

# **NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

## **Policy Number 14 – Employee Travel and Reimbursement**

- I. **Purpose.** The purpose of this policy is to define the policy regarding employee reimbursement for meals, local and non-local travel.
- II. **Local Travel Expense Report.** Employees should request reimbursement monthly. Requests for reimbursement not made within 45 days of expense may not be fulfilled. Local travel reimbursement requests must include the travel date, destination, reason for travel, method of travel, mileage for personal automobile and cost. Mileage will be reimbursed at the published IRS Rate.
- III. **Non-Local Travel Expense Report.** Non-local travel must be approved in advance by the Executive Director. Costs associated with non-routine travel outside the Washington metropolitan region should be reported on the appropriate form to include the reason for travel, location, description of costs, and appropriate receipts. Receipts are required for airline, train, shuttles, hotels, restaurants, parking, tolls and miscellaneous items. Rental cars requested for non-local travel must be preapproved by the Chief Financial Officer. Reimbursement is not available for luxury cars. Airline travel shall be at the coach/business rates. Personal expenses should be designated on receipts.

Expense report should be submitted promptly after travel has been completed, but no later than a month thereafter. Approval is required by the employee supervisor and the Chief Financial Officer. Approved reports will be processed and forwarded to accounts payable.

- IV. **Permitted Travel Expenses.** Mileage to attend meetings outside of the NVTA office is permitted. Mileage is not allowed for travel between an employee's home and the NVTA office. Mileage from home to an appointment or from an appointment to home is not reimbursable unless the distance is substantially greater than the employee's normal commute.
  - A. Actual, reasonable, costs for food and lodging are allowed. The test of "reasonable" is general consistency with accepted Federal/State rates.
  - B. Travel shall be at coach rates. Any exception must be approved by the Executive Director in advance. Whenever it is available and advantageous to do so, employees should request the appropriate government rate for overnight lodging expenses.
  - C. The cost of meals should be consistent with Federal per diem rates. Customary gratuities are reimbursable at customary rates.
  - D. Personal care items and personal use items are not reimbursable.

- E. Entertainment such as in-flight movies or hotel movies is not reimbursable.
  - F. Alcohol is not reimbursable.
  - G. Snacks and comfort items (unless a substitute for a meal or other expense) are not reimbursable.
  - H. The Executive Director may reduce the submitted reimbursement request to the Federal per diem rate.
- V. **Meal Expenses.** Meals provided as part of a conference or travel package should be utilized.
- A. Local meal costs shall not be reimbursed unless:
    - Expenses are for a business meeting with one or more person(s) other than the NVT A staff, or
    - Meal is a part of travel to or from a meeting outside of normal business hours, or
    - Meal is part of a NVT A staff or Authority meeting that results in an inability to have normal meal and for which a meal has not been provided, excluding routine scheduled meetings.
- VI. **Mileage Reimbursement Rate.** Mileage reimbursements shall be consistent with the current IRS rate.
- VII. **Travel Advance.** Travel advances will be limited to the use of the office purchasing card for conference and ticket purchases. Employees who submit prompt expense reimbursement requests will typically have their reimbursement prior to their credit card invoice cycles.

Upon request by an employee, the Executive Director may authorize a travel advance on an infrequent basis for unique situations that are received in sufficient time to permit normal processing through accounts payable.

Upon completion of the trip, any excess funds must be returned, together with a completed non-local travel expense form, within 14 Days.

**Approved by the Finance Committee:** December 5, 2014

**Approved by Northern Virginia Transportation Authority:** December 11, 2014