Sec. A17-6. Notice of Meetings

1. **Regular Meetings**

Each legislative body, except for advisory committees or standing committees, shall provide, by ordinance, resolution, bylaws, or by whatever other rule is required for the conduct of business by that body, the time and place for holding regular meetings. Meetings for which an agenda is posted at least **72-hours** in advance of the meeting shall be considered as regular meetings of the legislative body.

2. **Special Meetings**

A special meeting may be called at any time by the presiding officer of the legislative body or by a majority of the members of the legislative body, by delivering written notice to each member of the legislative body and to each local newspaper of general circulation and radio or television station requesting notice in writing and posting a notice on our Internet Website.

The notice shall be delivered personally or by any other means and shall be received at least **24-hours** before the time of the meeting as specified in the notice. The call and notice shall specify the time and place of the special meeting and the business to be transacted or discussed. No other business shall be considered at these meetings by the legislative body. The written notice may be dispensed with as to any member who at or prior to the time the meeting convenes files with the clerk or secretary of the legislative body a written waiver of notice. The written notice may also be dispensed with as to any member who is actually present at the meeting at the time it convenes. The call and notice shall be posted at least **24-hours** prior to the special meeting in a location that is freely accessible to members of the public.

3. **Emergency Meetings**

"Emergency situation" means both of the following: (1) An emergency, which shall be defined as a work stoppage, crippling activity, or other activity that severely impairs public health, safety, or both, as determined by a majority of the members of the legislative body. (2) A dire emergency, which shall be defined as a crippling disaster, mass destruction, terrorist act, or threatened terrorist activity that poses peril so immediate and significant that requiring a legislative body to provide **one-hour notice** before holding an emergency meeting under this section may endanger the public health, safety, or both, as determined by a majority of the members of the legislative body. In the case of an emergency situation involving matters upon which prompt action is necessary due to the disruption or threatened disruption of public facilities, a legislative body may hold an emergency
meeting **without** complying with either the 24-hour notice requirement or the 24-hour posting requirement of Section 54956 or both of the notice and posting requirements.

**Sec. A17-8. Conduct of Meetings**

(From Board Policy Manual – 3.5 Protocol and Time Limits on Public Presentations at Board Meetings (Adopted 6-13-95)

1. **Presentations by Members of the Public on Items Not on the Agenda**

Pursuant to the Brown Act, the Board of Supervisors regularly sets aside time during its regularly scheduled sessions when members of the public may address the Board on any matter that is not on the agenda for that day's meeting. The public is cautioned to note that the Board is legally prohibited from taking action on or engaging in a lengthy discussion of any matter that is not on the agenda except under rare circumstances. If Board action is requested, the matter can be placed on the next Board agenda. All matters that require a written response will be referred to Administration for a scheduled reply.

2. **Time Limit on Public Presentations for Items Not on the Agenda**

Persons who wish to address the Board on a matter that is not on the agenda shall limit their presentation to one minute.

3. **Public Comments on Items on the Regular Agenda**

Persons who wish to address the Board on a regularly scheduled item on the agenda shall complete and submit a form that is located on the speaker’s podium. Groups of speakers who wish to make a presentation on a particular item are asked to limit their presentation to a maximum of twenty minutes for each side of the issue. Individual speakers are requested to limit their comments to three minutes.

**Sec. A17-12. Disclosure of Public Records**

These are the procedures for coordinating and responding to requests to inspect or to copy non-exempt County records under the California Public Records Act (CPRA).

1. **California Public Records Act**

The CPRA gives the public the right to inspect and to obtain copies of public records. The CPRA declares that access to information concerning the conduct of the people’s business is a fundamental and necessary right of every person in this state. The CPRA strongly favors prompt disclosure of public records. Several types of records, however, are exempt from disclosure for privacy or public policy reasons.

The CPRA defines public records as “any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public agency’s business prepared, owned, used or retained by any state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics.” A “writing” is broadly defined
to include any means of recording on any form of communication. Accordingly, written
documents, maps, audio and video recordings, e-mails, and other computer data are public
records. While an agency has no duty to create a record that does not currently exist, the
agency is required to provide electronic data in a usable form. This duty may include
necessary computer programming work to extract or compile electronic data. In such
cases, the County may be able to recover the costs of the computer programming work
from the requestor.

The CPRA contains several enumerated exemptions from disclosure as well as a public
policy exemption that applies where there is no specific exemption but where the public
interest in not disclosing the record “clearly outweighs” the public interest in disclosing the
record. Examples of enumerated exemptions include certain records relating to pending
litigation; personnel, medical or similar files, where disclosure would constitute an
unwarranted invasion of privacy; privileged communications (such as attorney-client and
physician-patient communications); and taxpayer information.

Any doubt about whether a “writing” constitutes a public record that must be disclosed
under the CPRA should be addressed to the Office of the County Counsel.

A. Time Limits to Respond to a CPRA Request

Public records must be open to inspection at all times during the agency’s normal business
hours. Records that are readily accessible for inspection and copying or otherwise
readily produced within one or two business days of a request should be promptly
provided in accordance with County Counsel-approved departmental protocols (discussed
in Section 4.A). Responses to requests for other types of records must comply with the
following time limits. Within ten (10) days of receiving a request for copies, the agency
must notify the requestor whether there are any records responsive to the request, and, if so,
whether the records will be disclosed or withheld.1

This ten-day time period to respond whether responsive records are maintained by the
agency may be extended for up to fourteen (14) additional days in “unusual
circumstances.” Unusual circumstances are defined as requests involving a voluminous
amount of separate and distinct records, the need to search for records at other locations,
the need to compile or write programming to extract electronic data, or the need to consult
with other departments or agencies that have a substantial interest in the matter.

Once it is determined that responsive records are maintained by the County, the County
must promptly provide for inspection and/or copying of responsive records. A “prompt
response” to provide responsive records does not necessarily require immediate disclosure
of the records. Under the appropriate circumstances, taking into consideration factors such
as the volume of records requested, the need to redact information, the difficulty in copying
the records, limited resources, etc., the County can inform the requestor that the records
will be provided at a later date, so long as that later date is reasonable under the
circumstances.

B. Costs for Processing the Records Request

1 State law requires some records to be produced more quickly. For example, Form 700s must be made
available as soon as possible during the agency’s regular business hours, but in any event not later than the
second business day after the statement is received.
The County can only charge for direct copying costs. (Note: This does not apply to requests for documents or official records where a different fee is otherwise legally authorized.) With few exceptions, the County may not charge for staff time to locate records, review the records, or otherwise process the request. For copies made in-house by the department/agency, the County Executive’s Office establishes the copying costs that may be charged (currently $0.10/page). For voluminous records, the County may require the requestor to arrange and pay for a third-party copy service to make the copies.

2. **County-Designated Office for Coordinating Public Records Act Requests**

In 2011, the Board of Supervisors designated the Office of the County Counsel as the office responsible for receiving and coordinating the County’s responses to CPRA requests. However, individual departments/agencies that maintain the records requested continue to have primary responsibility for responding to CPRA requests. The Office of the County Counsel is simply responsible for receiving and coordinating the response. The process for obtaining public records is published on the County’s website. To streamline the receipt and processing of CPRA requests, individual departments/agencies are to forward non-routine CPRA requests to the Office of the County Counsel’s public records email address. This email address is for internal departmental use.

Departments/agencies will still receive CPRA requests directly. A department/agency must not turn away a CPRA request directed to it; the department/agency should follow the procedure discussed in Section 4 (below).

3. **Department/Agency Public Records Act Coordinators**

Each department/agency shall identify a designated Public Records Act Coordinator (and at least one back-up for absences) who is responsible for complying with the County’s CPRA Response Process. Larger departments/agencies with multiple divisions shall designate a Public Records Act Coordinator (and back-up) at each appropriate division level. Each department/agency must ensure that all staff are aware of the identity of the department/agency’s Public Records Act Coordinators.

The Office of the County Counsel maintains a list of the department/agency Public Records Act Coordinators, and updates it throughout the year. Departments/Agencies must notify the County Counsel’s Confidential Secretary whenever the department/agency’s primary or back-up Public Records Act Coordinator(s) changes.

4. **Submit Copy of CPRA Request with Evidence of Date Received to the Office of the County Counsel**

A. Requests for Documents and Copies of Official Records Routinely Provided as Part of the Departments/Agency’s Business Not Included in this CPRA Response Process

Many departments/agencies’ functions include processes in which individuals can inspect and order or otherwise request copies of documents or official records. A few examples

---

2 As each page is $0.10/page, a double-sided copy is $0.20.
include requests to the Clerk-Recorder’s Office for birth, death, marriage, or divorce
records, or routine document requests to the Clerk of the Board’s Office or the Department
of Planning and Development. To streamline these routine requests and ensure that there is
no undue delay in providing records to the public, the department/agency should work with
its assigned deputy county counsel to develop a standard protocol for responding to these
types of requests. The protocol should identify the types of records that are subject to the
protocol and the procedures for handling requests to review and obtain copies of those
records. If there is a County Counsel-approved departmental protocol, then requests for
documents and copies of official records that are covered by the protocol are not included
in the CPRA Response Process discussed herein.

B. Dedicated Email Address

Upon receipt of a CPRA request, the receiving department/agency will immediately (on the
same business day) submit via email a copy of the complete written CPRA request,
including evidence of the date received, to the Office of the County Counsel’s public
records email address. This can be accomplished by forwarding a full email request
received or scanning a paper request with a date stamp on the document and the mailing
envelope in which it was received, if applicable. If the records request was made orally
(e.g., by telephone), the department/agency will need to convert the request to written form
for emailing as explained under Section 4.C. below.

The Office of the County Counsel will log the CPRA request and track it for response. A
deputy county counsel will be assigned to coordinate the CPRA response with the affected
department(s)/agency(ies).

C. Oral CPRA Requests / County of Santa Clara Public Records Request Form

A request for public records may be made orally or in writing. When an oral request is
received, the department/agency shall ask the requestor to complete the “County of Santa
Clara Public Records Request Form” (Request Form) or otherwise put his/her request in
writing. Confirming the request in writing will assist in eliminating any confusion
regarding the details of the public records request.

However, the requestor is not required to put the request in writing, and a request for public
records cannot be denied because it is made orally. If the requestor is unable or not willing
to put the public records request in writing, the department/agency shall complete the
Request Form for the requestor to document the public records request for the County’s
records.

The Request Form does not apply to routine requests for documents and copies of official
records that are covered by a County Counsel-approved departmental protocol, as
discussed in Section 4.A. (above). The Request Form applies to oral requests for records
that are not covered by a County Counsel-approved departmental protocol.

In some cases, an oral request may include both (1) documents provided by a department
on a routine basis and covered under a County Counsel-approved departmental protocol
and (2) records not covered under such a protocol. When this happens, the
department/agency may provide the routine documents covered under a protocol
immediately upon request, and will need to forward the remainder of the oral request to the
Office of the County Counsel pursuant to this CPRA Response Process. If the department/agency provided any responsive records immediately upon request, the department/agency shall indicate this in the email with the copy of the Request Form to County Counsel’s public records email address.

5. **Office of the County Counsel Will Coordinate Department/Agency CPRA Response**

Typically, the deputy county counsel assigned to the department/agency will work with the department/agency to respond to the CPRA request. In cases where the CPRA request involves other related potential or pending matters already being overseen by the Office of the County Counsel (e.g., pending litigation, matters involving multiple departments), another deputy county counsel may work with the department/agency directly.

The Office of the County Counsel will coordinate the department/agency response. This will include:

1. determining if multiple departments/agencies need to be consulted to respond to the CPRA request;
2. determining if the response should come directly from a department/agency or through the Office of the County Counsel; and
3. if the response is to come from a department/agency, whether the responsive records need to be reviewed by the Office of the County Counsel in advance of their release.

The coordinating deputy county counsel will consult with the County department(s)/agency(ies) to determine what records the department(s)/agency(ies) has that fall within the scope of the request. As necessary, the coordinating deputy(ies) will review the responsive records and determine whether any exemptions from disclosure apply, and whether any records with exempt material may be redacted such that the record can be released while still protecting the exempt material.

6. **Submit a Copy of CPRA Extension and Response Letters to Office of the County Counsel**

If an extension to respond was sent to the requestor, a pdf copy of the signed extension letter that was sent to the requestor must be provided the same day via email to County Counsel’s public records email address. If the extension was sent via email, the sent email should be forwarded to County Counsel’s public records email address. For CPRA requests made orally, see Section 4.C. above.

Within 10 days (or 14 additional days if an extension was requested), a pdf copy of the signed response letter (or copy of a response email) that was sent to the requestor must be provided the same day via email to County Counsel’s public records email address. Copies of any responsive records, if any, should **not** be included in the email to County Counsel’s public records email address.
7. **Responsive Records**

The Office of the County Counsel will determine if there is a need to have a full copy of the responsive records (in addition to the response letter) sent to County Counsel. This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis.

The responding department/agency must keep a copy of the CPRA response and all responsive records for three (3) years unless an alternative method of documenting what records were produced is approved by County Counsel.

---

**Sec. A17-13. Acceptance of Gifts**

1. **General Principle for Gifts Under $10,000**

The head of a department or agency and individual members of the Board of Supervisors may accept on behalf of the County personal property gifts, including cash, **valued at less than $10,000.00 from a single donor**, connected with or incidental to his or her office, whenever he or she deems such gifts and the terms and conditions thereof to be in the best interests of the County; provided, however, that the head of a department or agency receiving any gift shall make an accounting of all gifts so accepted to the Director of Finance and the Board of Supervisors at the first meeting in December and first meeting in June each year.

2. **Gifts Above $10,000**

All other gifts, devises, bequests and trusts, except as described above, may be received by each board, commission, department and agency only after formal acceptance and approval by the Board of Supervisors as trustee for the County.

Title to all such gifts, devises, bequests and trusts shall be taken in the name of the County of Santa Clara and shall vest in said County, and it shall be the duty of any such trustee to pay the proceeds to the Treasurer of the County when the same shall be allowed by the terms of the transfer to the trustee. Upon acceptance of any gift, devise, bequest or trust by the Board of Supervisors, the Director of Finance shall be notified of such acceptance and shall make the necessary entries on the respective accounts and property records to insure that the property which is the subject of such gift, devise, bequest or trust will be charged to the account of the proper County officer. The County Counsel shall act as attorney for the trustee solely for the purpose of effectuating any such gift, devise, bequest or trust.

3. **Gifts Shall Not be Tied to Performance of a Specific Act as Part of Official Duties**

No County officer or employee shall accept any gift, reward, devise or bequest for the performance of a specific act, which act is a part of said officer's or employee's official duties and responsibilities.
## Subject Title

County Travel Policy – Quick Reference Guide

### SCOPE OF THIS

Policies, Guidelines and Affected Parties

### PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

- Purpose
- Objectives
- Guiding Principles
- Occasions for Travel
- Non-occasions for Travel
- Possible Conflict with Labor Agreements or Laws
- Geographical Categories
- Advance Fund Request and Claims Submission
- Prudent Judgment and Common Sense

### RESPONSIBILITY AND

- Traveler
- Dept. Head, Agency/Dept. Head, Board Appointee, Elected Official
- Department Travel
- Controller-Treasurer
- Who To Call on Travel Policy Issues

### TRAVEL

- Obtaining Travel
- Advance Written Request

### LEVELS OF

- Board of Supervisors, as a
- President of the Board of
- Vice-President of the Board of Supervisors
Members of the Board of Supervisors and Other Elected Officials
Board Appointees
County Executive
Sheriff/District Attorney
Agency/Department Heads
Department Heads
Final Approval
Review by Chief Operating Officer
Exception Principles
Requests for Exception
Approval of Exception

GENERAL
Resource Materials and
Travel Options – Minimize
Illness
Overtime
Extended Travel for Business
Extended Travel for Personal
Spouses and Guests

TRAVEL PLANNING AND ARRANGEMENTS
Consider All
Minimizing Time Spent
Booking
Ticket
Cancellations

ADVANCES AND USE OF P-
Travel
Use of P-
Settling Advances

TRAVEL
County
Optional Rental Car
Personal Car
American Express Insurance Through V-Cal or Y-Cal
TRANSPORTATION
General Guidelines

TRANSPORTATION – AIR TRAVEL
Y-Cal Airfare Program
V-Cal Airfare Program
State Contracted Internet (Variable) Fare
Airline Fees
Area Airports
Airline Class of Service
Low Airfare Alternatives
Saturday Night Stayover
Airline Frequent Flyer Programs
Companion Airfare
Denied Boarding Compensation
Overnight Delays
Cancellations/Unused Tickets
Lost or Stolen Airline Tickets

TRANSPORTATION BY CAR – GENERAL GUIDELINES
Driver’s
Emergency
Accidents

TRANSPORTATION – CAR
Car Rental
Preferred Car Rental
Promotional Rates and
Class of
Rental Car
Returning Rental
Car Rental Expense Claim

TRANSPORTATION – PERSONAL
Personal Car
Allowable Mileage Reimbursement for
Mileage/Reimbursement
Airfare Equivalent (AFE)
Personal Car
Multiple Passengers
TRANSPORTATION – COUNTY CAR

TRANSPORTATION – OTHER GROUND TRANSPORT

Non-Air
Ground Transportation at the Travel
Taxi Service

LODGING
Lodging
Lodging Reimbursement Rate
Making Hotel
Arrival/Departure
Late
Additional Room Charges and Late Checkout Charges
Sharing a
Hotel Cancellation Procedures

MEALS
Travel Meals
Meal Reimbursement
Meal Reimbursement Rates
Two or More County Travelers Dining Together
Partial Travel Day Meal Claims
Meals Provided as Part of the Program
Alcoholic Beverages
Meals at Protocol Events
Meals Purchased with P-Card
Meals for Clients or Minor in Escort

MISSING RECEIPTS

INCIDENTAL AND OTHER REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES
Non-Reimbursable Expenses

PAYMENT
General
County Direct Payment to
County Procurement Card
American Express Business Travel Account
County Gas Credit
Direct Payment by Traveler,
Mileage Reimbursement Through
Use of Petty Cash
Subject Title

INTERNATIONAL
Travel Notices, Emergencies and Other Information
Foreign Currency

LONG TERM TRAVEL

RELOCATION (NOT TRAVEL)

EXPENSE REPORTING AND REIMBURSEMENT
General
Documentation
Reimbursement from Outside
Out-of-County
Out-of-State Transport of
Settling Expenses for
Unused
Delinquent Advance
Reimbursement of Expenses

TRAVEL RELATED TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TUITION
General
Travel Related To SCVMC P41 Physician Licensure and Certification Fund for Professional Growth and
Travel
Travel Expense Reporting

APPENDICES
A. Ordinance Code on Travel Division A-31
B. Travel Approval Levels and Requirements
C. Flow Chart for Written Pre-Approval Requirements
D. County Certificate of Coverage/Evidence of Financial Responsibility
E. Tipping Allowances
F. Travel Forms and/or Instructions
   F-1 Travel Authorization
   F-2 Trip Expense Voucher
   F-3 Reimbursement on Extended Travel for Saturday Night Stayover
   F-4 Travel Exceptions
   F-5 Exemption Certificate for Government Agencies (TOT Waiver) F-6
   Employee Auto Mileage
   F-7 Attendance Certification Form
   F-8 Santa Clara County Vehicle Accident/Incident Report; What To Do In Case of an Accident (Check List)
County Travel Policy – Quick Reference Guide

Introduction

This is a quick reference guide to travel policies and procedures contained in the County’s Travel Policy Desk Reference Manual. It is NOT meant to provide comprehensive information. For further information, please refer to the following Santa Clara County documents:

- Travel Policy Desk Reference Manual
- County Comprehensive Vehicle Policy (BOS Policy Manual Section 3.52)

Guiding Principles

County travel should be for business and training purposes that benefit the County. All expenses incurred while on County business should be reasonable and prudent use of public funds. Travelers shall choose the most efficient, direct and economical travel options required by the occasion.

Travel Authorization

When traveling out-of-state or internationally, a travel authorization form must be completed and approved prior to the trip. When traveling in-state, this form is only required when lodging or airfare is to be reimbursed, a pool vehicle is needed, or when advance is requested.

Refer to Appendix B of the Travel Policy listing the travel approval levels for in-state, out-of-state, and international/Hi/AL travel for each type of traveler.

Travel Advance

Travel advances cannot exceed estimated travel costs to be paid by the traveler. The minimum advance is $50.00 (with exception for transport of prisoners out-of-state).

Employees with a P-card or who have an outstanding advance balance are not eligible for a travel advance.

Reimbursable Travel Costs

Reimbursable travel costs are limited to those that are actual and necessary.

When arranging for travel, travelers shall consider any special rates, promotions, etc., that would reduce County cost.

Transportation Costs

Air travel reservations are made through a County-approved travel agency. Contact your Departmental Travel Coordinator for travel arrangement assistance.

Travelers who use a private auto for traveling on County business will be reimbursed for personal car mileage which exceeds the normal home-to-work mileage. Members of the Board of Supervisors and persons in management positions who receive a vehicle allowance shall not be eligible to claim mileage reimbursement for any miles traveled within Santa Clara County.

The County P-Card and County gas card are not to be used for personal car mileage expenses.

When traveling to a destination with scheduled airline service, the mileage payment may not exceed the equivalent coach class airfare plus avoided mileage to/from airport and local airport parking costs (at San Jose International Airport long term parking rates). Refer to County Comprehensive Vehicle Policy for time limit on mileage reimbursement request.

When ground transportation is required, the most economical and appropriate form of available transportation which meets the traveler's needs should be selected. Rental car should use State rental car contract with low base rate, and written justification should be provided on the Travel Authorization Form when it is submitted for approval.

Car rental reimbursement claims must include the original car rental receipt showing the date(s), number of days and type of vehicle rented and mileage. A credit card receipt alone is insufficient.

Travel Insurance

The County provides an insurance program for employees that includes liability, workers’ compensation and automobile coverage for County owned and rented vehicles to County employees on County business. Travelers using personal cars for County travel must carry adequate insurance coverage for personal protection as well as for the protection of any driver/passenger. Refer to County Comprehensive Vehicle Policy for more information.

Lodging Costs

Lodging expenses will be reimbursed at the actual expenses up to the federal per diem rate plus hotel tax.

A valid, itemized receipt must accompany the lodging reimbursement claim.

Meal Costs

Travelers will be reimbursed for actual meal expenses, including tax and tips (tipping allowances can be found in Appendix E to Travel Policy), not to exceed the federal meal per diem rate. Where a Trip Expense Voucher is not completed, the Non-Travel Business Meal Policy shall be followed.
Federal Per Diem Rate

For Travel within the Continental US, use rate listed on http://www.gsa.gov/
* Includes 48 contiguous States and District of Columbia high cost locations
* Applies to short term travel (20 days or fewer)
* Use County Code (www.naco.org) search when the city is not listed and to identify if the city is in a high cost county
* If neither city nor county is listed, use CONUS standard lodging/meal rate

Incidental and Other Reimbursable Expenses

Reasonable and necessary costs for other travel expenses will be reimbursed when supported by itemized receipts (if more than $10) or other appropriate documentation.

Incidental expenses incurred for fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, hotel staff, and staff on ships will be reimbursed up to GSA limit (currently at $5 per day)

Other Costs

Miscellaneous expenses must be itemized, and receipts must be provided for each single item of expense in excess of $10.00

Occasionally petty cash is used to reimburse single small expenses, and in this case, a receipt is always required.

Non-reimbursable Expenses include:
* Car rental insurance & Fuel Service Option
* Tips exceeding County allowances
* Refreshments, snacks, alcoholic beverages
* Personal travel expenses
* Medicinal remedies, health supplies, cosmetics
* Personal entertainment, e.g. in-room movies
* Childcare fees; kennel/boarding fees
* Short term airport parking exceeding long term rate
* Incident expenses that are to be of a personal nature, extravagant, or might be considered to be unreasonable or unnecessary

Final Accounting for Trip

Within 14 calendar days of return from a County business trip, a final accounting of all expenses must be completed on a Trip Expense Voucher and submitted to the traveler’s department. This must be approved and provided to the Controller-Treasurer within 21 days after the end of the trip. Any over-payments arising from the excess of travel advances over actual cost must be repaid to the County at the time the financial accounting is submitted. When an advance is not settled by 90 days from date of return, the County is authorized to deduct the entire amount of the advance from the employee’s wages.

For travelers who paid upfront cost for their business travel, they must send approved Trip Expense Voucher within 60 days from the travel ending date to qualify for reimbursement.

Refer to “Documentation Requirements” section of the Travel Policy.

When filing both P-Card and the Trip Expense Voucher, the original receipts and other supporting documentation go with the P-Card report; copies are to be submitted with the Trip Expense Voucher.

Travel Exceptions Form

Exceptions to specific provisions of County travel policy may be authorized by the Finance Agency Director on a case-by-case basis, and only when there is adequate written justification and documentation and the travel is within the intent of the overall travel policy. The traveler shall complete a Travel Exceptions Form.

Allowable exceptions are confined to the following conditions:
* To serve the business interest of the County
* To avoid a severe hardship or inconvenience
* To observe an established or expected protocol at a specified event
* To respond to an emergency situation

Examples of when the Travel Exceptions Form is required include, but are not limited to:
* Attendance of more than policy-specified number of employees from same budget unit to seminar/workshop.
* Lodging costs within eight Bay Area counties.
* Exception to meal rate limits (e.g., when there is not a price choice, traveler has no control over location selected, etc.).
* Alternate meal plan from the meal provided as part of a program.
* Receipt, when required, does not provide detail for meal expenses.
* Special circumstances that require rental cars from companies other than those the State contracts.
* Unanticipated rental car is required.
* Unusual high mileage usage results in higher rental car fees.
* Upgrade of rental car due to special circumstances (medical needs, drivers with disabilities, etc.) when upgrade is not pre-authorized.
SCOPE OF THIS MANUAL

Policies, Guidelines And Procedures:
This desk reference manual regarding County travel provides policies and guidelines and establishes procedures for employees and others incurring authorized business travel expenses on the County’s behalf.

Affected Parties:
The policies, guidelines and procedures contained herein apply to all employees and officers of Santa Clara County whether appointed or elected, members of boards, commissions, committees and task forces advisory to the Board of Supervisors, County volunteers, as well as non-employees traveling on County business. Contractors and professional consultants are also subject to these policies and guidelines. County service agreements and contracts shall be written to comply with these policies when terms include travel provisions for contractors and professional consultants whose travel expenses are paid by the County. This also applies to contracts under federal, state, private or other grants unless the grantor specifically authorizes in writing that a different policy shall apply. Agencies or departments may adopt more restrictive procedures, if desired. If there are special circumstances that the travel allowance to contractors or consultants are to be paid more than the county policies prescribed, these exceptions are required to specifically seek the Board’s approval.

For the remainder of this document, County business travelers will be referred to as “travelers” or “employees,” unless otherwise noted.

PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

Purpose:
The Santa Clara County Ordinance, Division A-31 authorizes travel for business purposes, on the County’s behalf. The ordinance allows advances and reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred by County employees and others for business travel and related expenses. This version of the Travel Policy also incorporates reimbursement for travel by County physicians and podiatrists (P41s) associated with the Physician Licensure and Certification Fund in one comprehensive section. The ordinance also states that specific policies, procedures and guidelines are provided in this Santa Clara County Travel Desk Reference Manual. The County Ordinance on travel can be found in Appendix A.

Objectives:
The objectives of the County’s travel policy and procedures documents are as follows:
- To support travel costs incurred on behalf of the County for the purpose of conducting County business
- To establish uniform criteria and approval authority for advances and reimbursement of travel expenses for County business travelers
- To ensure all County business travelers have a clear and consistent understanding of policies and procedures for business travel
To provide County business travelers with a reasonable level of service and comfort at reasonable cost
To avoid the improper use of County funds for travel that does not benefit the County

Guiding Principles:
Travel on behalf of the County will be approved when the purpose results in a benefit to the County.

All expenses incurred while traveling on County business should be a reasonable and prudent use of public funds. Cost will be taken into account when weighing the importance and benefits of the business purpose for travel. Travelers should choose the most efficient, direct and economical travel options required for the occasion and any individual who chooses a different route, without adequate justification, must assume any additional expense incurred. If for traveler’s personal convenience, there is interruption or deviation from the direct route, the travel cost cannot exceed that which would have been incurred on uninterrupted travel.

Travel is authorized for the minimum number of persons necessary to carry out the business purpose of the travel, and only for those whose job tasks are directly related to the purpose of the travel. No more than three employees from the same budget unit (five employees from the two budget units that have over 2,000 employee counts – Social Service Agency (BU 501) and Valley Medical Center (BU 921)) should be allowed to attend the same seminar or workshop, unless individual attendance is required for certification purposes. Attending employees can give a presentation or report to other employees after returning from the workshop or seminar. If there are specific reasons that the department head approves attendance of more than three (or five for SSA or VMC) employees from the same budget unit for a seminar or workshop which is not for certification purposes, the additional costs and the justification notes will be documented on the Travel Exceptions Form and the additional costs will be reported to the Finance and Government Operations Committee annually.

Occasions for Travel:
Examples include the following types of occasions when the County traveler is required to travel out of the general region to:
- Attend a convention, seminar, meeting, school, or training
- Make professional presentations as a County employee or official
- Interview persons; inspect programs, facilities or institutions; conduct surveys; exchange professional information
- Work at a project location sufficiently distant from the main or regular place of work to require overnight lodging
- Work long hours away from the main or regular place of work where daily travel is impractical
- Transport equipment to and from distant points for repair or maintenance
- Transport prisoners and/or clients; attend legal proceedings or hearings
- Participate in formal activities, including hosting of persons who, for protocol reasons, merit appropriate courtesies and hospitality
Non-occasions for Travel:
Membership in an organization is not of itself a basis for travel authorization, and in no circumstance shall employees be authorized to travel as a reward for meritorious service, performance, or employee recognition, unless the purpose is to receive an award of formal recognition bestowed by a recognized outside organization for work performed for the County.

Possible Conflict with Labor Agreements or Laws
These policies apply to all travelers on County business unless they are in conflict with specific provisions of existing labor agreements or with specific provisions of state or federal law. In such cases, the provisions of those agreements or laws shall prevail for the employees covered under those agreements or laws.

Geographical Categories:
Santa Clara County travel policies cover three geographical categories:

- In-State
- Out-of-State (within contiguous 48 states)
- International and Travel to Non-Continental US territory

Advance Fund Request and Claims Submission:
A County traveler may submit a request for advance funds to cover anticipated out-of-pocket travel expenses whenever the expenses are incurred as part of official duties and the traveler does not have a P-Card. He or she may also submit a claim for reasonable, actual and necessary incurred expenses related to such authorized travel.

Prudent Judgment and Common Sense:
While this manual tries to provide specific guidelines for most circumstances that might be encountered while traveling on County business, it cannot anticipate all possible circumstances. When such circumstances occur, travelers must use prudent fiscal judgment and common sense in the expenditure of public funds.

RESPONSIBILITY AND ENFORCEMENT

Traveler:
Anyone who travels on County business, or supervises someone who travels, is responsible for knowing the general intent of the travel policy. The traveler is responsible for complying with the County’s travel policies and exercising reasonable and prudent judgment related to County business travel. The traveler is also responsible for obtaining proper authorization and preparing and submitting expense reports on a timely basis along with appropriate receipts.

Dept. Head, Agency/Dept. Head, Board Appointee, Elected Official:
Note: Agency/Department Heads report directly to the County Executive. Department Heads report to Agency Heads.

The Department Heads, as well as Board Appointees and Elected Officials are responsible for travel requests and expenditures of their corresponding departments, and for exercising due
diligence to ensure that authorized travel is necessary and appropriate for the conduct of County business, that the cost is reasonable and justified by the trip’s purpose, and that the travel expenditures are within budgetary limits. They are also responsible for assuring that expense reports are accurately reviewed for compliance and for review and recommendation regarding exceptions. The policies, guidelines and procedures mentioned below do not preclude more restrictive internal approval procedures which the agency or department head may choose to implement internally to better monitor and control the budget.

While this policy places the primary responsibility for departmental travel oversight on the department head level in the overall County organization, respective immediate supervisors/managers, including the County Executive (or designee) and Agency/Department Heads may impose any additional approval levels or processes that they require for respective individuals and/or organization(s) under their purview.

**Department Travel Coordinator:**
The Department Travel Coordinator is considered to be the “resident expert” and is the primary contact point for travel-related matters. He/she provides information, instruction and training to department staff. As the department resource for travel arrangements, forms and materials, the Coordinator receives training, updates and changes to travel policies and procedures from the Controller-Treasurer Department and is responsible for notifying his/her departmental personnel. The Coordinator is a contact point for obtaining electronic forms. He/she is also responsible for providing travel assistance in several ways, including assistance with documentation, e.g., additional justifications, and consultation and/or troubleshooting regarding claims issues, e.g., discrepancies, need for clarification or additional paperwork; maintenance of central travel control log; and AMEX Business Travel Account (BTA) reconciliation. In cases where charges are inconsistent with general policy guidelines but are justifiable, or when there are travel costs that may otherwise be questioned, the Coordinator assists in ensuring that the business purpose of travel costs is clearly stated. Department Coordinator’s responsibilities include screening and reviewing travel plans; making, coordinating and expediting travel arrangements; and/or helping travelers who have difficulties during travel. All travel shall be coordinated through a designated coordinator in each department/agency.

**Controller-Treasurer:**
The Controller-Treasurer has final approval authority as to the appropriateness and reasonableness of reimbursement requests other than exceptions described below and works with the County Executive, Agency/Department Heads to maintain Countywide common and consistent travel practices as governed by these policies and guidelines.

The Controller-Treasurer has lead responsibility in the regular review of travel policies and procedures and the development of amendments, as needed. See also Resource Materials and Forms section.
Controller-Treasurer Department:
The Controller-Treasurer Department is responsible for exercising general oversight for the processing of reimbursement requests in order to ensure consistency with the policies and guidelines set forth in this document. The Controller-Treasurer Department processes claims, including conducting desk audits, and provides timely, accurate reimbursement to claimants.

Regular updates to the published travel policies and procedures are provided by the Controller-Treasurer Department via this written County Travel Desk Reference Manual. The Department Travel Coordinators shall be advised of all such updates and changes and are responsible for notifying department personnel.

Who to Call on Travel Policy Issues:
Any questions, concerns or suggestions regarding the County travel policy may be directed to the traveler’s Department Travel Coordinator. The Coordinator can contact the Claims Unit of the Controller-Treasurer’s Office for assistance and/or providing information.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

Obtaining Travel Authorization:
Any person traveling in his/her capacity as a County employee, member of a County board, commission, committee, or task force advisory to the Board of Supervisors, or other official County capacity, must obtain travel authorization prior to travel on official County business.

Travel authorization should be obtained as early as possible, prior to the date of travel. Authorization is required for all County travel for County business purposes. Employees must always secure advance approval from their direct supervisor/manager for all County travel. This approval may be verbal or in writing based on the supervisor/manager’s policies and requirements. However, certain approvals must always be in writing as stated in the section which follows (Advance Written Request).

Members of County boards, commissions, committees, and task forces advisory to the Board traveling in their capacity as a member of the advisory body must obtain prior approval from the Board of Supervisors in public session for travel on official County business. In circumstances where an advisory body member is not expending County funds, the member shall provide advance written notice (rather than request) to the Board of Supervisors in public session.

Written request for travel is made on the Travel Authorization form. Blank form samples and instructions can be found in Appendix F.

Authorizations may also be provided via designee in accordance with individual department policy.

The Travel Authorization number is assigned by the department for each trip at the time Travel Authorization is submitted, the number sequence is as follows: ####-###-TA#####. First set of numbers represents the budget unit, second set of numbers represents the cost.
center, and the third set is assigned by departments, beginning with “TA”. The original Travel Authorization should always go to the Controller-Treasurer Department with the first payment request, with copies attached to each payment request afterward. Controller-Treasurer will hold the original Travel Authorization in an open file until the trip is finalized.

**Advance Written Request:**
For in-state travel, advance written request and approval are required if travel includes overnight stay, airfare, advanced funds or transportation involving a County vehicle that is not assigned to the department, rented from the central pool or vendor. For these circumstances, Board Appointees provide advance written notice (rather than request) to the Board President.

For Out-of-State travel, advance written request and approval are required. For these circumstances, Board Appointees provide advance written notice (rather than request) to the Board President.

For International travel and travel to non-continental destinations, advance written request and approval are required. However, for Board members and their staff, public session approval may occur after-the-fact if timing prevents pre-approval; reimbursement for travel costs will be provided only after the Board’s public session approval.

A flow-chart showing requirements can be found in Appendix C.

For international travel and travel to non-continental destinations, advance written request must first be approved at the intermediary (e.g., departmental) level, then subsequently forwarded to the final approving authority for pre-approval. In cases where there is no intermediary level, requests are sent directly for final pre-approval.

**LEVELS OF APPROVAL**

Travel approval levels and requirements are summarized in table format (2) in Appendix B.

**Board of Supervisors, as a Board:**
The Board of Supervisors, acting as a Board, approves in public session all international business travel for Board members and their staff. Normally, this approval occurs in advance; however, if timing prevents advance approval, the travel may be pre-approved in writing by the associated Board member and be approved after the fact by the Board of Supervisors in public session. Reimbursement for travel costs will be provided only after Board approval is granted in public session.

The Board also pre-approves in public session all County business travel for members of County boards, commissions, committees, and task forces advisory to the Board of Supervisors who are traveling in their capacity as a member of the board, commission, committee, or task force.
President of the Board of Supervisors:
The President of the Board of Supervisors shall pre-approve all international travel for Board appointees.

The President also authorizes exceptions to the travel policy for Board members, for their staff and for Board appointees. Exception authorizations require a written recommendation by the Finance Agency Director.

Vice-President of the Board of Supervisors:
The Vice-President of the Board of Supervisors shall authorize exceptions to the travel policy for the Board President. Exception authorizations require a written recommendation by the Finance Agency Director.

Members of the Board of Supervisors and Other Elected Officials:
Note: Other Elected Officials are the District Attorney, the Sheriff, and the County Assessor.

Members of the Board of Supervisors and other elected officials may approve their own in-state and out-of-state travel.

Board members and other elected officials shall notify the Clerk of the Board of their planned business travel. The Clerk of the Board will post notice of Board business travel in the board agenda. Emergency or last minute travel may be noticed after the fact. Board absences are separately covered in the Rules of the Board of Supervisors, Chapter V.

Board members and other elected officials shall also approve all in-state and out-of-state travel for their staff and give preliminary approval for their staff’s international travel and exception requests before forwarding for final determination.

Board Appointees:
Note: Board Appointees are the County Executive, the Clerk of the Board, the County Counsel, the Director of Child Support Services, the Public Defender, and the Chief of Correction.

Board appointees may approve their own in-state and out-of-state travel but must submit prior written notice to the Board President of all travel which is overnight or includes airfare (written approval is not required). For their staff, they approve all in-state and out-of-state travel and give preliminary approval for their staff’s international/non-continental travel and exception requests before forwarding for final determination.

County Executive:
The County Executive, as a Board appointee, has authority and responsibility as noted above. The County Executive (or designee) approves all in-state and out-of-state travel for his/her direct reports.

In addition, the County Executive pre-approves all international/non-continental travel for Board appointee staff, elected officials, elected official staff, Agency/Department Heads (Executive direct reports), Department Heads, department staff, department affiliated non-
employees, and any others. See Sheriff/District Attorney below regarding special consideration for travel to Hawaii and Alaska relating to extraditions.

The County Executive also authorizes exceptions to the travel policy for Agency/Dept. Heads (Executive direct reports), Elected Officials, Elected Official Staff, Board Appointee Staff, Commissions, Advisory Boards, Task Forces and any others, as needed. Exception authorizations require a written recommendation by the Finance Agency Director.

**Sheriff/District Attorney**
In addition to having the standard authority for travel as Departmental Heads, the Sheriff and the District Attorney are authorized to approve all travel for their departments relating to extraditions to and from trials in Hawaii and Alaska. This is due to the critical time sensitive nature of their business.

**Agency/Department Heads:**
Note: Agency/Department Heads report directly to the County Executive. Department Heads report to Agency/Department Heads.

Agency/Department Heads approve all in-state and out-of-state travel for their reporting Department Heads. They give preliminary approval for their reporting department heads’ international/non-continental travel before forwarding to the County Executive for final determination.

They also authorize exceptions to the travel policy for their reporting Department Heads, and related department staff and affiliated non-employees. Exception authorizations require a written recommendation by the Finance Agency Director.

**Department Heads:**
Department Heads report to Agency/Department Heads. They approve all in-state and out-of-state travel for their department staff as well as department-affiliated non-employees. For their department staff and affiliated non-employees, they give preliminary approval for international/non-continental travel and for exception requests before forwarding for final determination.

**Final Approval:**
The Controller-Treasurer and Chief Operating Officer have final approval as to the appropriateness and reasonableness of all reimbursement requests. Reasonable variances or costs greater than anticipated should be explained in writing, providing reasons and appropriate supporting documentation. Department Head approval is required before submitting to the Controller-Treasurer.

**Review by Chief Operating Officer:**
The Chief Operating Officer shall regularly review the submitted Final Trip Expense Vouchers and accompanying documentation of Board Members, other Elected Officials, and Board Appointees to ensure compliance with County policies. Each Board Member, Elected Official, and Board Appointee is responsible for providing copies of his or her Final Trip Expense.
Vouchers and accompanying documentation to the Chief Operating Officer on a quarterly basis, as indicated below:

Due February 1: Final Trip Expense Vouchers submitted for travel between October 1 – December 31.
Due May 1: Final Trip Expense Vouchers submitted for travel between January 1 – March 31.
Due August 1: Final Trip Expense Vouchers submitted for travel between April 1 – June 30.
Due November 1: Final Trip Expense Vouchers submitted for travel between July 1 – September 30.

If a Board Member, other Elected Official, or Board Appointee does not have any new Trip Expense Vouchers since the last quarterly submittal, he or she shall submit a signed memorandum indicating this.

**Exception Principles:**
Exceptions to specific provisions of County travel policy may be authorized by the Finance Agency Director on a case-by-case basis, and only when there is adequate written justification and documentation and the travel is within the intent of the overall travel policy. Allowable exceptions are confined to the following conditions:

- To serve the business interest of the County
- To avoid a severe hardship or inconvenience
- To observe an established or expected protocol at a specified event
- To respond to an emergency situation

**Requests for Exception:**
Occasionally there may be exceptions to these policies and guidelines that are reasonable and necessary and which adhere to the Exception Principles stated above.

Exception requests should be clearly explained and documented and should be approved at the earliest opportunity. Requests should be submitted on the Travel Exceptions Form which can be found in Appendix F.

**Approval of Exception:**
Requests for exception to the Travel Policy must be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis at the supervisory and department levels before submitting for final authorization, which may be granted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXCEPTION APPROVER</th>
<th>EXCEPTION APPROVAL FOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President, Board of Supervisors</td>
<td>Board Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board Staffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board Appointees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Board President</td>
<td>Board President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency/Department Head</td>
<td>Agency/Department Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department Affiliated Non-Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Executive</td>
<td>Agency/Dept. Heads (Executive Direct Reports)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elected Officials Elected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Official Staff Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appointee Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commissions, Advisory Boards, Task Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Any others, as needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All approved exceptions require a written concurring recommendation by the Finance Agency Director in accordance with the established Exception Principles, stated above. Requests which receive a positive recommendation by the Finance Agency Director will be forwarded to the Controller-Treasurer Department Claims Unit for processing. Negative recommendations will be returned to the initiating department.

Under no circumstances may any county official or employee approve his/her own exception request.

**GENERAL CONDITIONS**

**Resource Materials and Forms:**
A comprehensive account of policies, procedures, as well as travel information, suggestions and examples are included in this County Travel Desk Reference Manual.

The appendices included in this manual also include a variety of other useful resources for the County traveler.

The above documents, as well as forms, are available from the Department Travel Coordinators and are included in the appendices of this document. They are also available online at the Controller-Treasurer’s website located on the County Intranet, http://www.controller. Revision of these policies and documents is under the direction of the Controller-Treasurer and will be done as needed and whenever major changes are made to federal indexes. In addition, every two years they will be comprehensively reviewed. Updates will be issued as changes occur. The Board of Supervisors shall approve all major revisions and changes to travel policies in these manuals.

**Travel Options – Minimize Costs:**
Travelers shall choose the most efficient, direct, and economical travel options required for the occasion. If two or more employees are authorized to attend the same event, departments shall coordinate travel arrangements to minimize the total cost to the County.

**Illness:**
If an employee becomes sick or suffers a work-related injury and must delay returning, the County will reimburse for additional living expenses (except those costs directly related to the illness or injury, such as physician or hospital costs) until he/she is able to return home.
In addition, the County will pay for the costs of increased airfare and/or other reasonable travel costs should it be necessary for the employee to return home early or late due to illness or work-related injury.

The employee should notify his/her supervisor as soon as possible if he/she becomes ill or is injured. The time will be counted as sick leave if it occurs during the normally scheduled work hours, and the County’s normal sick leave rules will apply.

**Overtime:**
If an employee agrees to go out of town on business travel on a weekend or on his/her own time, then the travel is not considered overtime eligible unless mandated by the Fair Labor Standards Act. When considering weekend travel or a Saturday Night Stayover, the employee’s decision should be based on his or her own benefits from the travel purpose (e.g., education, networking, opportunity to visit the area, etc.).

Accordingly, overtime shall not be authorized in connection with travel on County business without prior authorization from the Department Head, or unless it is mandated as stated above. As part of approving travel, department managers should consider the effect of either authorized or mandated overtime on the total cost of the travel.

**Extended Travel for Business Reasons:**
In some situations extended travel time may be required. For example, in a change of venue trial the defense or prosecution teams may require extended stay in an area, sometimes as long as a month or more in duration. In this case, to save money it may be advisable to make special arrangements. A possibility might be to secure alternative lodging such as renting an apartment or other temporary housing. Cost saving measures should always be considered where possible and appropriate.

**Extended Travel for Personal Reasons:**
Travelers sometimes extend the length of a business trip by adding personal travel to the trip. In such cases, there must be no additional cost to the County. With supervisor approval, the County will cover the base travel expenses, and any additional cost above the base is the sole responsibility of the traveler.

Example:
An employee attends an approved business conference in Miami, Florida, and it is possible to take an additional flight extension to Orlando to visit Disney World at no extra cost for the ticket. In this case, the County will cover the full cost of the air ticket and the employee is responsible for all costs related to the side-trip. The employee is responsible for providing documentation with the travel request showing that there is no increased cost. However, if the cost of the 3-way airfare is greater than the round trip to Miami, the employee will be responsible for incremental additional airfare.

If a traveler’s extended personal travel includes a Saturday Night Stayover airfare discount, the extended travel expenses may be claimed up to the level of higher cost travel at the Y-Cal
An extension of time for personal travel is the responsibility of the traveler and will be on the employee’s own personal time. An employee’s travel time beyond the amount required for County business purposes must be charged to an available leave balance such as STO, vacation, or personal leave, even if the extension of time results in a lower total cost to the County. When combining business and personal travel in this manner, supervisor approval is required.

Both employees and managers should be cautioned that the frequent use of personal extensions and side trips may be questioned if there appears to be a pattern. In addition, care must be taken to document those costs attributable to the personal portion of the side trip and to have those costs billed separately to the employee whenever possible.

**Spouses and Guests:**
Spouses and guests may accompany the County traveler on County travel and at conferences, seminars and meetings. However, any additional costs associated with the participation of the spouse or other guests are the responsibility of the traveler. The County is not liable for spousal/guests injury or loss resulting from theft of their personal items.

**TRAVEL PLANNING AND ARRANGEMENTS**

**Consider All Costs:**
In choosing the most efficient, direct, and economical mode of transportation, the traveler shall take into account total costs including airfare cost, ground transportation availability and cost, alternate airport options, departure and travel times and their impact on work time, expediency, daily expenses, and similar measures of reasonable travel conditions.

**Example:**
A traveler may select an airfare ticket which does not have the lowest price in circumstances such as the following:

The overall cost of the trip is less because of less expensive ground transportation connections or lower mileage to/from the airport. The lowest fare ticket departs at an unreasonable time. The lowest fare ticket requires unreasonably excessive time due to multiple stopovers, etc.

Such circumstances do not require an exception approval if the traveler selects the transportation at a higher cost than the lowest available price if it is otherwise a more efficient use of the traveler’s time due to the availability of a direct flight and/or the needs of traveler to attend to official County business.
Minimizing Time Spent Away:
Travelers should schedule their trip so that they leave at the latest reasonable time and still arrive at their destination on time. They should also return promptly as soon as their business is finished, thereby minimizing both the time away from work and corresponding expenses.

Booking Reservations:
Reservations should be made as early as possible to take advantage of available discounts. We recommend the following minimum time margins for pre-booking air flights: 7 days for in-state, 21 days for out-of-state and 28 days for international travel.

Booking Methods:
American Express Business Travel Account (AMEX BTA) must be used to purchase the air tickets so that we can take advantage of the complimentary travel insurance coverage and facilitate the central billing and payment process. Booking through State approved participating travel agencies will enable us to utilize the discounted airfare program from the contract with State of California.

Travel reservations for all air travel, lodging, car rental and public carriers, including en route changes, should be booked through an approved travel agency who is contracted with the County.

In order to capture all the airfare spending through centrally billed AMEX BTA, the travel agency will request a copy of the approved Travel Authorization form to facilitate their reporting requirements to the County. The traveler or travel coordinator should fax/email a copy to the agency.

When making direct reservations, it is especially important to be sure that expenditures will be a “reasonable and prudent use of public funds.” Usually pre-arranged accommodations (e.g., for a conference) provide very reasonable cost choices, and direct booking is easy and efficient, requiring no special justifications.

Ticket Delivery:
Tickets which have been reserved through a County approved travel agency are to be sent by the agency directly to the department’s specified work location. Ticketless (e-ticket, e-travel) travel is becoming very common and is encouraged. It can also be less expensive, as some airlines charge a fee to print a ticket.

Cancellations:
When travel arrangements must be cancelled, the traveler or the Travel Coordinator is responsible for handling the cancellation and for documenting the cancellation number to avoid possible billing disputes later. See also Cancellations/Unused Tickets section.

ADVANCES AND USE OF P-CARDS

Travel Advances:
Travel advances are allowed when the traveler does not have a P-Card. The Trip Expense Voucher form is used for requesting advances (as well as for documenting the final travel
Whenever a County traveler requires an advance of funds for travel expenses, a written, approved request for an advance will be submitted to the Controller- Treasurer Department Claims Unit on the Trip Expense Voucher, accompanied by a copy of the signed Travel Authorization. To insure timely preparation of the advance payment, travelers should submit their requests to the Controller-Treasurer within 15-30 days before the trip date. Blank form samples and instructions can be found in Appendix F.

Costs prepaid by the County, including airfare, registration, hotel and other authorized expenditures are considered part of the travel advance and it is the traveler’s responsibility to settle them within the timeframe.

Only items authorized on the Travel Authorization and which the County has not already paid in full can be included in the calculation of the Cash Advance.

Example:
The Travel Authorization was approved for 5 nights lodging, and the first night has been paid by the County. Only the cost of the other 4 nights can be included in the calculation of the advance.

The amount requested for each line item must not exceed the amount authorized on the Travel Authorization.

No advance will be provided for mileage reimbursement. However, if the County is paying an Airfare Equivalent (AFE) in lieu of mileage, then the AFE can be included in the computation of the advance.

In calculating the advance meal allowance, the per diem rate will be used.

An advance shall not exceed the unpaid portion of estimated travel costs. The minimum advance to employees is $50.00. For the transport of prisoners out of state, the minimum advance amount may be under $50.00, and is authorized whether or not the traveler is a P-Card holder. (For reimbursements related to transport of prisoners, see also rules and regulations of the California State Board of Control.) The advance amount to vendors is not restricted.

The Controller-Treasurer Department will process cash advances (payment to employees) up to 30 days in advance of the departure date. The same employee cannot have more than one advance at a time.

Use of P-Cards:
The County has a credit card program known as P-Card (Procurement Card). This program may be used to pay for travel costs, and for employees who have P-Cards, the cards must be used for major expenses, since cash advances are not permitted to P-Card holders. See also County Procurement Card (P-Card) Policy.
Settling Advances:
Advances are settled through the filing of an expense report on the Trip Expense Voucher form. This report, along with supporting documentation, is due to the traveler’s department within 14 calendar days after returning from a trip and to the Controller-Treasurer Department within 21 calendar days after returning. When the advance has exceeded expenses, documentation should also include the SAP journal entry number for deposit (showing funds were returned to County). If the Trip Expense Voucher report and documentation are not received by the Controller-Treasurer Department within 28 days of return, the settlement will be considered delinquent.

Failure to settle advances in the allowed timeframe following a trip will result in notification to the traveler and Department Travel Coordinator from the Controller- Treasurer Department that settlement is due. If there is no response, after two notices each approximately 30 days apart, the County is authorized to deduct the entire amount of the advance from the employee’s wages (total 90 days from date of return). The Travel Authorization form includes an authorization statement to this effect so that employees are aware of and agree to this provision when they request an advance. Unsettled advances must be resolved before a traveler is eligible for travel advances in the future. See also Delinquent Advance Settlement section.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

County Insurance:
The County provides an insurance program for employees that includes liability, workers’ compensation and automobile coverage for County owned and rented vehicles during the course and scope of employment as described below.

The County insurance only applies to County employees on County business. If the trip includes any side trips of a personal nature (during the trip, as well as before or after), insurance for the employee as well as traveling companions is the responsibility of the employee. Should a traveler wish to purchase additional travel insurance coverage, e.g., accident, life, lost baggage, insurance for him/herself or a traveling companion, such expenses are the responsibility of the traveler and are not reimbursable.

For automobiles, the policy covers County owned or rented vehicles used for County business. See also the County Certificate of Coverage in Appendix D. Insurance for personal vehicles is the responsibility of the vehicle owner/County employee.

Optional Rental Car Insurance:
Travelers on County business should decline the optional rental car insurance offered by rental companies. See also Rental Car Insurance section.

Personal Car Insurance:
Travelers using personal cars for County travel must carry adequate insurance coverage for personal protection as well as for the protection of any driver/passengers, including spouse. Please refer to the County Comprehensive Vehicle Policy “Business Use of Private Vehicles”
(Board of Supervisors Policy Manual section 3.52) for liabilities associated with the operation of private vehicles on County business.

**American Express Insurance**
American Express provides the following services for air tickets paid by BTA:

- Business Travel Accident Insurance
- American Express Card Baggage Insurance Plan

**TRANSPORTATION**

**General Guidelines:**
When planning the transportation portion of a trip, consider all aspects of cost to the County – daily expenses, overtime, lost work time – as well as actual transportation costs. In general, a common carrier (e.g., plane, bus, train) is the preferred mode of transportation. However, use of a personal or County vehicle – especially if two or more employees or officials are traveling together – may be less expensive for travel within the State. The increased time for automobile transportation and the potential for lost work time, overtime, or increased lodging costs should be considered in determining the best mode of transportation.

**TRANSPORTATION – AIR TRAVEL**

Air travel reservations are made through County-approved travel agency using County’s American Express Business Travel Account (AMEX BTA), with exception of independent contractors. This requirement applies to all three airfare programs mentioned below (Y-Cal, V-Cal and SWABIZ).

The least expensive option shall always be chosen taking into consideration time constraints, value of employee time, elimination of overnight lodging, and cost of meals. In the event that a flight is cancelled due to the airline or other unforeseen circumstances, all credit received by the traveler should be tracked by the traveler and department so that the credit is utilized for future travel. It is understood that it will not always be possible for County to utilize these credits; still, we encourage employees to purchase non-refundable tickets (which result in the creation of credits as opposed to refunds) as opposed to the more expensive refundable airline tickets.

The traveler shall be responsible for any additional charge for changing flight plans due to personal reasons or the convenience of the traveler.

**Y-Cal Airfare Program:**
As one airfare option, the County participates in the CSAC (California State Association of Counties) airfare program known as Y-Cal. This program currently offers pre-set rates on California State contracted airlines which are fully refundable and may be booked up to the day of a flight, assuming seat availability. The Y-Cal Program is available through the County’s authorized travel agency.
As part of the program, all Y-Cal bookings will be charged by the Travel Agency to a Countywide American Express Business Travel Account maintained by the Controller-Treasurer Department. The Controller-Treasurer Department will then allocate charges to the appropriate departments.

**V-Cal Airfare Program:**
The V-Cal and Y-Cal airfares provide efficient, cost effective air travel for State department, university, and local government employees that travel on behalf of the organization for official business. The V-Cal provides a lower airfare than the Y-Cal airfare when the traveler is able to make travel arrangements early and seats are available.

The V-Cal airfares are capacity controlled which require a certain number of seats to be specifically set aside for State department, university, and local government travelers. Each respective airline will provide a limited number of seats on any given flight to be sold at a discounted fare. The airline controls the number of seats they will offer at the discounted V-Cal rate. The travel agent must secure reservation and issue the ticket at the same time of booking in which V-Cal is available. Once V-Cal tickets are sold out, the V-Cal rate is no longer available. The V-Cal tickets are issued at the time of reservation and are non-refundable.

The V-Cal Program is available through the County’s authorized Travel Agency.

**State-Contracted Internet (Variable) Fares**
The contracted internet (variable) fares are booked by the County-approved Travel agency through Southwest Airlines travel portal SWABIZ using County’s AMEX BTA. They are based on Southwest’s “Anytime” fare which is a fully refundable, non-restrictive fare. Southwest Airlines also has “Wanna Get Away” fares and “Business Select” fares. The “Business Select” rate is more expensive and should not be used.

**Airline Fees:**
Reasonable and actual add-on airline fees, such as checked baggage fees within the fare class for which the traveler is authorized, will be approved travel expenses when submitted with a receipt.

Travelers will be authorized to pay excess baggage charges when traveling with heavy or bulk material or equipment for business purpose. Documentation must be included in the final Trip Expense Voucher explaining the nature of the excess baggage charge. Approval of such charges shall be provided as part of the final Trip Expense Voucher approval.

Excess baggage charges for personal belongings will not be reimbursed. Airline Club membership, advance seat selection fees and other fees for the convenience of travelers will be paid by the traveler, no reimbursement will be made by the County.

**Area Airports:**
County travelers who are flying usually use one of the three Bay Area Airports - San Jose, San Francisco or Oakland - for leaving and returning home. The County will reimburse for
reasonable costs from any of these locations. Where cost effective, other airports may be used with permission from the Department Head or appropriate official.

**Airline Class of Service:**
Unless authorized as an exception, all air travel must be Coach Class. In the event Coach Class is not available, Business/First Class may be used if it represents the most efficient, direct and economical mode of transportation available. Tickets may be upgraded when there is no additional expense to the County or if the traveler is willing to pay the difference in cost or use frequent flyer credits.

**Low Airfare Alternatives:**
The following types of low fare alternatives should be considered in determining the lowest reasonable airfare:
- V-Cal Tickets
- Y-Cal Tickets
- Advance purchase fares for off-peak flights
- Connecting and one-stop flights (when travel time permits)
- Alternate airports
- Lower cost carriers
- Specially negotiated fares
- Promotional/bulk fares, travel coupons (e.g., as part of a conference)
- Minimum stay excursion fares, such as Saturday Night Stayovers, especially on longer trips. See also Saturday Night Stayover, below.
- Non-refundable fares are the standard. Refundable fares should be considered only when chance of cancellation is high.

**Saturday Night Stayover:**
Often, airlines offer a Saturday Night Stayover package for less expensive rates. While not required, these fares may save a significant expense to the County while more than offsetting the cost of meals and hotel fare for the Saturday night stay. It also provides opportunity for the employee to spend additional time to visit the area if he/she elects to stay over. To qualify, the traveler’s round trip air travel period must bridge over a Saturday. For example, the traveler flies to a conference on Tuesday which ends on Friday. If he/she stays at the destination through Saturday and returns home on Sunday (rather than Friday), the fare is offered at a less expensive rate.

When County travelers elect to take advantage of a Saturday Night Stayover, the County will allow reimbursement for travel costs up to the level of higher cost travel at the Y-Cal/other rate quoted by an authorized County travel agency. When this occurs, the traveler must complete the form Reimbursement on Extended Travel for Saturday Night Stayover, in addition to the Trip Expense Voucher.

**Airline Frequent Flyer Programs:**
Frequent flyer credits earned by County employees for travel on County business should be applied toward future County travel. (Please note that personal use of airline frequent flyer
mileage credit earned on County business is a taxable fringe benefit to the employee pursuant to the IRS regulations, and County has no intention to provide such fringe benefits.)

**Companion Airfare:**
Programs such as “Friends Fly Free” and other companion airfares are usually based on published rates without considering other discounts available. These can be higher than if one person flies alone.

When a traveler purchases such airline tickets for travel on County business with a spouse, friend or relative, it is necessary to obtain quotes from the travel agency regarding alternate airfares for the traveler traveling alone, including Y-Cal rates. These quotes must be used to determine whether the traveler should pay for or reimburse the County for any portion of the companion ticket. The quote must be provided in written form by the County’s Authorized Travel Agency stating the price quote (include date, agency name, telephone number, and the name of the contact).

**Denied Boarding Compensation:**
Airlines occasionally offer free tickets or cash allowances to compensate travelers for delays and inconveniences due to overbooking, flight cancellations, changes of planes, etc. A traveler may volunteer his/her seat for denied boarding compensation if the flight is outside normal working hours not subject to overtime, and the delay will not result in any interruption, loss of business or additional cost to the County. Under such circumstances, the traveler is allowed to claim the compensation. If there are personal costs related to the delay (e.g., another night’s lodging and extra meals), these would be the responsibility of the airline or the traveler.

**Overnight Delays:**
If an overnight stay is necessary due to an airline delay, the traveler shall attempt to secure complimentary lodging from the airline. If unsuccessful, and the delay was unavoidable, the traveler may charge the costs to the County.

**Cancellations/Unused Tickets:**
When an airline reservation must be cancelled, the traveler is responsible for handling the cancellation and for documenting the cancellation number, to avoid possible billing disputes.

Unused airline tickets or flight coupons must not be discarded or destroyed by the traveler as these documents may have a cash value. An unused ticket should be returned to the Department Travel Coordinator who will determine if it can be redeemed for refund or used for future service. Since some of the refund programs are time sensitive, the refunds should be made as soon as possible.

Please note that many airlines have a “Use It Or Lose It” policy for nonrefundable tickets. Under this policy, passengers who are not able to fly as their ticket is booked will lose the full value of the fare unless they rebook before the flight takes place. The rebooking will require a fee and commitment to a specific future flight and date certain. Previously, passengers could take up to a year to determine a date and pay a fee to rebook. Now, for many airlines, carrying
a flight credit is no longer permitted. When purchasing tickets, travelers are responsible to be aware of all the terms and conditions prior to confirming the purchase.

If refunds are not available, but the same person has an occasion to travel again, an attempt should be made to schedule the traveler on the same airline and use the original ticket (it may be necessary to pay a rebooking fee). The traveler’s department should retain the unused ticket for a minimum of one year. Some airlines may honor an unused ticket beyond one year, so the Travel Coordinator or travel agency should always make an inquiry of the airline. As a final step, a letter should be sent to the airline president requesting an additional extension. The tickets should only be forfeited when a written denial is received.

**Lost or Stolen Airline Tickets:**
Ticketless, or “e-ticket” travel is available for most airlines. E-ticket traveling is encouraged because it is convenient and reduces the possibility of lost or stolen tickets.

When printed tickets are issued, travelers are responsible for the safekeeping of airline tickets once they are received.

If a ticket has been lost or stolen prior to the start of a trip, the traveler, upon discovery, should report the loss to his/her Department Travel Coordinator who will assist in obtaining replacement tickets.

If a ticket is lost immediately prior to or during a trip, the traveler should seek direct assistance from the airline. In this situation, it may be necessary for the traveler to pay for replacement tickets, including administrative fees and a higher airfare charge. Upon return, the County may approve reimbursement of the replaced ticket expense. When seeking assistance, the traveler should also inquire with the airline about filing a lost ticket reimbursement claim. The claim should be submitted listing the County as claimant. If a County P-Card is used, reimbursement to the employee would not be necessary, but the reimbursement claim should still be filed on behalf of the County. If unsuccessful in recovering the cost from the airline, the Travel Coordinator should contact ESA Insurance at 408-441-4340.

**TRANSPORTATION BY CAR – GENERAL GUIDELINES**

**Driver’s Permit-License:**
County travelers who drive any car on County business, whether a personal vehicle, a rented car or a County car, must possess a valid County Driver’s Permit and California Driver’s License. Please refer to Comprehensive Vehicle Policy, section “Driver Selection, Training, Driver Responsibility Statement, Permitting” (Board of Supervisors Policy Manual section 3.52).

**Emergency Authorization:**
In case of emergency, the head of any office, department or institution can authorize use of a vehicle without a County Driver’s Permit. This is a one-time accommodation, and verification of emergency must be submitted to the Director of Risk Management, Employee Services Agency.
Accidents:
Should a car accident occur, a traveler should immediately contact:

- 911 for all injury and/or property damage accidents
- Local law enforcement authorities, as required
- County Risk Management Office, Insurance Division, at 408-441-4340 (if off-hours, leave message) or fax 408-441-4341
- Traveler’s supervisor, (if major, as soon as possible; if minor, within 24 hours)
- If a rental, the car rental company
- If traveler’s personal car, his/her insurance carrier
- For County vehicle, please refer to Comprehensive Vehicle Policy, section “Safety, Accident Prevention, and Accident/Loss/Damage Reporting” (Board of Supervisors Policy Manual section 3.52).

An accident checklist and vehicle accident report form can be found in Appendix F.

All travelers who will be driving a County car or rented car should take along the Santa Clara County Vehicle Accident/Incident Report form and the County’s Certificate of Coverage. In the event of an accident, the report form must be completed as soon as possible. The Certificate will be required by local law enforcement authorities. The blank accident report form and certificate copy can be found in Appendices F and D.

TRANSPORTATION – CAR RENTAL

Car Rental Guidelines:
Upon arrival at the destination, travelers may rent a car when it is less expensive than other transportation modes such as taxis, airport limousines and hotel airport shuttles, or when a private car is needed for other reasons, e.g., ongoing work requirements or inadequate/unavailable ground transportation. A written justification is required on the Travel Authorization form. In the event that an unanticipated rental car is required or if any unusual high mileage usage results in higher rental car fees, then a written explanation with approval on a Travel Exceptions Form must accompany the expense claim.

When traveling within Santa Clara County, car rental is generally not a cost authorized for reimbursement. For special circumstances (e.g., emergencies) when a short term car rental is necessary for local travel, the traveler and department should refer to the County’s Comprehensive Vehicle Policy (Section II (D) Short-Term Rentals) (Board of Supervisors Policy Manual section 3.52).

Car Rental Reservations:
Car rental reservations should be booked with the County’s approved travel agency.
Preferred Car Rental Suppliers:
The County piggybacks on the State’s rental car contract. All travelers on County business should use the state contract with a low base rate for compact or intermediate vehicle. For contract details, please visit State of California, Department of General Service’s website, under “Travel Portal”: [http://www.ofa.dgs.ca.gov/default.htm](http://www.ofa.dgs.ca.gov/default.htm) If there are special circumstances that require rental cars from companies other than those the State contracts, prior approval is required on the Travel Exceptions Form with the quantification and justification of the increased costs to the County. In these exceptional cases, the Controller-Treasurer Department will review and compile the annual reports for the Finance and Government Operations Committee.

Promotional Rates and Inspection:
When transacting rental car, travelers should check with the rental agent for any promotional rates, government rates, last-minute specials or free upgrades, which would reduce County cost. At the time of rental, the car should be inspected, and any damage found should be noted on the contract before the vehicle is accepted.

Class of Car:
When traveling alone or in pairs, travelers should book mid-size cars or smaller, based on need. Upgrades are allowed if there is no additional cost, or when there are special circumstances, for example, medical needs, drivers with disabilities, etc. Such upgrades should be justified on a Travel Authorization; however, if pre-authorization is not acquired, the traveler will need to justify the upgrade on a Travel Exceptions Form. When traveling with a group of three or more, a full-sized vehicle may be necessary to accommodate more travelers and luggage requirements. Rental expenses for luxury cars, motorcycles and recreational vehicles shall not be reimbursed.

Rental Car Insurance:
Travelers should decline the optional vehicle insurance offered by rental companies, as employee’s operation of a rental car for County business is covered by the County’s insurance program. For this reason, a spouse or traveling partner, who does not have a County driver’s permit, cannot be added to the rental car policy as a driver since the rental car is covered by the County’s insurance program. Note, however, insurance covering any personal side trips or additional driver is the responsibility of the employee. Rental companies will require some proof of vehicle insurance, and for this the traveler should carry the County’s Certificate of Coverage (the traveler’s own personal coverage may also be accepted by the rental company). A certificate copy can be found in Appendix D.

Exception: The traveler should not decline vehicle insurance in international locations when the rental agency confirms that the County’s self-insurance is not applicable. Travelers should inquire about this possibility prior to traveling outside of the country.

Returning Rental Cars:
Every reasonable effort should be made to return the rental car as follows:

- To the original rental city unless approved for a one-way rental
- On time, to avoid additional hourly charges
With a full tank of gas. Fuel Service Option (FSO) or Fuel Purchase Option (FPO) should always be denied.
Within the mileage allowance. For rentals that have restricted mileage per day, County will not pay for fuel, mileage or additional charges associated with any side trips or used by guests or spouse.

**Car Rental Expense Claim:**
Reimbursement claims must include the original car rental receipt showing the date(s), number of days and type of vehicle rented and mileage. A credit card receipt alone is insufficient.

**TRANSPORTATION – PERSONAL CAR**

Please refer to Comprehensive Vehicle Policy – Business Use of Private Vehicles (See Board of Supervisors Policy Manual section 3.52).

**Personal Car Guidelines:**
Employees, if pre-approved, may use their personal car while traveling for business purposes when one or more of the following applies:

- Public transportation is limited or unavailable
- It is more flexible and timely than taking public transportation
- Expense is equal to or less than alternate transportation
- Employee is willing to accept reimbursement equal to the lowest price of reasonable transport.
- For extended stays a department may authorize the use of an employee’s car with reimbursement for mileage to/from the destination work site and other work-related uses.

Example:
An employee attending an out-of-town academy may be approved to use his/her own vehicle to travel to/from the lodging site and for daily trips to/from the training site.

Requirements for use of personal vehicle are detailed in the Comprehensive Vehicle Policy “Business Use of Private Vehicles” (Board of Supervisors Policy Manual section 3.52). Travelers must have a copy of their insurance certificate on file with their department travel coordinator.

**Allowable Mileage Reimbursement for County Business Travel:** Reimbursement is allowed for personal car mileage for County business purposes which exceeds the normal home-to-work mileage:

- To and from the scheduled carrier service
- To and from destinations that do not have scheduled air service
- If scheduled air service is available but the traveler still prefers to use his/her personal car, mileage reimbursement will be based on “equivalent airfare,” described below.

County paid additional travel time should also be factored into the cost decision.
For non-commuter transportation inside Santa Clara County. Reimbursable mileage is distinguished from commuter mileage, which is mileage from home to a regular, main or temporary place of work and back. Commuter mileage is not claimable, however certain labor agreements provide for an incremental mileage reimbursement to a temporary place of work provided that it exceeds regular commute mileage.

Pursuant to the Salary Ordinance relating to the compensation of persons in management positions of the County of Santa Clara unrepresented by recognized employee organizations, members of the Board of Supervisors and persons in designated management positions shall be paid a flat rate vehicle allowance per month. Board of Supervisors and designated management employees receiving the vehicle allowance shall not be eligible to claim mileage reimbursement for any miles traveled within Santa Clara County.

**Mileage/Reimbursement Rate:**
Travelers will be reimbursed for personal car mileage expenses for County business purposes, not to exceed established federal rates. Personal car mileage reimbursement covers the operating cost of the vehicle, such as cost of gas, oil, wear and tear, and needed servicing during the trip. To claim travel mileage reimbursement, travelers should use the Trip Expense Voucher. For non-travel related mileage reimbursement, travelers should use the Employee Mileage form. Please refer to Comprehensive Vehicle Policy “Business Use of Private Vehicles” (Board of Supervisors Policy Manual section 3.52) regarding document requirements for mileage reimbursement claims.

Current mileage rates can be found at [http://www.irs.gov/](http://www.irs.gov/). In addition, blank form samples and instructions can be found in Appendix F.

The County P-Card is not to be used for personal car mileage expenses, since the traveler assumes responsibility for personal vehicle expenses and will be compensated through mileage reimbursement. Also, the County gas credit card is allowed only for County vehicles and shall not be used for personal vehicle expense.

No advance will be provided for mileage reimbursement unless as an “Airfare Equivalent” (AFE).

**Airfare Equivalent (AFE) Reimbursements:**
Personal car mileage for travel is reimbursed based on the “equivalent airfare” (Airfare Equivalent, or AFE) when driving in lieu of traveling by air. This provision applies when the employee is traveling by personal car outside of the local area to a destination with scheduled airline service and mileage expenses would be more than the airfare equivalent.

In this case, the Trip Expense Voucher should show the amount for Coach Class airfare (per Y-Cal schedule or Travel Agency quote when Y-Cal is not available) to the same destination, plus the amount for avoided airport parking (at San Jose International Airport long term rates) and avoided mileage to/from the airport. Mileage reimbursement is thus covered in the total trip expense reimbursement. Note, for Equivalent Airfare, the Employee Mileage form is not used. See also Allowable Mileage Reimbursement for County Business Travel section.
Current long-term parking rates and availability for San Jose International Airport can be obtained by calling the airport at 408-441-5570 or visit [http://www.sjc.org/](http://www.sjc.org/).

**Personal Car Insurance:**
Please refer to “Personal Car Insurance.”

**Multiple Passengers:**
When there is more than one County traveler in the car, mileage reimbursement will only be made once. Mileage reimbursement is made to the vehicle owner or driver, not to passengers. When the department has chosen group mode transport, e.g., a van for multiple employees, and an employee decides for personal reasons to travel separately on his/her own, then reimbursement will not be allowed. Please refer to Comprehensive Vehicle Policy that promotes carpools and prohibits non-County passengers on business use.

**TRANSPORTATION – COUNTY CAR**

Please refer to Comprehensive Vehicle Policy (Board of Supervisors Policy Manual section 3.52). Travelers who need to rent a County car must obtain a Travel Authorization number prior to renting a County pool vehicle. Please see “Obtaining Travel Authorization”, page 14.

**TRANSPORTATION – OTHER GROUND TRANSPORT**

**Non-Air Travel:**
Public carrier services, e.g., bus and train, are authorized means of travel, not to exceed the coach airfare or allowable mileage, whichever is lower.

**Ground Transportation at the Travel Destination:**
Ground transportation may also be required for moving to and from airports, bus or rail terminals, as well as between work, training or conferencing sites. Various types of transportation may be available for this, e.g., hotel and airport shuttle services, light rail, subway or bus, or personal/rented car. The most economical and appropriate form meeting the traveler’s needs should be used.

**Taxi Service:**
Taxis may be used when time is of the essence or public transit or other common carriers are not reasonably available.

When taxi service is used, receipts are required if the taxi cost plus tip is over $10. When asked for a receipt, taxi drivers will often hand a blank receipt to the customer. Travelers should ask the driver to fill out the receipt which should include the cab number, cost, including tip (if applicable), and the driver’s signature.

See also Reimbursable Expenses section.
LODGING

Lodging Guidelines:
Lodging expenses will be reimbursed at the actual expense up to the lodging per diem rate plus hotel tax. If traveler desires to upgrade (e.g., a suite or room with a view), he/she will be responsible to pay the difference between the maximum reimbursement rate and the actual hotel expense. A valid, itemized receipt must accompany the lodging reimbursement claim.

Lodging Reimbursement Rate:
The maximum amount reimbursable for lodging as well as meals, which will be discussed in more detail in later section, will be based on the rates posted by the federal agencies indicated in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Travel to:</th>
<th>Lodging and Meal Rates Are Established by:</th>
<th>Rate Tables Can Be Found at:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within the continental US</td>
<td>US General Services Administration (GSA)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gsa.gov/">http://www.gsa.gov/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign destinations</td>
<td>US Department of State</td>
<td><a href="http://aoprals.state.gov/">http://aoprals.state.gov/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When traveling within the eight Bay Area counties – Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Cruz, lodging is generally not a cost authorized for reimbursement. Travelers are expected to commute between the travel destination and work location or home each day. In unusual situations, such as attendance at
meetings which occur early in the morning or late in the evening, reimbursement of such lodging costs must be justified and approved on the Travel Exceptions Form. The increased costs will be included in the annual reports to the Finance and Government Operations Committee.

Under special circumstances when specified per diem rates cannot be obtained or when the traveler is staying at the same hotel where the conference is held, exception to the maximum per diem rate will be granted per Chapter 301-11.300 of the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR), which provides that actual expense reimbursement is warranted “when lodging and/or meals are procured at a prearranged place such as a hotel where a meeting, conference or training session is held.” However, the maximum amount of reimbursement “is limited to 300 percent (rounded to the next higher dollar) of the applicable maximum per diem rate.” FTR Chapter 301-11.303. In such circumstances, a Travel Exceptions Form must be completed and approved.

Making Hotel Reservations:
Whenever possible, Department Travel Coordinator or traveler should secure lodging at the rates at or below the published federal per diem for the area. Some websites (www.hotel.idt.net, http://www.hotelsatperdiem.com/) offer list of hotels at or below GSA per diem rate for the destination city.

Always check special rates, e.g., government rate, conference or last minute specials, which would reduce County cost. If in California, inquire about exemptions from the local Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT). By local ordinance, some California cities exempt travelers on government business. If there is an exemption, you can save up to 12% on lodging costs depending on the local TOT rate. Almost all lodging operators will require an official, written claim for exemption. The form Exemption Certificate for Government Agencies serves as a TOT waiver. At the time of check-in, complete and show this form along with other proof, such as the County Employee ID card or County business card. A form sample is provided in Appendix F.

Hotel reservations can be made with the approved travel agency without additional service charge.

Arrival/Departure:
When a suitable business case can be made, travelers may claim lodging for the evening before or the last evening of an event. Reasonable transition time is allowed to arrive at the venue and return home comfortably, i.e., sufficient time to check in/out, adequate preparation time, appropriate travel time, and departure/arrival at reasonable times of the day.

Late Arrival:
Unless otherwise instructed, lodging for County travel should be booked for late arrival with the County’s P-Card or the traveler’s credit card. Traveler is responsible to coordinate late arrivals directly with the lodging vendor.
Additional Room Charges and Late Checkout Charges
Internet connection, honor refrigerator items, additional fee bottled water and late checkout charges will not be reimbursed unless a business reason is provided and attached to the final Trip Expense Voucher. Approval of such charges shall be provided as part of the final Trip Expense Voucher approval. Under no circumstances shall the County fund purchases of alcoholic beverages.

Sharing a Room:
County policy does not require sharing a room, however there may be occasions when either necessity or the event requires that a room is shared with a fellow County traveler of the same gender (who is also authorized to travel with lodging). Either traveler may claim the total expense, or each traveler may claim a prorated amount based on the multiple occupancy rate. In the former case, the Trip Expense Voucher must indicate the room was shared with a fellow County traveler and provide the traveler’s name. In the latter case, duplicate bills must be obtained and submitted with each claim.

Hotel Cancellation Procedures:
Hotels normally require an advance deposit (normally prepayment for one night) or a guarantee by a credit card (County’s P-Card or personal credit card). After a deposit is submitted or a guarantee is made, it is the traveler’s responsibility to cancel hotel reservations within the hotel cancellation policy time frame and to obtain a cancellation number. The traveler will not be reimbursed for the deposit or guarantee penalty (“no show” fees) if he/she fails to make a cancellation notification.

MEALS
Note: This section covers travel related meal expenses. Business meals are covered in a separate policy, Non-Travel Business Meal Policy.

Travel Meals:
Travel-related meal expenses include meals consumed while traveling for business purposes on the County’s behalf, as well as while attending training, education or conferences that require travel and the completion of a Trip Expense Voucher. Where a Trip Expense Voucher is not required, the County Non-Travel Business Meal Policy shall be followed. Travelers will be reimbursed for meal expenses, including tax and tips (tipping allowances can be found in Appendix E), not to exceed established rates.

Meal Reimbursement:
The County will reimburse for travel meals if the department approves an overnight stay (includes either partial or full travel day meals, as appropriate, on the day of departure and the day of return).

For Same-Day Travel (no overnight), meal reimbursement is allowed if the work plus travel causes an “extended work day.” An “extended work day” is when the actual work plus travel causes the normal workday to be extended by two or more hours at either end.

Example:
Assuming an 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. workday, if work and travel time extend the day past 7:00 p.m., then a travel meal (dinner) would be allowed. For this example, if the traveler left his home at 6:00 a.m., breakfast would also be allowed.

Because of the unpredictability of commute traffic, the criterion based on a mileage radius or geographical boundaries is being replaced by the two-hour rule. However, this rule does not apply to regular overtime at the employee’s normal work site. Travel meals are not the same as overtime meals. Both cannot be claimed simultaneously for the same meal.

For Same-Day Travel with a destination outside of Santa Clara County, reimbursement will be allowed if the time away for travel exceeds five hours during the normal work day.

**Meal Reimbursement Rates:**
Travel meal reimbursement is for reasonable, actual costs including tax and tips (tipping allowances can be found in Appendix E), and shall not exceed the U.S. General Services Administration per diem rate (http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287). For multi-destination travel, the meal per diem rate used should correspond to traveler’s lodging location of the day.

Please check GSA’s website for current federal per diem rates for specific travel destination city or region, using “lodging per diem” for reference. Same as lodging per diem, a standard meal per diem rate for travel within the continental U.S. applies to any location not otherwise specified.

Board of Supervisors, and members of boards, commissions, committees and task forces advisory to the Board of Supervisors who are traveling in their capacity as members of the advisory body, must submit original detailed/itemized receipts reflecting the actual costs of meals for travel meal reimbursement.

Other travelers shall claim the actual meal cost, not to exceed the per diem rate, on the Trip Expense Voucher, but are not required to submit receipts for the travel meals, unless otherwise required for specific circumstances as provided in this Policy.

**Two or More County Travelers Dining Together**

If two or more County travelers are dining together, each traveler shall claim their own meal on their own Trip Expense Voucher, in accordance with the provisions of this Policy. County travelers are strongly encouraged to request separate receipts for their individual meals.

However, if a County traveler pays for the meal expenses of one or more fellow County travelers on his or her P-card, the other travelers may not claim reimbursement for that meal on their Trip Expense Voucher. The paying traveler shall document the names and business relationship of the fellow travelers on his or her Trip Expense Voucher. The business relationship shall indicate the County department in which each fellow traveler works.
Partial Travel Day Meal Claims:
For claimed meals that are based on a partial travel day (first or last day of overnight travel), the actual cost of the meal up to the GSA per diem rate shall be used. On the day travel begins or ends, if travel time occurs during a mealtime and a meal is not provided as part of the paid ticket, service or event (such as an airline meal), then the employee is entitled to the meal reimbursement. For an “extended work day” meal which can occur for Same-Day travel, see Meal Reimbursement section.

Meals Provided as a Part of the Program:
Employees are generally expected to take advantage of meals which are considered part of a conference, special event or program, and for which the cost is covered by payment for the event itself.

When a meal is provided as part of the cost of an event, employees will not be additionally reimbursed for the same meal unless it is not a substantial meal or if other business reasons can be explained. For example, a continental breakfast may not be substantial enough for employees with special dietary needs. In such cases reimbursement will be provided up to per diem rates, but only with an itemized receipt with explanation on a Travel Exceptions Form.

In addition, in cases where there is a legitimate reason to make alternate plans from the provided meal, the employee may submit written justification for reimbursement of the cost of a separate meal and include the receipt with the final Trip Expense Voucher. The final Trip Expense Voucher approver shall decide if reimbursement is appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

Alcoholic Beverages:
Expenditures for alcoholic beverages including related tax and tip will not be reimbursed.

Meals at Protocol Events:
There are times when traveling on County business, when meals are served in conjunction with authorized protocol events where the County traveler is representing the County and/or has hosting responsibilities. The exception approver may provide case-by-case approval on a Travel Exceptions Form for exceptions to rate limits when there is not a price choice, the traveler has no control over the location selected, or other appropriate justification for the expense can be provided. See sections Requests for Exception and Approval of Exception.

Meals Purchased with P-Card:
If P-Card is used to purchase meals, itemized receipts are required regardless of the amount spent, and reimbursement will be based on actual receipt amount (the same amount as shown on P-Card statement and assuming no alcohol is purchased), not to exceed the federal per diem rate.

Meals for Clients or Minors in Escort
Meals paid for clients or minors will be reimbursed at actual cost including tax and tip (tipping allowances can be found in Appendix E), and shall not exceed the U.S. General Services
Administration per diem rate for County travelers. County traveler claiming for such actual expense reimbursements must submit itemized meal receipt for the clients/minors.

**MISSING RECEIPTS**

When a traveler is required by this Policy to submit an itemized receipt for a travel expense, the County recognizes that the traveler may inadvertently not have a receipt for a particular item. Traveler is responsible for contacting the vendor, if possible, to request a duplicate receipt. Traveler shall document the name of the individual with whom he or she spoke and the contact date. On rare occasions, when a good faith effort to obtain a receipt is unsuccessful, a Missing Receipt Affidavit may be used in conjunction with the Trip Expense Voucher. All information must be completed on both the Voucher and the Missing Receipt Affidavit. Both the Approving Official and fiscal officer for the claimant shall approve the Affidavit.

For purposes of the Missing Receipt Affidavit for members of boards, commissions, committees, and task forces advisory to the Board of Supervisors, the Approving Official shall be the County Executive or involved Elected Official or Department/Agency Head for the department overseeing the advisory body and the fiscal officer shall be that department’s fiscal officer.

For purposes of the Missing Receipt Affidavit fiscal officer approval, the Chief Operating Officer shall be the fiscal officer for all Board members and Board office staff.

For a missing receipt amount over $50.00, a department/agency head (or Board member for Board of Supervisors’ staff) signature is also required on the Affidavit, with the exception noted below.

- For all elected officials and board appointees, because the Chief Operating Officer either signs the Affidavit as the approving fiscal officer or reviews the Missing Receipt Affidavit during his scheduled review of the Final Trip Expense Vouchers, no additional department/agency head signature is required for missing receipt amounts over $50.00.

The Missing Receipt Affidavit may not be used on a routine basis. Repeated use of a Missing Receipt Affidavit may revoke the privilege of providing a declaration in lieu of a receipt. The approving fiscal officer shall notify his/her department/agency head, elected official, or Chief Operating Officer, as applicable, if a claimant develops a record of repeated uses of the Missing Receipt Affidavit.

**INCIDENTAL AND OTHER REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES**

Reasonable and necessary costs for other travel expenses will be reimbursed when supported by itemized receipts (only required if item is more than $10.00) or other appropriate documentation. Such expenses may include the following:

- Registration fees
Taxi, shuttle, public transit fares, etc., for transport to/from departure point (e.g., airport), or between business sites at destination location
Bridge, road or ferry tolls, etc.
Fuel for rental cars
Parking (airport parking – when the expense for short-term parking is expected to exceed the one-day rate of long-term parking fee, traveler should use long-term parking. County will reimburse traveler up to the daily long-term rate). Costs directly linked to the program or subject matter of a business meeting/function. Traveler must note purpose of expense on the claim. Examples of such costs include the following:

- County business calls
- Faxing
- Copying
- Postage

- Printed materials, tapes, training material that may be available for sale at the meeting (if claimed as a travel expense; Departments may elect to purchase through other [non-travel] payment processes.)

- Other business related travel expenses determined to be reasonable and necessary by the approver and the Controller-Treasurer

- Personal phone calls - The County will reimburse employees for reasonable personal phone call expenses. Travelers must use discretion, e.g., reasonable duration to call home, and the number of calls should be kept to a minimum (i.e., one call per day unless unusual circumstances).

Incidental expenses up to the GSA per diem limit (currently at $5 per day): Chapter 300, Part 300-3, Section 300-3.1 in the Federal Travel Regulation, under Per Diem Allowance, describes Incidental Expenses as: “Fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, hotel staff, and staff on ships.” The County will reimburse travelers for a reasonable amount of incidental expenses where these are usual and customary. This does not include tips for meals as they are included in the daily per diem meal allowance. (Tipping allowances can be found in Appendix E.)

Laundry and dry cleaning - Charges may be included when traveling in excess of five consecutive days on County business, or in emergency circumstances (include description and justification of emergency on the Travel Exceptions Form with claim request).
Currency conversion fee

Non-Reimbursable Expenses:
The following incidental and personal expenses are generally not allowable for reimbursement:

Traffic and parking violations, also refer to Comprehensive Vehicle Policy for vehicle user responsibilities (See Board of Supervisors Policy Manual section 3.52)
Mileage for County vehicles
Mileage traveled within the County for Board of Supervisors and designated employees receiving a vehicle allowance
Mileage for commute to work
Emergency repairs on non-County vehicles
Car rental insurance and Fuel Service Option (FSO) / Fuel Purchase Option (FPO)
Insurance not provided for under this policy/procedure
Alcoholic beverages
Refreshments and snacks
Medicinal remedies, health supplies, cosmetics
Personal entertainment, e.g., in-room movies, saunas, fees for exercise room, sports events, personal reading material, personal grooming, optional tours, souvenirs
Airline club membership fees and credit card fees
Childcare fees
Kennel/boarding fees
Tips that exceed County allowances
Expenses related to vacation or personal time while on business trip
Personal travel expenses that cause additional cost to the County
Expenses related to an employee’s family member or friend accompanying the traveler on business trips
Other incidental expenses that are determined to be of a personal nature, extravagant, or might be considered to be unreasonable or unnecessary

**PAYMENT METHODS**

**General Guidelines:**
Payment for authorized travel is provided in several ways. These include the following

- County direct payment to vendor
- County P-Card
- American Express Business Travel Account (BTA)
- County gas credit card
- Direct payment by traveler and subsequent reimbursement from the County
- Through payroll for business (non-travel related) mileage

Blank form samples and instructions can be found in Appendix F. Also see Advances and Use of P-Cards section, page 26 and Expense Reporting section.

**County Direct Payment to Vendor:**
The County can pay vendors directly, either in advance or after-the-fact, based on documentation submitted to the Controller-Treasurer Department. Requests for advance payments as well as after-the-fact payments to vendors are submitted on the Trip Expense Voucher with Travel Authorization copy attached.
**County Procurement Card (P-Card):**
Travelers may use a County P-Card, issued by the Procurement Department. This is a credit card issued in the name of Santa Clara County and assigned to authorized individual employees of Santa Clara County.

Employees who travel frequently may request a County P-Card through their supervisors. Applications that have been approved by the traveler’s department are forwarded by the agency/department P-Card Coordinator to the Procurement Department for registration. The County P-Card allows a traveler to cover certain costs without paying out of pocket. County P-Cards are intended for business use and shall not be used for personal expenses under any circumstances. P-Card holders may not request travel advances.

Employees are responsible for promptly providing proper supporting documentation for P-Card payment processing, as detailed in the County Procurement Card Program Manual. Failure to do so may result in suspension or cancellation of charge privileges. It is important to remember that the use of a P-Card as a payment method does not eliminate the need also to file a timely final expense report and submit it to the traveler’s department within 14 days after completion of the business trip. When filing both P-Card and the expense report, the original receipts and other supporting documentation go with the P-Card report; copies are to be submitted with Trip Expense report.

For information on using the P-Card for travel as well as detailed information and instructions regarding the P-Card Program, see the County Procurement Card Program Manual.

**American Express Business Travel Account (BTA):**
The County maintains a special credit card travel account with American Express which must be used for all air travel through the State Contracted airfare programs. The American Express Business Travel Account, or BTA, is also available for other airfare (or common carrier) travel expenses which are booked through the County approved travel agencies.

**County Gas Credit Card:**
Gas credit cards issued to the County may only be used to purchase fuel and oil in County owned vehicles. Use of County gas credit cards for expenses associated with the use of personal vehicles is prohibited, regardless of whether or not the use of the personal vehicle was for authorized County business. Please refer to Comprehensive Vehicle Policy “Fueling County Vehicles” (See Board of Supervisors Policy Manual section 3.52.)

**Direct Payment by Traveler, Reimbursement:**
The County will reimburse travelers who pay for authorized expenses through personal means such as a personal credit card, merchant card, check, or cash. The reimbursement request, Trip Expense Voucher or petty cash request should be accompanied by receipts and/or other documentation, and must be submitted within 60 days from travel ending date to qualify for reimbursement. Please refer to “Reimbursement of Expenses”.

Mileage Reimbursement through Payroll:
No advance will be provided for mileage reimbursement unless as an “Airfare Equivalent” (AFE).

Personal mileage incurred while traveling for County business must be reported on the Trip Expense Voucher along with other travel expenses (i.e. meals, car rental, registration, etc.).

Personal mileage incurred without other travel expenses is paid through the payroll system (unless Airfare Equivalent rules apply, described below). Please refer to Comprehensive Vehicle Policy “Business Use of Private Vehicles” claims submission timeline. (See Board of Supervisors Policy Manual section 3.52.)

Personal car mileage for travel is reimbursed based on the “equivalent airfare” when driving in lieu of traveling by air. This provision applies when the employee is traveling by personal car outside of the local area and mileage expenses would be more than the airfare equivalent. In this case, the amount for Coach Class airfare to the same destination (per Y-Cal schedule or Travel Agency quote when Y-Cal is not available), plus avoided related costs (e.g., airport parking [at San Jose International Airport long-term parking rates], mileage to/from airport) is shown on the Trip Expense Voucher along with the other travel costs. In this way, the mileage reimbursement is covered through the total trip expense reimbursement. No mileage claim is submitted to payroll.

See also Transportation-Personal Car section.

Use of Petty Cash:
No portion of the travel expense may be reimbursed via petty cash if the travel included air transportation, car rental, lodging, or if any meal is to be reimbursed at an amount above the per diem rate.

For miscellaneous, out-of-pocket travel expenses $25.00 or less (for example, toll bridge or parking costs), reimbursement can be made through petty cash, but receipts are required for all petty cash individual expenses even if less than $10.00.

For these small claims, basic travel information (date, time, destination, purpose) is documented on the petty cash request itself, which will serve as the required trip expense report. Otherwise, claims are handled through the regular trip expense report process.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Travel Notices, Emergencies and Other Important Information
Prior to any travel, particularly outside of the continental U.S., the traveler is advised to be aware of any risks associated with the travel. Several key reference sources may provide general information on travel advisories and specific information on the risks and precautions concerning the travel destination. These sources include without limitation:
If there is an emergency (e.g., geo-political, health related or any other unforeseeable situation) in the foreign country during the travel, the employee must contact his/her direct supervisor/manager as soon as possible to advise the supervisor/manager of the situation and receive appropriate direction. An employee may request or may be directed by an authorized supervisor/member of management to immediately return to the continental U.S. for work as soon as possible under the circumstances. An employee’s refusal to follow a reasonable directive or refusal to cooperate with reasonable efforts to return the employee back to the continental U.S. or other designated location may be considered insubordination and subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Foreign Currency:**
Foreign currency may be purchased at U.S. banks, foreign exchange firms, foreign exchange facilities at airports, at the hotels, and selected merchants. When purchasing foreign currency, ensure an imprinted receipt is obtained and submit with expense report for reimbursement. Most currency exchange operations include the currency exchange fee in the rate and do not separately charge the exchange fee. When the currency exchange fee is charged, it should be itemized on the receipt. Reimbursement for the exchange fee should be claimed as a miscellaneous item on the expense reimbursement form. Foreign currency used for meals, transportation, and other expenses should be claimed for reimbursement using the exchange rate excluding the exchange fee (when exchange fee is charged separately). When exchange fee is not separately charged, the exchange rate use for expense reimbursement must be the actual. When more than one exchange of the same type of foreign currency is made during the reporting period, a weighted average exchange rate (total U.S. dollars divided by total amount of foreign currency brought) must be used. All expenses must be recorded in U.S. dollars, with the currency conversion rate clearly noted on the expense report and on all support receipts.

Use of credit cards is also common for international travel. When personal credit card is used, the County will reimburse the expenses based on the actual charges billed to the employee. A copy of the credit card statement with original receipt showing the actual transaction amount is needed for expense reimbursement claim.

**LONG TERM TRAVEL**

When employees temporarily travel to one duty location for 30 or more consecutive days, but less than 365 days, this is considered long term travel status and the regular per diem rates do not apply.
Any long term travel status must be pre-authorized by the department head and Labor Relations if it is not a provision of any existing labor contracts, with a letter detailing the lodging arrangement, requested meal per diem and other pertinent information.

The long-term per diem for both domestic and international travel will be based on 55% of the applicable federal per diem allowance and is applied when a person’s original estimated travel is for more than 30 consecutive days but less than one year in one location. The long term travel per diem rate applies on the first day of travel.

**RELOCATION (NOT TRAVEL)**

If the employee will be away from their duty post for more than 365 days, then he/she is no longer considered on travel status. Beginning at the time the employee knows the duration will be greater than 365 days, it becomes relocation. Related expenses, if approved by the department head and Labor Relations, will be treated as moving and only expenses that qualify as moving expenses will be allowed and will be reported on employee’s W-2.

**EXPENSE REPORTING**

**General Guidelines:**
Within 14 calendar days of return from a County business trip or official function, a final accounting of all expenses must be completed on a trip expense report (Trip Expense Voucher) and submitted to the traveler’s department. This must be approved, as indicated under the Levels of Approval section on page 16 and submitted to the Controller-Treasurer Department within 21 calendar days of return from travel. The report is required even when no money is due. The accounting will be considered delinquent if not received by the Controller-Treasurer within 28 calendar days of the event. A pattern of delinquent accounting will be grounds for disciplinary action and suspension of future travel privileges.

**Documentation Requirements:**
For each travel occasion, minimum documentation must include a Travel Authorization, if written approval required or advance funds requested, a Trip Expense Voucher and pertinent supporting documentation for the final accounting which must be completed within 14 days of return.

In each department there should be a process in place that assures prompt review and approval of trip expense reports so they can be submitted timely for payment.

When individual or aggregate claimed expenses on final Trip Expense Voucher exceed 5% or $100, whichever is higher, of authorized amount on the Travel Authorization, or expenses not previously authorized (such as additional travel days, hotel nights, airfare, and/or rental car not shown on original Travel Authorization) are claimed, travelers need to obtain same management level of approval from the department for the adjusted amount. Original authorized amount should be kept visible and the approver needs to initial next to the adjusted amount noted with the subsequent approval date.
The review of Trip Expense Voucher reports should include the following important checks:

All expenses are reasonable, necessary and consistent with guidelines stated in this manual
Reports are submitted within the required time frames
Any amounts due to the County are reimbursed
Claims are complete, totals are accurate:
- An accounting of all expenses, no matter how they were paid
- Itemized listing of all expenses
- Amount of cash advance, if issued
- Name and location where the event took place
- Reason for business travel
- Date/time of departure and date/time of return
- Referral to separate mileage claim, if applicable
- Detail of meals, including names and business relationship of fellow County traveler(s) or guests whose meals are included in the claim
- The final disposition is correct, i.e., balance due to employee or balance due to County

Required supporting documents and receipts are attached. Blank forms and instructions can be found in Appendix F. The following documentation is required, if applicable:

- Copy of approved travel authorization
- Invoice and trip itinerary from vendor or travel agent, if applicable
- Copy of Extended Travel/Saturday Night Stayover Reimbursement Request
- Passenger copy of used plane/public carrier ticket, if applicable
- Car rental – original car rental receipt showing the dates and number of days, mileage driven, and type of vehicle rented (the credit card receipt alone is insufficient); copy of request justification for using rental car if it was not stated in the approved travel authorization; written explanation of any unusually high mileage
- Event brochure or agenda for conference, training, special event, including supplemental pages (if any) that have price information
- Hotel bill or statement, even if vendor was paid directly or on an estimated basis
- Receipts for non-meal expenses greater than $10.00
- Detailed receipts for meal expenses
  - Board of Supervisors, and those traveling in their capacity as members of boards, commissions, committees and task forces advisory to the Board of Supervisors, must submit original detailed/itemized receipts for all meal expenses.
  - For all other travelers, detailed receipts for meal expenses required if P- Card is used, claim for meal exceeds the per diem amount, or when meal is purchased for clients or children in escort or because of special dietary needs, excluding alcoholic beverages; written explanation on a Travel Exceptions Form is required if receipt does not provide detail.
  - For expenses incurred by an official guest of the County, include the name of
the guest, the guest’s affiliation, and business purpose for the guest’s expenses
☐ SAP Journal Entry Number of deposit that shows excess funds were returned to the County
☐ A written explanation if reporting any travel cost which may appear to be unusually high, questionable, or when exceptions have been authorized
☐ Approved Travel Exceptions Form(s), if applicable
Trip expense report is properly signed by the traveler with the approver’s signature. Any alteration on claimed amounts should be duly signed and subsequently approved.
Proof of attendance, and copy of continuing education credits certificate when applicable.

The staff processing the travel claims are required to update the following reportable items, if applicable:
1. additional costs and justifications by Department Head if there are more than three (five from SSA or VMC) travelers attending the same seminar or workshop (see requirements noted on page 9);
2. additional costs and justifications by departments if the travelers use rental car companies other than the state contracted parties;
3. additional costs and justifications by departments if the travelers incur lodging expenses within the eight Bay Area counties; and
4. Any other applicable situations.

**Reimbursement from Outside Source:**
Sometimes County travelers are able to claim all or a portion of the reimbursement from a non-County source. There are two ways to handle the reimbursement:

The traveler can submit a full claim for County reimbursement and turn over the outside reimbursement to the Controller-Treasurer.
Alternatively, the traveler can keep the outside reimbursement and deduct the amount from the County reimbursement claim.

With either treatment, the source of the additional funding should be noted on the claim.

**Out-of-County Trials:**
County employees who are participating in a trial are provided an allowance of $10.00 per working day when the following conditions are met:

The person is an employee of the Office of the District Attorney, Public Defender or County Counsel
The employee’s out-of-county work on the trial is more than 7 working days in a pay period
The trial location is outside the county and beyond a reasonable daily commuting distance for the employee
The trial lasts longer than 20 working days
Claims for this allowance shall be submitted within 14 days following the conclusion of the trial and prior to the close of the fiscal year in which the trial concludes.

**Out-of-State Transport of Prisoners:**
Reimbursement claims related to out-of-state transportation of prisoners shall comply with related rules and regulations under the authority of the California State Board of Control.

**Settling Expenses for Advances:**
The Trip Expense Voucher shows total expenses, the amount charged to and paid by the County, and the amount advanced to the traveler. If the amount charged and advanced has not covered the actual expenses, the difference will be reimbursed to the traveler. Likewise, any overpayments resulting from the excess of travel advances over actual expenses must be repaid to the County when the trip expense report is submitted. The department should deposit the employee’s reimbursement check and list SAP journal entry number of deposit to the Controller-Treasurer Department with the approved Trip Expense Voucher at the time of final accounting. If expenses and advances are equal, the report must still be filed.

**Unused Advances:**
Any advance warrants to the traveler which have not been cashed and are not needed should be provided to the Controller-Treasurer to be voided immediately following such determination. If an employee has cancelled his/her attendance at a conference for which payments have been made by the County and for which refunds are due by the vendor to the County, the employee/department should request those applicable refunds and turn them over to the Controller-Treasurer Department. The accounts originally charged for the expenditure will be credited (abated) for these refunds.

**Delinquent Advance Settlement:**
A Trip Expense Voucher and supporting documentation are due to the Controller-Treasurer 21 calendar days after completion of travel. If applicable, documentation should include the SAP journal entry number of deposit (showing funds were returned to County). If not received by the Controller-Treasurer Department within 28 days of return, the settlement will be considered delinquent. The Controller-Treasurer will send notification to the traveler and Department Travel Coordinator that settlement is due. If there is no response after the initial notice and two subsequent 30 day notices (total 90 days from date of return), the County is authorized to deduct the entire amount of the advance from the employee’s wages, based on the employee’s agreement when applying for the advance, and the traveler will not be eligible for an additional travel advance until existing unsettled advances have been resolved.

In addition, once delinquent, any unsettled advance shall be deducted from the final pay check of an employee leaving County service. The Travel Authorization has an authorization to this effect.

**Reimbursement of Expenses:**
Reimbursements for business related expenses that have been documented in accordance with these policies and procedures are tax-exempt.
One of the requirements for IRS’s accountable plan is that traveler must adequately account for expenses incurred within a reasonable period of time. For travelers who paid upfront cost for their business travel, they must send the approved Trip Expense Voucher within 60 days from the travel ending date to qualify for reimbursement.

The processing of a claim should take no more than 5 business days once after being received by the Controller-Treasurer Department if no additional information is needed from traveler or department. All reimbursement will be sent via electronic funds transfer (Direct Deposit or ACH) to employee’s bank account on file. An email will be sent to the employee indicating that the reimbursement has occurred. The employee is required to sign up for direct deposit (ACH) for travel expense reimbursement. Please contact department designated vendor master requester to create or change ACH information.

**TRAVEL RELATED TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TUITION REIMBURSEMENT**

**General Guidelines:**
A professional development fund may be used for travel costs related to attendance at professional seminars and conferences, as provided in an applicable employment or labor agreement. Except as provided below, all reimbursements from a professional development fund that relate to travel shall follow policies and procedures contained in this Desk Reference Manual.

The taxability of any such reimbursement is subject to the existing provision of Section 127 “Educational Assistance Program” of the Internal Revenue Code. Employees must meet all Internal Revenue Service stipulations regarding appropriate expenses and required documentation. Employees are advised to obtain tax counsel concerning the reportability and deductibility of professional development reimbursements. Generally, educational expenses qualifying as job-related are not reportable by the County as income to an employee. There are some exceptions to this general rule, such as when the professional development fund is used to purchase goods or equipment the County does not own.

**Travel Related To SCVMC P41 Physician Licensure and Certification Fund for Professional Growth and Development**

This section of the County Travel Policy governs travel related to the P41 Licensure and Certification Fund.

For P41 physicians and podiatrists, Continuing Medical Education (CME) is a mandatory requirement under California law to maintain medical licensure. CME is pertinent to enhance the skills of the physician/podiatrist in order to provide medical care, research and administration. Each P41 physician or podiatrist may be reimbursed for tuition and professional development expenses up to a maximum of $4,500 per fiscal year, prorated by the number of months employed. The unused balance, which may not exceed one year’s allocation, may be carried forward into the subsequent fiscal year. However, the maximum amount available at any given time may not exceed $9,000.
**Travel Authorization**

Advance written approval from SCVMC Chief Medical Officer (CMO), and the County Executive if appropriate, is required for all CME related travels.

Prior to any CME travel, a P41 physician or podiatrist must complete the Travel Authorization (TA) Form and the Travel Supplemental Form with supporting conference brochure/website information and documentation of estimated expenses as discussed below. The conference information provided must include the actual dates for conference seminars/sessions in addition to advertised conference dates that may include days for travel or other activities. All travel forms must be submitted to the CMO, and the County Executive as appropriate, and approval must be granted before the physician/podiatrist departs for the conference.

In order to complete the TA and Supplemental Forms, a physician/podiatrist must obtain price quotes to estimate travel expenses. Price quotes must be obtained from the County’s authorized travel agency and travel must be booked using the County’s authorized travel agency. However, if a lower price quote is found by the physician/podiatrist, both the County’s travel agency quote and the quote from the carrier/provider with the lower price must be appropriately documented and included in the TA for advance approval in order for the physician/podiatrist to independently book the lower fare.

To attend a conference outside of the continental United States, a physician/podiatrist must first discuss the conference with the CMO for pre-approval prior to completing the TA and Supplemental Forms. Upon the CMO’s preliminary approval, the physician/podiatrist may then complete the TA and Supplemental Forms for the CMO’s signature and then the forms must be forwarded to the County Executive for final approval prior to travel. Please refer to Travel Authorization for more details.

**Travel Reimbursement**

CME travel within the continental United States (US) will be approved for full reimbursement of appropriate expenses provided the documentation is complete and turned in on schedule. Reimbursement for CME travel outside of the continental US may be permitted and reimbursed if it is determined in the discretion of the CMO and the County Executive to be pertinent to enhance the skills of the physician/podiatrist in order to provide medical care/research/administration and it is approved in advance of travel. Requests and reimbursement for travel outside of the continental US will be handled on an individual basis.

For lodging, a physician/podiatrist should stay at the designated conference hotel and will be reimbursed at the conference hotel rate, as stated in the “Lodging Reimbursement” exception section. Any upgrade will be at the traveler’s own expense. Couples who are both employed by the County and attending the same conference will receive shared reimbursement (one half each) for lodging.

Requests for overnight stays the evening before the start of the conference must be pre-approved and will be approved only if sufficient time is unavailable to travel the first day of the conference. Requests for overnight stays the evening of the last day of the conference will
be reviewed and will be approved only if it is impractical to return home that evening. If the physician/podiatrist wishes to stay additional nights, the physician/podiatrist is responsible for those nights.

Meals will be reimbursed not to exceed per diem reimbursement as per County Travel Policy. Meal reimbursement will not be approved if meals are provided at the conference at designated times. If written justification on a Travel Exceptions Form is provided as to why meals provided at the conference were not consumed, the written explanation will be reviewed for possible reimbursement per the County Travel Policy.

Rental cars will be approved for compact models only and must be in the name of the physician/podiatrist pre-approved for travel. If a physician/podiatrist has a valid County of Santa Clara Driver’s Permit, rental car insurance need not be taken and will not be reimbursed as County coverage will apply (refer to “Rental Car Insurance”). Fuel plans, upgrades, additional features, insurance for a spouse, additional passengers or a physician/podiatrist who does not have a valid County Driver’s Permit, etc., are not covered and will not be reimbursed. Only one car per couple will be eligible for reimbursement if both are attending the same conference.

Expense Reporting
The physician/podiatrist should submit his/her Trip Expense Voucher with all required documentation to the appropriate Medical Administration Assistant (MAA) within 14 days of his/her return from travel in order for the Trip Expense Voucher to be timely processed and submitted to Controller-Treasurer Department within 21 days.

Proof of attendance and CME earned are required for all CME travel reimbursement. Since it may take months before a physician/podiatrist receives the CME certificate, a CME Credit and Attendance Certification Form (Appendix Q-7) indicating the traveler’s participation must be submitted with the final Trip Expense Voucher should the CME conference form be unavailable. It is the responsibility of physician/podiatrist to ensure that copies of CME certificates are submitted to the appropriate MAA once available. The MAA must verify that information on the CME certificate matches information shown on the Attendance Certification Form, and must inform Controller-Treasurer Department if there is any discrepancy that warrants an adjustment of the travel expenses claimed. The Controller-Treasurer Department will deny reimbursement of expenses (including without limitation registration fee, hotel, meals, transportation and/or airfare if applicable) incurred on dates lacking proof of attendance and certified CME hours, even if the travel was initially pre-approved, unless an exception under this Travel Policy otherwise applies.