



Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual

901 REIMBURSABLE BUSINESS RELATED EXPENSES

POLICY

Employees will be reimbursed for job-related expenses, subject to limitations set forth in Branch rules and applicable collective bargaining agreements.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Generally, the Judicial Branch will reimburse employees for reasonable business-related, out-of-pocket, expenses arising from:

- Travel authorized by the supervisor;
- Performance of duties significantly in excess of normal work hours;
- Attendance at meetings and educational programs; and
- Necessary use of equipment (e.g., photocopier, telephone) or services while away from office.
- Necessary minor expenses (e.g., books, mailing/shipping)

The determination of what is a reasonable business-related expense will be made by the applicable divisional Executive Director, in accordance with the principles set forth below.

For many Judicial Branch job classifications, travel is a necessary component of routine duties. Reimbursement requests for travel expenses must be submitted on the IN-STATE TRAVEL form (JD-ES-166). In-state expenses must be submitted on the IN-STATE EXPENSES form (JD-ES-167). All expenses must be approved by the employee's supervisor before submission to the Office of the Chief Court Administrator, Fiscal Administration Unit for payment. By signing the reimbursement request authorizing payment, the supervisor is certifying that to the best of the supervisor's knowledge the reimbursements claimed are appropriate because:

- The employee did travel or incur the miscellaneous expenses on Judicial Branch business on the days indicated on the claim form;
- The distances reported are accurate and were traveled in the employee's personal vehicle;

- The amounts claimed are accurate; and
- The travel or the miscellaneous expenses indicated were officially necessary and sanctioned by the supervisor.

When determining whether the travel is officially necessary, the supervisor should consider whether the purpose of the trip serves the needs and priorities of the Judicial Branch. The supervisor should also consider current fiscal conditions and whether the trip is the most efficient, economical and effective way of accomplishing the purpose.

Employees may travel by: state-owned or personally owned motor vehicle; by rail, bus, or other forms of public transportation in those instances where cost and convenience make it appropriate; and by regularly scheduled airline.

Reimbursement is paid for expenses incurred while traveling both in-state and out-of-state. Special rules exist for obtaining approval to travel in-state and out-of-state to attend conferences and seminars (Policy 405); to travel in-state and out-of-state and stay overnight; and to travel out-of-state in a motor vehicle leased from DAS State Fleet operations (Policy 806).

AUTOMOBILES

Supervisors should encourage the use of state-owned motor vehicles for state business, when available, by promoting the efficient use of Judicial Branch-owned vehicles assigned to the office, and by assisting employees in securing vehicles from the DAS State Fleet Operations, when necessary. When employees use their personal vehicles, reimbursement should be requested at the approved, prevailing rate for the actual number of miles traveled on state business. Supervisors should ensure that their employees use the most direct route possible and, in the event of unjustified excessive mileage claims, supervisors must adjust the amount of the reimbursement to reflect the standard distances between cities and towns. An alternative to actual mileage is to claim the mileage listed in the official mileage chart published by the State of Connecticut, Public Utilities Commission. In addition, tolls and parking expenses are reimbursable. Receipts for amounts should be provided at the time reimbursement is sought. Miscellaneous expenses such as tolls and parking, (submitted on IN-STATE EXPENSES form) must be approved by the employee's supervisor before submission to the Fiscal Administration Unit for payment.

The amount of reimbursement for mileage will be based upon the number of miles actually traveled (or the number of miles on the chart) from the employee's regular duty station to the location at which the Judicial business is to be conducted, back. In the event that an employee's work related duties require him/her to transact business at a location other than his/her regular duty station during an otherwise normal commute to or from work, only the cost associated with the additional number of miles incurred (total miles traveled minus normal commuting miles) will be reimbursed. Commuting expenses from the employee's residence to the employee's principal duty station are not reimbursable. Employees are expected to use the most direct route possible and, in the event of unjustified excessive mileage claims, Fiscal Administration and/or the employee's supervisor will adjust the amount of reimbursement to reflect the standard distances between cities and towns.

For employees subject to collective bargaining, mileage reimbursements are subject to the respective collective bargaining agreements.

In the case of out-of-state travel, the use of personally owned vehicles generally will be limited to those trips which do not exceed four hours of driving time in one direction. If approval is received from the applicable divisional Executive Director in advance to use a privately-owned motor vehicle for out-of-state travel exceeding four hours of driving time in one direction, the total amount to be reimbursed may not exceed what the total amount would have been if the employee had flown. Proof of the coach airfare amount should be obtained as of the date of approval for the trip. The amount reimbursed may include mileage, parking, tolls, and extra lodging subject to the limits described. Charges for road service, repairs, towage and other similar expenses may not be allowed.

The Judicial Branch will not reimburse an employee for the costs of fees or fines or any parking violations or motor vehicle infractions or violations.

Employees should submit requests of mileage reimbursements on a monthly basis. Mileage reimbursements that are submitted for six months or more in arrears may require additional documentation.

AIR TRAVEL/RAIL TRAVEL/BUS TRAVEL

Air travel should be arranged through a travel agency designated by the Office of the Chief Court Administrator, using the Judicial Branch's purchasing card account. Upon receipt of a written request accompanied by proper authorization for the out-of-state travel, Fiscal Administration will issue a travel authorization number and instructions to be used when contacting the travel agency to purchase airline tickets.

Alternatively, the employee may choose to prepay the airfare (coach only) and seek reimbursement through the normal reimbursement request process. The receipt should be submitted when seeking reimbursement with all other travel expenses related to each trip.

Reasonable ground transportation charges, such as bus, taxi, and limousine expenses when out-of-state overnight travel is involved, will be reimbursed.

MEAL ALLOWANCES

Meal allowances are reimbursable at the approved prevailing rates under the following circumstances:

- When the meal is taken after the employee has been required to work continuously for 2-1/2 hours beyond the normal end of the work schedule, or while the employee is engaged in a special business-related activity, approved by the applicable divisional Executive Director, beyond the normal work hours;
- When the employee is out-of-state on Judicial Branch business, including conferences and training; and
- When the employee remains overnight away from the individual's place of residence for the benefit of the Judicial Branch.

LODGING

The actual cost of overnight in-state lodging is reimbursable when it is determined that the overnight stay is required for operational reasons, or in the event that such travel would occasion extreme hardship for the employee engaged in Judicial Branch business as authorized by the applicable divisional Executive Director.

The Judicial Branch will pay the actual cost of accommodations at the site of an out-of-state conference, seminar, or other training session. In the event that accommodations are not available at the conference site, the Judicial Branch will reimburse the actual cost of accommodations acquired.

MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

The Judicial Branch will reimburse employees for certain expenses incurred as a result of their authorized activities. Among the items for which employees may seek reimbursement are:

- **Photocopying** - Will be reimbursed when a Judicial Branch copy machine is unavailable.
- **Car Rental** - The actual cost, or a portion of such expense, is reimbursable in those situations in which other ground transportation is necessary but unavailable. Advance approval, from the applicable divisional Executive Director, is required except in emergencies. Receipts are required.
- **Feeding an Individual in Custody** - When an employee would otherwise be entitled to a meal, reimbursement would be available for the cost of providing a meal for the employee and an individual in custody.
- **Telephone Calls** - Actual expense for any telephone call to the employee's office or other place of Judicial Branch business is reimbursable when the call is made exclusively for state business purposes and acknowledged by the employee as having been so made. This includes expenses that occur with laptop usage. Proper documentation must be made involving the number of such calls, the rate per call, and the persons to whom the calls were made.
- **Fees and Registration** - The cost for fees and registration is reimbursable, except that reimbursement is not allowed for activity fees for sightseeing trips or other personal activities.
- **Baggage Handling** - Actual cost, not to exceed \$5.00 per trip, for baggage handling is reimbursable.
- **Chambermaid Service** – Actual cost, not to exceed \$5.00 per day, for chambermaid service is reimbursable.
- **Taxis and Limousines** - Reimbursement is made for the actual cost of transportation in a taxi or limousine from the airport or railroad terminal to the hotel and back and for attendance at and return from business functions for which the out-of-state travel was authorized.

REIMBURSEMENT AND ALLOWANCE RATES

Employees have the obligation to acquire the most reasonable fares available. The following list sets forth the reimbursement rates for the major categories of expenditures. The rates set forth in the collective bargaining agreements may differ from those listed below. In the event of a conflict, the rates in the contract will prevail for employees in the appropriate bargaining unit. (These rates are subject to review and change by the Chief Court Administrator.)

Transportation

Privately Owned Automobile – Mileage rates are reimbursed in accordance with the Employee Reimbursement Rates.

This rate is in accordance with the October 16, 1997 vote of the Justices of the Supreme Court which states that the mileage reimbursement rate for travel expenses payable to family support magistrates and employees excluded from collective bargaining may be adjusted when the reimbursement rate approved by the Internal Revenue Service changes.

Railroad Fare - Actual fare amount with receipt.

Bus Fare - Actual fare amount with receipt.

Airline Fare (coach only) - Actual fare amount with receipt.

Ground Transportation - e.g. taxi, limousine - Actual amount with receipt.

Meal Allowance

Individual meal costs will be reimbursed in accordance with the Employee Reimbursement Rates. No receipts are required for individual meals.

Lodging

Actual amount for a single room at a conference site, or the actual amount of lodging for a single room located in close proximity to the place at which Judicial Branch business is to be transacted. Receipts are required.

Per Diem Subsistence

When overnight travel is involved for a period of 24 hours or more, the per diem rate including tax and gratuity should be used. Please refer to the Employees Reimbursement Rates. The per diem rate shall be reduced by the appropriate amount or amounts for any day on which the employee departs from home after the normal time for breakfast or lunch or returns home before lunch or dinner. No receipts are required for the per diem subsistence allowance. The per diem subsistence rate should also be reduced by the applicable amount for those meals included in the conference registration fees.

Notwithstanding the above limitation, the actual cost of a meal will be reimbursed if the employee's attendance at that meal is reasonably expected because, for example, there is a guest speaker or Judicial Branch business is being transacted during the meal period.

PROCEDURES

Supervisors should make sure that their employees understand the rules concerning expense reimbursement and the need to obtain prior approval for reimbursement of certain expenses before they incur such expenses

Cash advances for overnight out-of-state travel for conferences and seminars may be requested in writing for the employee by their Executive Director. This request should be sent to the Director of Fiscal Administration and should include a properly approved Authorization Request For Out of State Educational Programs (JD-ES 129 - Fiscal Administration) along with a copy of the program agenda (i.e. conference dates, registration deadlines, hotel accommodations, meals included in registration, etc.).

Every effort should be made to have the out-of-state travel form approved in advance so that the major expenses, such as airfare and registration are paid for through the normal payment process utilizing the State's authorized travel agent for airline tickets, and the purchasing card or the CO-17 process for registrations.

When the employee returns from the out-of-state trip, a completed Petty Cash Advance form must be submitted within five business days to Fiscal.

If the expenses exceed the amount of the cash advance, the difference will be included in the employee's payroll check.

If the cash advance exceeds the expenses, the difference will be subtracted from the employee's payroll check.

Questions on this policy:  Fiscal.JBAPPM@jud.ct.gov  (860) 706-5230