on official state business **when the employee is in overnight travel status**. The travel must involve a travel destination located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned duty station (vicinity) **or home, whichever is less**.

## Meals during Daily Travel

Employees may be reimbursed for meals for partial days of travel **when in overnight travel status** and the partial day is the day of departure or the day of return. The following applies:

- **Breakfast:** depart duty station **prior to 6:00** a.m. (i.e. **does not include** 6:00 a.m. departures) **and extend the workday by 2 hours**.
- **Lunch:** depart duty station prior to Noon (day of departure) or return to duty station after 2:00 p.m. (day of return).
- **Dinner:** depart duty station prior to 5:00 p.m. (day of departure) or return to duty station after 8:00 p.m. (day of return) **and extend the workday by 3 hours**.
- The travel must involve a travel destination located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned duty station (vicinity) or home, whichever is less.

Allowances **cannot be paid** to employees for **lunches if travel does not involve an overnight stay**; however, employees can be eligible for allowances for the breakfast and evening meals when the following applies:

- **Breakfast:** depart duty station **prior to** 6:00 a.m., **and extend the workday by 2 hours**.
- **Dinner:** return to duty station after 8:00 p.m., **and extend the workday by 3 hours**.
- The travel must involve a travel destination located at least 35 miles from the employee's regularly assigned duty station (vicinity) **or home, whichever is less**.
- Allowances for the breakfast and evening meals for employees working nontraditional (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> shifts) while on travel status must have prior approval of the Office of State Budget and Management.

## Meals and Day-to-Day Activities

State employees **may not be reimbursed** for meals eaten in conjunction with a congress, conference, assembly, convocation or **meeting**, or by whatever name called, of the employees within a single state department, institution or agency, or between the employees of two or more state departments, institutions or agencies to discuss issues relating to the employee's normal day-to-day business activities.

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## Meals for Required Employee Attendance

A state employee may be reimbursed for meals, including lunches, when the employee's job requires his attendance at the **meeting of a board, commission, committee, or council** in his official capacity and the meal is preplanned as part of the meeting for the entire board, commission, committee or council. Such board, commission, committee, or council must include persons other than the employees of a single state department, institution, or agency.

## Meals and Commercial Air Travel

Employees are allowed to claim reimbursement for meals even though they are shown and offered as a part of one's flight schedule on a commercial airline.

## Excess Meals

**No excess reimbursement will be allowed for meals** unless such costs are included in registration fees and/or there are predetermined charges, or the meals were for out-of-country travel. The department head or his or her designee may grant excess subsistence for meals for out-of-country travel.

DENR Division Directors are delegated authority to approve conference meals within state rates. The Division Director, Assistant Secretary and Secretary must approve all out-of-country travel. Prior approval of a "Travel Authorization" (form DENR-OC10) is required.

For conferences planned and conducted by DENR divisions, please see the section on Internal and External Conferences.

## CONVENTION REGISTRATION

State law allows reimbursement of the actual amount of convention registration fees as shown by a valid receipt or invoice [g.s. 138-6(a) (4)].

## PASSPORTS

Reimbursement for costs incurred in obtaining or renewing a passport may be made to an employee who, in the regular course of his duties, is required to travel overseas on official state business. Passport expenses are chargeable to the same fund that supports the employee's trip.

## TRANSPORTATION BY COMMON CARRIER

Reimbursement for air, rail, or bus fare is limited to actual coach fare, substantiated by receipt.

### Transportation by International Flights

Employees traveling internationally on overseas flights may be reimbursed actual business class fare (substantiated by receipt) with prior approval of the department head or his or her designee.

For DENR employees: all international travel must be approved by the Division Director, the Director of the Division of Budget Planning & Analysis, and the Secretary of the Department. Prior approval of a "Travel Authorization" (form DENR-OC10) is required.

### Penalties and Charges Resulting from Cancellations

Penalties and charges resulting from the cancellation of airline reservations (or other travel reservations) shall be the department's obligation if the employee's travel has been approved in advance and the cancellation or change is made at the direction of and for the convenience of the department. If the cancellation or change is made for the personal benefit of the employee, it shall be

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the employee's obligation to pay the penalties and charges. However, in the event of accidents, serious illness, or death within the employee's immediate family, or other critical circumstances beyond the control of the employee, the department shall pay the penalties and charges.

DENR Division Directors are designated by the Secretary of the Department to approve payment of penalties and charges when the above conditions are met.

## Super Saver Rates

When traveling by common carrier to conduct official state business, employees traveling to their destination earlier than necessary and/or delaying their return to avail the state of reduced transportation rates may be reimbursed subsistence for additional travel days if, in the opinion of the department head or his or her designee, the amount saved due to the early and/or delayed travel is greater than the amount expended in additional subsistence. When the reduced airfare rates require staying overnight one Saturday night, to be eligible for reimbursement, the state employee must stay overnight on the Saturday closest to the first or last day of official state business to which the employee is attending.

DENR Division Directors are designated by the Secretary of the Department to approve additional travel days when the above conditions are met. Prior approval of a "Travel Authorization" (form DENR-OC10) is required.

## Frequent Flyer Miles

Frequent flyer miles earned by a state employee while traveling on state business at state expense **are the property of the state**. Frequent flyer miles accumulated by an individual state employee during previous state business trips should, to the extent possible, be used by the state employee accumulating the frequent flyer miles while traveling on future state business trips.

## Coupons or Certificates for Reduced Air Fare

Coupons or certificates for reduced air fare if acquired by a state employee while traveling on state business at state expense **are the property of the State and should be used, to the extent possible, by the state employee on future state business trips**.

## Fees and Service Charges

With sufficient justification and documentation and with approval of the department head or his or her designee, state employees can be reimbursed for usual, customary, and reasonable fees and services charges imposed by travel agents for assistance in making travel arrangements.

DENR Division Directors are designated by the Secretary of the Department to approve payment of fees and service charges when the above conditions are met.

## TRANSPORTATION BY PERSONAL VEHICLE

Employees should make every effort to maximize the use of state vehicles for business travel. In cases where supervisors authorize employees to use their personal vehicles resulting from the employee's request for personal preference or for the convenience of the employee, or when a state vehicle is reasonably available, the reimbursement shall be made at a rate of 30 cents per mile. "Reasonably available" is defined as available for use and adequate to meet any special needs of the employee and the state in the given circumstances. If a state car is not reasonably available, the travel may be reimbursed at the standard business rate of 56 cents per mile. The reimbursement rate must be either 30 cents or 56 cents per mile and divisions may not negotiate different rates. If the employee wishes to utilize his vehicle when a state vehicle is available the reimbursement rate will be 30 cents. If the employee is

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required to use his vehicle when a state vehicle is not available, the reimbursement rate will be 56 cents with prior approval from his supervisor. Form DENR OC12 must accompany all reimbursement requests for use of personal vehicle when receiving the 56 cents rate.

THE SIGNING OF THE REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST BY THE EMPLOYEE'S SUPERVISOR PROVIDES THE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE USE OF A PERSONAL VEHICLE AND THE MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATE, BUT THE RATES MUST BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE ABOVE POLICY AND APPROPRIATE FORMS COMPLETED.

Divisions should review the use of agency assigned state vehicles from Motor Fleet Management. Division Directors should determine if vehicles that are not meeting the minimum mileage requirements for three consecutive months are cost effective for their program. If assigned vehicles continue to be needed, but do not meet minimum use requirements, consideration should be given to have them designated as "unique use" vehicles. Divisions should contact the Division of Purchase and Services if any of their assigned vehicles fall within this area.

## TRANSPORTATION BY A RENTAL VEHICLE

Rental vehicles may be used; however, rental vehicles are not to be used at state expense solely for the convenience or personal preference of the employee. A receipt is necessary for reimbursement.

DENR Division Directors are designated by the Secretary of the Department to approve authorization for rental vehicle. A "Travel Authorization" (form DENR-OC10) must be completed for each trip involving vehicle rental.

## TRANSPORTATION BY CHARTERED AIRCRAFT

The use of charter aircraft must be approved by the department head or his or her designee provided the following is substantiated and put in writing:

- A state aircraft is not available or not appropriate for the size of the party traveling or the destination airport.
- The use of a charter flight is more economical than a commercial flight.
- The use of a charter flight is necessary because of unusual travel circumstances.

The Director of Budget Planning & Analysis and the Secretary of DENR must approve any use of charter aircraft. Prior written approval (form DENR-OC10) is required.

## TRANSPORTATION BY USE OF AIRCRAFT OWNED BY A STATE EMPLOYEE

Reimbursement for costs incurred in the use of aircraft, owned by a state employee, on official state business may be approved by the department head or his or her designee, provided the following is substantiated and put in writing:

- The use of the aircraft owned by a state employee is necessary because of unusual travel circumstances and is not for the sole convenience of the employee who owns the plane.
- The use of the aircraft, owned by a state employee, at the rates published below is cheaper than any other method of air travel.

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- The allowable reimbursement rate for aircraft owned by a state employee is \$.68 per mile per passenger.

The Secretary of DENR must approve the use of a personally owned aircraft. Prior written approval (form DENR-OC10) is required.

## TRANSPORTATION BY STATE VEHICLE

Procedures for obtaining and using state vehicles owned by the division of motor fleet management (department of administration) are set out in the rules and regulations provided by that division. Every individual who uses a permanently assigned state- owned passenger motor vehicle, pickup truck, or van to drive between his official workstation and his home, shall reimburse the state for these trips at a rate computed by the department of administration.

### Non-state Employee Riders

Non-state employees may accompany state employees in state-owned vehicles when they have a business interest in the purpose of the trip and their presence is related to state business. Students of state universities, colleges, and institutions may be passengers in state-owned vehicles to attend athletic events and other activities officially sanctioned by the institution, provided the proper account is reimbursed at the standard mileage cost rate by the student activity fund involved. Spouses and children of state employees may accompany them in state-owned vehicles, if ample space is available and all travel is strictly for official state business [G.S. 143-341.8(i)(7)]. Hitchhikers are not permitted to ride in state-owned vehicles.

### Transportation by State Vehicle at Destination

At the employee's destination, state-owned vehicles may be used prudently for travel to obtain meals, but not for private purposes or for entertainment while off duty. No common carrier or public transportation fares are reimbursable on a trip on which an employee uses a state-owned vehicle, unless it is shown that such transportation was more economical in a particular situation.

### Commuting

No reimbursement shall be made for the use of a personal vehicle in commuting from an employee's home to his duty station. (No mileage reimbursement is allowed to employees on "call back" status. For the state's policy on compensation to employees on "call back" status, see the State Personnel Manual.)

### Tolls

If the department receives invoices for DENR assigned state-owned vehicles for tolls on the Western Wake toll road, the employee responsible for that vehicle will be charged the toll plus any additional fees imposed by Motor Fleet Management.

Because the new Western Wake toll road does not provide any access that is not already provided by non-toll roads, DENR Management has decided that the department will not purchase the electronic passes for this road and will not reimburse employees for the use of this road.

This policy applies only to the Western Wake toll road. Other toll situations will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

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## TRAVEL TO/FROM AIRPORT AT EMPLOYEE'S DUTY STATION

Reimbursement for travel between the employee's duty station and the nearest airline terminal (or train/bus station if applicable) and for appropriate parking may be made under the following circumstances. For travel by:

- Taxi or Airport Shuttle – Actual costs with receipts.
- Private car - the business standard mileage rate set by the Internal Revenue Service for a maximum of two round trips with no parking charge, or for one round trip with parking charges. Receipts are required for airport parking claims.
- Use of Public Transportation – In lieu of using a taxi or airport shuttle, employees can be reimbursed without receipts \$5 for each one-way trip from the airport to hotel/meeting or from the hotel/meeting to the airport.

DENR employees should use the least expensive form of transportation to/from airports. This will vary depending on the cost of taxis or shuttles, and the length of time a personal vehicle would be parked at the airport. Use of a private car must also be less expensive than the use of a state vehicle. **Parking at RDU airport has a maximum of \$6 per day.**

## TRAVEL TO/FROM AIRPORT AT EMPLOYEE'S DESTINATION

Reimbursement for travel to and from the airline terminal (or train/bus station if applicable) at the employee's destination may be made where travel is via most economical mode available as listed below:

- Taxi or Airport Shuttle service – Actual costs with receipts.
- Rental vehicles - may be used with the prior approval of the department head or designee; however, rental vehicles may not be used for the sole convenience of the employee (receipt required).
- Use of Public Transportation – In lieu of using a taxi or airport shuttle, employees can be reimbursed without receipts \$5 for each one-way trip from the airport to hotel/meeting or from the hotel/meeting to the airport.

Authority to approve the use of a rental vehicle is delegated to the Division Director only.

## TRAVEL INVOLVING TRIPS OTHER THAN TO AND FROM THE AIRPORT

The actual cost of taxi and shuttle service fares (receipt required) is reimbursable when required for travel on official state business. The request must be documented with a receipt. The use of public transportation is reimbursable up to \$5 per one way trip.

## AUTHORIZATION FOR OUT-OF-COUNTRY TRAVEL

All out-of-country travel must be authorized by the department head or such department official designated by him or her.

For DENR employees, all international travel must be approved by the Division Director, the Director of Budget Planning & Analysis, and the Secretary of the Department. Prior approval of a "Travel Authorization" (form DENR-OC10) is required.

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Out-of- country travel status begins when the employee leaves the country and remains in effect until the employee returns to the country. If the employee and other qualified official travelers use hotel and meal facilities located outside North Carolina, but within the continental United States, immediately prior to and upon returning from out-of-country travel but during the same travel period, out-of-state subsistence rates shall apply.

## TRAVEL ADVANCES

All employees who travel on state business may be issued advances when authorized by the department head or his or her designee in order that personal funds will not be required. Fiscal records must be maintained by the department for proper control.

Eligibility for advances and reporting requirements are as follows:

- **State Employees who have been issued state credit cards** for travel purposes should not be issued travel advances, unless there is substantiated justification.
- **Travel advances for occasional travel** must not exceed the estimated cost of the trip and may not be issued more than five working days prior to the date of departure. Advances must be deducted from the reimbursement request on the travel expense report which shall be submitted within 30 days after the travel period or May 31, whichever comes first.
- **Travel advances for regularly scheduled travel** for employees who travel each month, and permanent/annual advance of funds equal to the average monthly expense may be made. All reimbursement requests shall be filed and paid monthly for incurred expenses and the advance must be repaid as of June 30 annually or earlier if required by the agency. If it is determined that the monthly reimbursement has averaged less than the permanent/annual advancement, the advance must be reduced to the newly established amount.

DENR Division Directors are delegated authority to approve the issuance of travel advances within the above regulations (use form DENR-OC7). Division Directors may delegate authority to supervisors, as appropriate within their organizational structure. This delegation of authority must be provided to the DENR Controller's Office.

Travel Advances will not be issued for the month of June.

## TRAVEL POLICIES FOR STATE OFFICIALS

### POLITICAL FUNCTIONS

From time to time state officials, both elected and appointed, attend functions or meetings that are political in nature. The following policies are intended to be guidelines for the payment from state funds for travel and subsistence costs surrounding the attendance of state public officials at political functions or meetings:

#### Travel Related to a Political Function

**No state funds may be used to pay travel and/or subsistence costs for a state official while attending a political function or meeting.** In the event a state-owned aircraft is used, the reimbursement rate will be the actual operating cost rate per flight hour. If a state-owned vehicle is used, the reimbursement rate to the state will be the motor pool rate.

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## Travel Related to Official State Business that includes Political Functions

If a trip includes both official state business and political functions or meetings, state funds may be used to pay up to one-half of the travel and/or subsistence costs. In the event that a state-owned aircraft is used, the cost to the state will be charged at the regular rate per flight hour and the charge to a non-state source will be at the actual operating cost rate per flight hour. If a state-owned vehicle is used, the reimbursement rate to the state will be the motor pool rate.

## All Other Travel

Travel reimbursement policies and regulations for all other travel for state officials is the same as for state employees.

## TRAVEL POLICIES FOR MEMBERS OF STATE BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES, AND COUNCILS

(Other than Licensing Boards and Members of the General Assembly)

### Per Diem Compensation

Pursuant to G.S. 138-5(a) (1), non-state employees who are members of state boards, commissions, committees, and councils shall receive \$15 per *day of official service*. State employees and members of all state boards, commissions, and councils whose salaries or any portion of whose salaries are paid from state funds shall receive no per diem compensation from state funds for their services. It is the responsibility of the fiscal officer of the Board, Commission, Committee, or Council to insure that such per diem compensation is not paid to state employees.

- OSBM has clarified this to define “day of official service” as the day(s) that meetings are held. If members travel on days before or after the meeting, they may not receive per diem for the “travel only” days.

*For Example:*

*If a member of a board travels from Asheville to Raleigh on Wednesday for a board meeting on Thursday and returns on Friday, they would only receive per diem for Thursday (the day of the meeting).*

### Subsistence

Meal subsistence for non-state employee members of state boards, councils, commissions, or committees is a daily, lump-sum allowance payable per day of official service. The subsistence reimbursement for actual lodging expenses must be documented by a receipt of actual lodging expenses from a commercial establishment. Meals and lodging are to be reimbursed as follows:

#### In-State Travel:

- **\$37.30** for meals.
- Actual expenses up to **\$65.90** lodging documented by a receipt of actual lodging expenses for a commercial lodging establishment.

#### Out-of-State Travel:

- **\$39.80** for meals.

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- Actual expenses up to **\$77.90** lodging documented by a receipt of actual lodging expenses for a commercial lodging establishment.
- OSBM has clarified this to define “day of official service” as the day(s) that meetings are held. For the "travel only" days, they will be reimbursed in exactly the same manner as regular state employees.

## Excess Subsistence

Authorization for excess expenses for in-state or out-of-state travel may be granted by the department head or his designee (division director or board chairperson) when such costs are included in registration fees and/or there are predetermined charges.

## Out-of-state travel

Expenses for out-of-state travel on official business shall be reimbursed only upon authorization obtained in the manner prescribed by regulations governing out-of-state travel for state employees.

## Meetings

Refreshments, i.e., coffee, soft drinks, cookies, doughnuts, may be served at official board meetings. Reimbursement may be paid from state funds for actual cost not to exceed \$4.50 per member and required staff, per meeting per day. "Required Staff" shall be defined as an employee who, in the regular course of his duties, is expected to attend the meeting and any other employee whose presence is necessary to accomplish a purpose of the meeting.

## Transportation

Transportation policies and regulations are the same as for those for state employees, except that a mileage reimbursement rate set by any other law by reference to G. S. 138-6(a) (1) is established at **25 cents a mile, not the IRS rate.**

## SUBSISTENCE OF STATE EMPLOYEES SERVING AS BOARD MEMBERS

As allowed under G.S. 138-6, a state employee who is a member of a state board, commission, committee or council that operates from funds deposited with the State Treasurer, may be reimbursed for actual cost of any meal (including lunch) eaten while on official state business if the meal is preplanned as part of the meeting for the entire board, commission, committee, or council. However, when an overnight stay is required, the state employee is limited to a daily reimbursement as follows:

### Subsistence

#### In-State Travel

- **\$37.30** for meals
- Actual expenses up to **\$65.90** lodging documented by a receipt of actual lodging expenses for a commercial lodging establishment.

#### Out-of-State Travel

- **\$39.80** for meals
- Actual expenses up to **\$77.90** lodging documented by a receipt of actual lodging expenses for a commercial lodging establishment.

### No Overnight Stay

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When an overnight stay is not required, the state employee is allowed actual cost of any meal (including lunch) eaten while on official state business if the meal is preplanned as part of the meeting for the entire board, commission, committee or council.

## **Other Meals**

If the employee is eligible for reimbursement for any other meal, that reimbursement is limited by the same reimbursement amounts and regulations as those allowed for in-state and out-of-state travel by a state employee who is not a member of a state board, commission, committee, or council.

## **Meetings**

Refreshments, i.e., coffee, soft drinks, cookies, doughnuts, may be served at official board meetings. Reimbursement may be paid from state funds for actual cost not to exceed \$4.50 per member and required staff, per meeting per day. "Required Staff" shall be defined as an employee who, in the regular course of his duties, is expected to attend the meeting and any other employee whose presence is necessary to accomplish a purpose of the meeting.

## **TRAVEL POLICIES FOR LICENSING BOARDS (OTHER THAN STATE EMPLOYEES)**

### **Per Diem Compensation**

Pursuant to G.S. 93B-5, non-state employee members of licensing boards shall receive \$100.00 per day of official service. State employees and members of all licensing boards whose salaries or any portion of whose salaries are paid from state funds shall receive no per diem compensation from state funds for their services. It is the responsibility of the budget officer of the licensing board to insure that such per diem compensation is not paid to state employees.

*OSBM has determined that board and commission members may receive per diem only for the days that meetings are held. If members travel on days before or after the meeting, they may not receive per diem for the "travel only" days.*

### **Subsistence**

Subsistence policies and regulations are the same as for those for state employees.

### **Convention Registration**

Convention registration policies and regulations are the same as for those for state employees.

### **Transportation**

**Transportation policies and regulations are the same as for those for state employees, except that a mileage reimbursement rate set by any other law by reference to G. S. 138-6(a)(1) is established at 25 cents a mile, not the IRS rate.**

### **Meetings**

Refreshments, i.e., coffee, soft drinks, cookies, doughnuts, may be served at official board meetings. Reimbursement may be paid from state funds for actual cost not to exceed \$4.50 per member and required staff, per meeting per day. "Required Staff" shall be defined as an employee who, in the regular course of his duties, is expected to attend the meeting and any other employee whose presence is necessary to accomplish a purpose of the meeting.

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## TRAVEL POLICIES FOR MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SERVING ON STATE BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES, AND COUNCILS

### Per Diem Compensation

Pursuant to G.S. 120-3.1, per diem compensation is not applicable.

### Subsistence

A member of the General Assembly shall receive a subsistence allowance for meals and lodging at a daily rate (which is currently \$104) equal to the maximum per diem rate for federal employees traveling to Raleigh, N.C., as set out at 58 Federal Register 67959 (December 22, 1993), while the General Assembly remains in session, and, except as otherwise provided in this subsection when, with the approval of the Speaker of the House in the case of Representatives or the President Pro Tempore of the Senate in case of Senators, the member is:

- Traveling as a representative of the General Assembly or of its committees or commissions.
- Otherwise in the service of the state.

### Excess Subsistence

A member who is authorized to travel, whether in or out of session, within the United States but outside of North Carolina may elect to receive, in lieu of the amount provided in the preceding paragraph, a subsistence allowance of twenty-six dollars (\$26.00) a day for meals, plus actual expenses for lodging when evidenced by a receipt satisfactory to the Legislative Services Officer, not to exceed the maximum per diem rate for federal employees traveling to the same place, as set out at 58 Federal Register 67950-67964 (December 22, 1993) and at 59 Federal Register 23702-23709 (May 6, 1996).

### Transportation

A member will receive a travel allowance at the rate equal to the business standard mileage rate set by the Internal Revenue Service in Rev. Proc. 93-51, December 27, 1993, (29 cents) whenever the member travels, whether in or out of session, as a representative of the General Assembly or of its committees or commissions, with the approval of the Legislative Services Commission.

### Convention Registration

Convention registration policies and regulations are the same as for those for state employees.

## TRAVEL POLICIES FOR NON-STATE EMPLOYEES

### Non-state Employees

Non-state employees traveling on official state business whose expenses are paid by the state are subject to these regulations, including statutory subsistence allowances, to the same extent as are state employees. Travel expenses for members of a non-employee's family are not eligible to be paid by the state. No travel advances will be made to non- state employees.

### Prospective Professional Employees

A department head or his or her designee is authorized to approve reimbursement of transportation expenses of prospective professional employees visiting state departments for employment interviews. These expenses are limited to transportation and subsistence for 3 days

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(5 days if one is a Saturday) at the in-state rate. Excess lodging expenses may be approved by the department head or his or her designee.

DENR Division Directors (only) are delegated authority to approve reimbursement of travel expenses of prospective professional employees, within the above regulations.

## Students

Students at state institutions who travel on official state business other than for athletic events or student organizations and whose expenses are paid or reimbursed by the state are subject to these regulations, including statutory subsistence allowances, to the same extent as are state employees. Travel by students for the purpose of participating in athletic contests and activities of student organizations must be paid from funds supporting the particular organization or activity.

## Attendants

Payment of travel and subsistence expenses (motel and meal costs) for attendants for handicapped employees while traveling on official state business may be reimbursed to the same extent as are state employees if advance approval is obtained from the department head or his or her designee.

## Expert Witness Fees

Any person who is used by any state department, agency, commission, committee, licensing board, or council as an expert witness may be reimbursed by said group a fee agreed upon by both parties. All travel costs will be reimbursed the same as for state employees. The source of funds used for such expenditures should comply with G.S. 143-23(a2) (2), unless otherwise directed by the General Assembly.

## CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, WORKSHOPS, TRAINING SESSIONS AND RETREATS

### External Conference Definition

External conferences are those that involve the attendance of persons other than the employees of a single state department, institution or agency. Payment for meals is allowable if included in the registration fee, but such fee must not consist exclusively of meal or it will not be allowable unless meeting overnight travel criteria. The registration fee is typically made for defraying the cost of speakers, building (room) use, handout materials, breaks and lunches at conferences and conventions. These fees are charged to other services "Registration Fees." The agency may require itemizations and/or documentation of expenses. Conferences sponsored or co-sponsored by a state department are authorized when they meet the limitations and requirements listed below.

### Requirements and Limitations for External Conferences

The conference is planned in detail in advance, with a formal agenda or curriculum.

There is a written invitation to participants, setting forth the calendar of events, the social activities, if any, and the detailed schedule of costs.

**Assemblies should be held in state facilities;** however, non-state facilities can be rented and the cost charged to a state agency without allocation to participants' daily subsistence allowances.

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**DENR divisions must obtain the written approval of the Director of Budget Planning & Analysis before entering into any agreement with a non-state facility.**

Registration fees may be charged by the sponsoring department to participants for costs of external conferences.

**Any registration fees collected in excess of the actual cost of a conference are required to revert the General Fund. Therefore, a budget of estimated expenses must be prepared for all conferences planned by DENR divisions, and a registration fee to cover these estimated costs may be charged.**

**Registration fees may not include costs of entertainment, alcoholic beverages, setups, or flowers.**

Registration fees collected and not used to defray expenses of the particular conference may not be used for other programs and must revert to the general or highway fund as applicable (G.S. 138-6(a) (4)).

Sponsoring departments may provide refreshments for "coffee breaks" provided there are twenty or more participants and costs do not exceed four dollars and fifty cents (\$4.50) per participant per day.

When assemblies are to be held under the sponsorship of a state department in which the funding for all participants is budgeted, lump-sum payments to a conference center or an organization may be made upon written authorization from the department head or his or her designee. The authorization must provide the following:

- The purpose and duration of the conference.
- The number of persons expected to attend.
- The specific meals to be served at the conference (law prohibits lunches being provided to state employees unless registration fees are charged to all attendees).
- The approximate daily subsistence cost per person.
- The name of the conference center, hotel, caterer, or other organization providing the service.

It is the responsibility of the departments to ensure that reimbursement for meals included in the lump-sum payment is not also included in reimbursement payments made to state employees who are conference participants.

## Internal Conference Definition

Internal conferences are those that involve the attendance of employees within that particular department, institution or agency only. **No payment for meals is allowable unless overnight travel criteria are met. A routine staff meeting is not an internal conference.**

## Requirements and Limitations for Internal Conferences

- The conference is planned in detail in advance, with a formal agenda or curriculum.
- There is a written invitation to participants, setting forth the calendar of events and the detailed schedule of costs.

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- **No excess travel subsistence may be granted for internal departmental meetings, conferences, seminars, etc., and such meetings must be held in state facilities when available.** No registration fee may be charged.
- Sponsoring departments may provide refreshments for "coffee breaks" provided there are twenty or more participants and costs do not exceed four dollars and fifty cents (\$4.50) per participant per day.
- A department cannot use state funds to support or underwrite a meeting, assembly, conference, seminar, rally, celebration, or similar function by whatever name called that promotes any cause or purpose other than the mission and objective of the department.

## Training Session Definition

Employee training involves courses that develop an employee's knowledge, skill, and ability to perform the duties of his/her present job, such as, courses on computer usage or management skills development. These courses generally have a set fee, are of relatively short duration, and are not part of a curriculum the employee is participating in leading to an educational degree.

## Requirements and Limitations for Training Sessions

- Fees for training courses that provide training in specific areas are charged in the Accounting system to "Employee Training" under "Other Services."
- Departments sponsoring training sessions may provide refreshments for "coffee breaks" provided there are twenty or more participants and costs do not exceed four dollars and fifty cents (\$4.50) per participant per day.

## Management Retreat Definition

A management retreat is a meeting or series of meetings consisting of a department or division head and his or her top assistants and coworkers. Retreats are sometimes held at a site other than the usual workplace and ***are held no greater than once a year.***

## Requirements and Limitations for Management Retreats

State employees who are elected by a vote of the people or appointed by the governor, the president of The University of North Carolina, the chancellors of the constituent institutions of the university, the executive director of University of North Carolina Hospitals at Chapel Hill, chairman of the State Board of Education, and the president of the Community College System may authorize an annual management retreat.

**Expenditures are permissible in a manner as if it were an internal conference.**

## Predetermined Meals for Internal & External Conferences/Workshops/Training/Retreats

Expenditures for meals related to the above are allowable only if they are necessary to assure the efficiency of the meeting (such as a working lunch that reduces a two-day meeting to a one-day meeting, or a working lunch that allows more work to be done than if everyone left the meeting site for lunch). Division Directors are delegated authority to approve predetermined meals with the following restrictions:

- Lunches are only allowable for non-routine, special purpose meetings.
- Payments should be made via a direct invoice from the restaurant/caterer.
- A minimum of 12 attendees is required.

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➤ **No excess for meals is allowed.** Note that the allowable meal rates include all costs related to the meal (tax, tip, delivery charge, etc.)

## INFORMAL MEETINGS WITH GUESTS OF DEPARTMENT HEADS

### Informal Meeting Definition

An informal meeting is a meeting consisting of a department head and his or her designee and non-state employees during which official state business is discussed for the majority of the meeting. Informal meetings are one-time occurrences and are not held on a recurring or routine basis.

### Requirements and Limitations for informal meetings

State employees who are elected by a vote of the people or **appointed by the governor**, the president of The University of North Carolina, the chancellors of the constituent institutions of the university, the executive director of University of North Carolina Hospitals at Chapel Hill, chairman of the State Board of Education, and the president of the Community College System, **or their designee** when given prior written approval by the department head for a specific event, may be reimbursed from state funds for **actual costs of meals** for themselves and individuals who are not state employees who are their guests, when accompanying them in the course of conducting official state business.

➤ *Cost of meals and other expenses for family members of the above referenced state officials are not reimbursable.*

## TELEPHONE CALLS

### Long Distance

Employees are **not allowed** to charge long distance phone calls to the state for calls made of a **personal nature**, except as stated below. All long distance calls that are to be paid by the state are those made pursuant to the employee conducting official state business.

### Reimbursement

Official phone calls are reimbursable under "Miscellaneous." Individual calls over \$5.00 must be identified as to point of origin and destination.

### Allowable Personal Calls

An employee who is in travel status for **two or more consecutive nights in a week** is allowed **one** personal long distance telephone **call for each two nights** for which reimbursement to the employee may not exceed \$3.00 for each in-state call or \$5.00 for each out-of-state call. **Documentation is required for reimbursement.**

### Employee emergency calls

Employees may use the state network system, state credit card, or may be reimbursed for a personal long distance call(s) if such call(s) is/are of an emergency nature as determined by the department. An example is a call made when an employee calls home to inform someone that the travel period has been extended beyond original plans due to unforeseen reasons.

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## Repayment

Any Personal long-distance phone calls that are charged on a state invoice shall be repaid to the state within two weeks of notification. Failure to remit payment to the state may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

## Mobile Telephones

Because mobile telephone charges (cellular and digital) are based on measured use, **no personal calls should be made on mobile telephones except in case of emergency** as determined by the department. *Mobile telephone calls to conduct official state business should only be used when more economical means of telephoning are not reasonably available.*

If an employee uses his/her personal mobile telephone in conducting state business, the employee can be eligible for reimbursement. In order for the agency to reimburse the employee, the **employee must indicate on his/her telephone bill the reimbursable calls, individuals called and nature of calls and submit the telephone bill to their supervisor for approval.** If the supervisor approves the calls as state business related, the agency will reimburse the actual billed cost of the call.

When the department pays the bill, the employee will use the phone as determined by the department to be most efficient.

## Use of Telephone with Computer Hook-ups

Employees traveling on official state business needing to transmit data via their computers should use the most efficient manner available; including services available through the State's Information Technology Services (ITS) access.

## EXCEPTIONS

Any exception to the rules and regulations as herein stated in the State Budget Manual, except those expressly delegated, must be approved *in advance* by the Office of State Budget and Management.

## Definitions

### Employee's Duty Station

"Duty station" is defined as the headquarters or job location at which the employee spends the majority of his or her working hours [G.S. 138-6(a) (1)]. For an employee in travel status, the duty station should be the point where traveling begins the majority of the time (home or office). The designation of an employee's home as the duty station by a department head requires **prior approval** by the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) on an annual basis. (For additional information, see on Designation of Duty Station Report.)

DENR Division of Budget, Planning & Analysis will coordinate all requests for designation of an employee's home as the duty station with the Secretary and will file all reports required by OSBM.

Departments, institutions, and agencies must make one submission for the entire department, institution or agency by the second week in December of each preceding calendar year of all employees whose home is also their duty station.

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When hiring new employees or designating the home as the duty station of current employees during the calendar year, a revision to the annual report must be submitted to OSBM for its prior approval.

Employees assigned to regional offices or who are living in state-owned facilities should not be listed on the report.

## **External Conference**

External conferences are those that involve the attendance of persons other than the employees of a single state department, institution, or agency. Payment for meals is allowable if included in the registration fee, but fee must not consist exclusively of meal or it will not be allowable unless meeting overnight travel criteria.

## **Informal Meeting**

An informal meeting is a meeting consisting of a department head and his or her designee and non-state employees during which official state business is discussed for the majority of the meeting. Informal meetings are one-time occurrences and are not held on a recurring or routine basis.

## **Internal Conference**

Internal conferences are those that involve the attendance of employees within that particular department, institution, or agency only. No payment for meals is allowable unless overnight travel criteria are met. A routine staff meeting is not an internal conference.

## **Management Retreat**

A management retreat is a meeting or series of meetings consisting of a department or division head and his or her top assistants and coworkers. Retreats are sometimes held at a site other than the usual workplace and are held no greater than once a year.

## **Out-of-Country Travel**

Out-of-country travel status begins when the employee leaves the country and remains in effect until the employee returns to the country. If the employee and other qualified official travelers use hotel and meal facilities located outside North Carolina immediately prior to and upon returning from out-of-country travel but during the same travel period, out-of-state subsistence rates shall apply.

## **Out-of-State Travel**

Out-of-state travel status begins when the employee leaves the state and remains in effect until the employee returns to the state. However, in-state allowances and reimbursement rates apply when employees and other qualified official travelers use hotel and meal facilities located in North Carolina, but within the continental United States, immediately prior to and returning from out-of-state travel during the same travel period.

## **Per Diem Compensation**

Applicable only to members of state boards, commissions, committees and councils who do not receive any salary from state funds for their services.

## **Registration Fees**

The registration fee is typically made for defraying the cost of speakers, building (room) use, handout materials, breaks and lunches at conferences and conventions. These fees are charged to

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other services "Registration Fees." The agency may require itemization and/or documentation of expenses. An employee cannot be reimbursed for meals included in a registration fee.

## **Required Staff**

Required staff is a state employee who, in the regular course of his or her duties is expected to attend the meeting and any other state employee whose presence is necessary to accomplish a purpose of the meeting.

## **Subsistence (Meals and Lodging)**

Subsistence is an allowance related to lodging and meal costs, and gratuities thereon. General Statute 138-6 provides for allowances to be paid in amounts or rates specified.

For purposes of determining eligibility for allowances, travel status means being away from the employee's normal duty station. The duty station is defined as the location or near vicinity of the employee's work place. To be eligible for allowances in connection with travel, the employee must be acting in official capacity as required by his/her work activities.

## **Training Session**

Employee training involves courses that develop an employee's knowledge, skill, and ability to perform the duties of his/her present job, such as, courses on computer usage or management skills development. These courses generally have a set fee, are of relatively short duration, and are not part of a curriculum the employee is participating in leading to some educational degree.

## **Transportation**

Includes personal automobile, taxi, bus, train, airplane, motor pool charges, auto rental, tolls, and parking fees. All travel expenses must be incurred by and for state employees or other eligible travelers in conducting official state business in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

When travel by car is determined to be feasible, a state-owned vehicle, when available, should be used instead of a private vehicle. State departments must determine whether or not state-owned vehicles are considered to be available. State departments must periodically review employee duty stations (see paragraph below on "Duty Station") for the purposes of determining cost effectiveness of having a state vehicle permanently assigned to the geographical area (department/institutions duty station location or vicinity). If found to be cost-effective, state-owned vehicles should be requested for assignment on a permanent basis.

## **Travel Period**

Travel period is defined as the first day an employee enters travel status through the last day of travel status for each individual business trip. Travel reimbursement forms are due in the calendar month after which the travel ended – except at year-end when all travel reimbursements must be submitted by May 31.