

TRAVEL AND REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

(A) Authority for Travel.

(1) Pre-Approval. All non-routine out-of-county travel for official Summit County Educational Service Center business shall be approved in advance regardless of whether reimbursement will be requested. Such approval shall be obtained by completing the Summit County Educational Service Center's Travel Form. The purpose of the review of the Part I is to determine whether the travel is beneficial for the Summit County Educational Service Center and whether funds are available. Part I is not required to attend meetings on routine Summit County Educational Service Center business within the Summit County. All out-of-state travel must be pre-approved by the Superintendent and the Governing Board.

(2) Superintendent and Treasurer Travel. All non-routine out-of-county travel of the Superintendent and Treasurer must be pre-approved by the Governing Board President.

(3) Emergency Travel. The Superintendent may authorize travel, after it has taken place, if there are unusual and extenuating circumstances of an emergency provided that funds are available.

(4) Check Request. The Treasurer and employee(s) shall use best efforts to have a check prepared in advance of travel to pay the vendor (hotel, conference, restaurant etc.) directly.

(B) Reimbursement for Travel.

(1) Reimbursement. Upon proper submission of Part II of the Summit County Educational Service Center's Travel Form, the Summit County Educational Service Center shall pay the necessary and reasonable expenses incurred by employees while on authorized travel. The purpose of Part II is to provide verification of expenses paid by an employee that were previously approved on a Part I. Part II shall be completed within thirty (30) working days after returning from travel.

(2) Receipt Required. Any request for reimbursement shall be accompanied by original itemized receipts and shall be attached to Part II when submitted.

(3) Intent. Part II of the Summit County Educational Service Center's Travel Form shall not be divided so as to circumvent the intent and purpose of this section.

(4) "Cash Back Rewards" Programs. The Summit County Educational Service Center prohibits a "cash back reward" to an employee when an employee uses a personal credit card with a "cash back reward" program. The employee will be reimbursed for the cost of the travel items less the "cash back reward" portion.

(C) Air, Rail or Bus Travel.

(1) Lowest Available Fare. Travel by air, rail or bus shall be for the lowest available fare.

(2) “Frequent Flyer” Programs. The Summit County Educational Service Center prohibits the accumulation of “frequent flyer” miles by employees earned because of Summit County Educational Service Center travel which is paid for or reimbursed by the Summit County Educational Service Center or the Summit County Educational Service Center will require employees to use such miles earned for future official Summit County Educational Service Center travel. (See Ohio Ethics Commission Advisory Opinion No. 91-010.)

(D) Personal Vehicle.

(1) Mileage Reimbursement. Employees using a personal vehicle for travel may be reimbursed at the standard mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service, as amended. Such expenses are payable to only one (1) of the two (2) or more employees traveling in the same vehicle. The mileage rate stated herein shall be considered as the total reimbursement for all expenses incurred in the use of a personal vehicle except for parking fees, ferry charges, bridge and highway tolls.

(2) Mileage Calculation. Mileage reimbursement shall be calculated as actual mileage minus the employee’s daily commute to and from the employee’s place of work.

(3) Insurance. Employees operating a personal vehicle for work-related purposes shall be required to maintain insurance in accordance with Section 4509.01 of the Ohio Revised Code, as amended.

(4) Limitations on Mileage Reimbursement. The limit on private vehicle mileage distance one-way shall not exceed three hundred (300) miles except where special approval is obtained in advance from the Superintendent after presenting good cause that is consistent with a public purpose for the exception. Further, no reimbursement shall be granted to employees for travel from their homes to places of work or vice versa.

(E) Overnight Travel. If it is necessary for an employee to stay overnight while on Summit County Educational Service Center business, the employee shall be reimbursed for the actual cost of their lodging at the lowest rate available. If a spouse accompanies an employee, the Summit County Educational Service Center shall refund at the single rate only and such rate shall be submitted. If employees share a double, one (1) employee should submit a Part II for both and make the appropriate notation. It is expected that Summit County Educational Service Center employees will travel to a meeting or conference the first day of the meeting or conference and not incur unnecessary lodging expense for a hotel stay the night before a meeting or conference.

(F) Meals.

(1) Location of Meals. Reimbursement shall only be made for meals outside of Summit County except that meals inside Summit County shall be reimbursed if the price of the meal is included in a registration fee as an integral part of a conference, meeting or similar working assembly. The Governing Board President may approve reimbursement of meals inside Summit County on an exception basis.

(2) Rate of Reimbursement. Reimbursement shall not exceed the per diem rate for Columbus, Ohio permitted by the State of Ohio Office of Budget and Management, as amended.

(3) Timing of Meals. Breakfast is reimbursable if the employee departs before 6:00 a.m. Dinner is reimbursable if the employee returns after 7:00 p.m.

(4) Alcohol. No reimbursement for liquor costs shall be made.

(5) Registration Fee. If the price of meals is included in the conference or registration fees, no additional reimbursement for meals shall be made to the Superintendent, Treasurer or employee.

(G) Conference Fees.

(1) Reimbursement. Reimbursement shall be made for registration fees required for attendance at a conference, meeting or seminar. All such items are to be listed separately and individually on the expense report and supported by a receipt and/or cancelled check.

(H) Penalties. Failure to comply with any provision of this policy shall result in denial of the reimbursement requested. Abuse or fraudulent claims for travel and reimbursement shall result in discipline, up to and including, termination.