CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY
TRAVEL POLICY

PURPOSE

• The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Travel Policy includes the official procedures for Board members, employees, residents and other authorized individuals traveling on official CHA business.

• This policy applies to all CHA employees, Board members, residents and other authorized individuals, regardless of funding sources. “Employee,” hereinafter, when used alone, refers collectively to any CHA Board member, employee, consultant, contractor, resident and other authorized individual.

• This policy requires all employees to secure the most economical means of travel expenses considering time, cost, and work requirements.

• The policy will be strictly enforced. Exceptions may be made, on a case by case basis, in the event of emergency or extraordinary circumstances, or in the event that alternative travel and/or lodging arrangements are required to accommodate special needs or mobility limitations. Any deviations by the Employee from the policy must be justified in writing and approved by the CEO or the CEO designee.

• For the purpose of this policy, the Chicago Metropolitan Area is defined as Cook, DuPage, Will, Lake, Kane and McHenry counties.

TRAVEL POLICY

The rates for reimbursement of allowable travel expenses as set forth within this policy, with the exception of ground transportation rates to and from airports, shall be based upon the current rate guidelines set forth in the Federal Travel Regulations prescribed by the General Service Administration (GSA) for travel within the conterminous 48 United States, as amended from time to time. The allowable travel reimbursement rate for ground transportation to and from airports shall be reviewed from time to time and determined by OBM and approved by the CEO and/or the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The Travel Reimbursement Table can be found in the CHA Portal.

When an individual has occasion to travel on behalf of and for the benefit of the CHA, Employees are expected to exercise good judgment in managing travel costs and make every effort to ensure that the cost of travel arrangements are the most economical available.
It is CHA’s policy to authorize out-of-town travel only when necessary and:

- Not permit travel when the matter in question can be handled by mail or telephone; or if training is available within a 50-mile radius of the Chicago-land area.

- Limit attendance at meetings, conferences and training sessions to Employees for whom participation is essential;

- Use special reduced fares whenever provided by common carrier;

- Ensure that all travel by contractors and consultants is warranted, with costs held to a minimum; and

- Ensure, to the extent possible, that visits to more than one city are made in a series without interrupted return to the official work location or residence.

- CHA is not obligated to reimburse any Employee for travel expenses that were not previously approved by OBM.

This policy supersedes the Chicago Housing Authority Travel Guidelines effective as of September 1, 2011, approved by the Board of Commissioners September 20, 2011 by Resolution No. 2011-CHA-108, personnel statements (verbal or written) and past practices that pertain to travel, including internal memoranda and prescribed forms. It is expected that when Employees travel on behalf of CHA that they conduct themselves in accordance with the Chicago Housing Authority Employee handbook.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The CHA recognizes the following activities as appropriate travel purposes:

- Delivery of legislative testimony;
- Meeting with Federal and/or State Legislators;
- As a stipulation or condition of grant funding or otherwise required for State or Federal certification;
- Presentations on behalf of CHA at conferences or seminars;
- Financial and Operational audits;
- Site visits or operational evaluations related to asset management, development or program management efforts;
- Court Proceedings or case preparation; and
- Attendance at conferences, meetings, seminars, or training sessions where:
  - The topic is of critical interest to CHA;
  - Representation at the conference is in the interest of the CHA;
  - The topic is related to an Employee’s professional development.

Before planning out-of-town travel, every effort should be made to identify comparable local options for relevant training, conferences, or seminars.
TRAVEL APPROVAL PROCEDURE

- Completed original Travel Request Forms must be approved by the appropriate department director and Division Chief and submitted to the Office of Budget & Management.

- CHA is not obligated to reimburse Employees for travel expenses that were not previously approved by OBM.

- A CHA Out-of-Town Travel and Other Employee’s Business Expense Form (“Travel Expense Statement”) must be completely and clearly filled out with appropriate signatures and submitted with all original receipts attached within thirty (30) business days of return from trip in order to obtain reimbursement for travel expenses.

- When travelling outside the continental United States; travelers should convert all foreign expenses to U.S. currency prior to submitting the request for reimbursement. Official documentation of the exchange rate at the time of travel (e.g., bank receipt) must accompany all original receipts.

- All travel expenses by Board Members will be approved by a roll call vote at an open meeting as required by Local Government Travel Expense Control Act.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAVEL EXPENSE CONTROL ACT

Pursuant to this act, Employees must utilize the following table for compliance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Normal Limit (No reporting required)</th>
<th>CEO or Designee Approval and Reported to Board</th>
<th>CHA Board Approval Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lodging</td>
<td>GSA Rate</td>
<td>Greater than 100% to 200% of GSA rate</td>
<td>Greater than 200% of GSA rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>GSA Rate</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Greater than GSA rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Fare (Round Trip)</td>
<td>Economy/Coach</td>
<td>Non-Economy/Coach</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Car</td>
<td>Mid-Size car unless larger justified</td>
<td>Larger than Mid-Size car</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Transport</td>
<td>Equal or less than $100/day</td>
<td>Greater than $100/day</td>
<td>Greater than $150/day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exceptions to the above limits may be made, on a case by case basis, in the event of emergency or extraordinary circumstances, or in the event that alternative travel and/or lodging arrangements are required to accommodate special needs or
mobility limitations. Any deviations by the Employee from the policy must be justified in writing and approved by the CEO or the CEO designee.

**REIMBURSABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES**

**Business-Related Expenses**

Allowable Expenses

- Business-related expenses incurred, while on CHA business, may be reimbursed at the discretion of the department director. The following are examples of acceptable reimbursable business expenses (*Note: This list is not all inclusive)*:
  - Copying;
  - Express mail;
  - Business phone calls;
  - Internet connections for retrieving business related email;
  - Business use of personal cellular phone;

- Original receipts must be provided for reimbursement.

Unallowable Expenses

Non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Meals related to business meetings
- Additional charges for room upgrades or special "club" floors
- Alcoholic beverages
- Coat checks
- Entertainment expenses, including in-room movies
- Late check-out and guarantee charges
- Parking or other traffic tickets
- Personal services (e.g., barber, shoeshine, health club, massage)
- Spousal expenses
- Toiletries
- Travel accident insurance
- Laundry/dry cleaning expenses

Other expenses of a purely personal nature and not listed as reimbursable in this policy.

**Transportation**

- **Cars, CHA-owned (Pool Cars)**
  - Refer to the CHA Vehicle Policy for rules and regulations regarding the use of CHA-owned vehicles.

- **Cars, Personal**
  - Employees may utilize their personal vehicle for business trips within 200-mile radius of Chicago. When practical, two or more persons
should travel in the same vehicle when several individuals are traveling to the same location.

- Employees must carry personal automobile insurance coverage the state requires or $20,000/$40,000 bodily injury and $15,000 property damage liability on private automobiles, owned or leased by the Employee, if used in connection with CHA business. Employees are forbidden to use any privately owned or long-term leased automobile for firm business if the above minimum amounts of liability coverage are not in effect. Employees must submit copies of their valid driver’s license and insurance card to Risk Management within the CFO’s Office in order to be reimbursed for business mileage. Both documents must be effective during the period the reimbursement is being claimed by the Employee.

- Employees shall be reimbursed at the IRS business mileage rate per mile, but in no event shall the reimbursement exceed the cost of coach airfare.

- “Per mile” reimbursement includes the cost of insurance, gas, oil, and general maintenance.

- Parking and toll expenses will be reimbursed separately with original receipts. Acceptable forms of receipts include I-Pass statement or toll booth receipt.

- Employees are responsible for any and all fines incurred due to parking or moving violations issued while traveling. Absolutely no exceptions will be made.

- **Cars, Rental**
  - Car rental is a reimbursable expense only if approved in advance of travel and when there is no other transportation available, or the distance between lodging and/or meeting site(s) renders public transportation, taxi, or other mode of transportation impractical.

  - Only one (1) car rental will be allowed per trip unless otherwise justified.

  - The mid-size car rental rate will be reimbursed unless the need for a larger car can be justified. Daily rental rates, taxes, surcharges, and gas expenses are considered reimbursable items. Employees that have personal automobiles with insurance coverage should decline all additional insurances offered by the rental car agency. However, Employees that do not have personal automobiles with proper insurance coverage should elect to purchase insurance coverage from the rental car agency.
• Employees are responsible for any and all fines incurred as a result of parking or moving violations issued while traveling. Absolutely no exceptions will be made.

• If an Employee is involved in an accident and the vehicle is damaged, or if the vehicle is vandalized or stolen, the Employee must notify the rental agency and local police immediately. Failure to notify both the car rental company and the police may negate some or all of the insurance benefits covered in the CHA agreement. Employees should always request a copy of the police and accident report. Keep all reports and paperwork from the accident in addition to the original rental agreement. Risk Management should be notified as soon as possible regarding any auto accident that occurs on CHA business.

• Rental cars will not be approved for travel within the Chicago Metropolitan Area. CHA pool cars should be reserved for such travel (Refer to Pool Car reservation procedures).

• Original receipts are required.

• **Common Carrier Transportation (Air, Train, Bus)**

  • Employees are encouraged to take advantage of any available discount fares. All reservations and ticket purchases should be made as far in advance as possible. A ticket cannot be purchased until the Division Chief approves the travel documents.

  • First class travel is prohibited, unless required due to emergency or extraordinary circumstances, or to accommodate special needs or mobility limitations. The necessity for first class travel must be justified in writing and approved by the CEO or the CEO designee.

  • Any charges incurred as a result of changes to original airline reservations made prior to or during travel are subject to OBM approval.

  • The lowest priced airfare often requires a Saturday night stay. The CHA Travel Policy does not require or suggest that an Employee include a Saturday stay in their itinerary in order to take advantage of these lower fares. However, an Employee may choose to stay over a Saturday night if the difference between the airfares exceeds the costs of lodging and the per diem for each extra day added together.

    For example, if the difference between airfares is $500, and lodging and per diem for that Saturday and Sunday total $300, Employees have the option of the Saturday night stay.

  • The following applies when a traveler has opted for a Saturday night stay, but is not conducting CHA business on Saturday and Sunday:
    • Supporting documentation comparing airfares is
needed to approve Saturday night stay option.

- Costs of lodging and ground transportation to and from the airport/hotel are reimbursable expenses.

- Meals (per diem), are reimbursable at the then applicable GSA rate (See Travel Reimbursement Rate Table).

- **Ground Transportation**
  (Taxis, Uber, Lyft, Public Transport, Limousine Service)
  
  o Public Transportation is encouraged.
  
  o Employees are entitled to a ground transportation allowance. On the Travel Expense Statement provide ground transportation costs (if applicable) for:
    a) Transportation costs to and from the airport.
    b) Parking at Chicago Airports in the long-term parking lots.
    c) Additional transportation between out-of-town business locations.
    d) Taxis, Uber, Lyft and/or public transportation
  
  o Additional transportation costs beyond the daily allowance are reimbursable only if approved by the department director. Original receipts along with a justification for reimbursement must be provided.
  
  o The amount of reimbursement is equal to the actual fare and tolls.
  
  o Original receipts are required for reimbursement.

- **Lodging**
  
  o The cost of a standard hotel room is reimbursable up to the maximum daily rate based on the annual GSA published rate, exclusive of applicable taxes.
  
  o The maximum daily rate may be exceeded only if written justification is submitted with the completed Travel Request Form to the CEO or the CEO designee and approved prior to the trip.
  
  o Hotel lodging within the Chicago Metropolitan area is generally not a reimbursable expense, however, out-of-town contractors and consultants may be eligible for hotel lodging reimbursement.
  
  o All personal expenses must be paid for separately and deducted from the lodging bill before it is submitted for reimbursement.
  
  o Original, detailed receipts are required for all reimbursements.
• **Meals**
  
  o Employees are entitled to a per diem allowance, as outlined in the Travel Reimbursement Table, as reimbursement for all meals, inclusive of tax and tip. Receipts are not required. In the event that all meals are covered through the training/conference etc. Employee shall not be reimbursed for a meal per diem (Breakfast, lunch, and dinner).

  o If the Employee elects to submit meal receipt; Employee will be reimbursed based on the amount on the receipt less tip.

  o If travel is conducted within 50-miles of the Chicago Metropolitan Area, meals will not be reimbursable.

• **Telephone Calls**

  o Employees are allowed up to twenty (20) minutes of reimbursable personal phone calls per day while traveling on CHA business.

• **Additional Expenses**

  o Original receipts are required to claim reimbursement for incidental expenses not listed above.

  o Reimbursement for incidentals will be approved at the discretion of the department director.

• **Travel Expense Advances**

  o Travel advances are allowed and request forms must accompany the Travel Request Form. Approved travel advances will be made available to the traveler within five (5) business days prior to the start of the trip.

  Note: An Employee with an outstanding advance from previous travel will not be eligible for another advance until the outstanding one is settled.

• **Conference Registration Fees**

  o Every effort should be made to take advantage of early-bird and/or group registration discounts.

**EXPENSE STATEMENT DOCUMENTATION**

• Travel Expense Statements should be completed and submitted to Accounts Payable within thirty (30) business days of return of trip.

• All **original** receipts for expenditures claimed on the Travel Expense Statement must be attached to the form to be considered for
reimbursement. These receipts must include vendor name, address, date, description, amount, and form of payment.

- Miscellaneous or other business expense must be reported with a detail description of the nature of the expense.

- The Employee and department director must sign the Travel Expense Statement prior to submission to Accounts Payable. This signature will indicate that both individuals have reviewed the expense statement and agree that the expenses claimed on the statement are business related and within the guidelines of the CHA Travel Policy.

- Reimbursements of advances or expenses due to CHA must be remitted by cash or check to Accounts Payable within five (5) business days of return of trip. Office of the Comptroller reserves the right to take disciplinary actions including garnishment of the Employee’s wages, if payment due to CHA is not remitted within the specified number of days.