



Town of Discovery Bay

Program Area: Administrative	Policy Name: Reimbursement of Expense/Travel	Policy Number: 008
Date Established: December 6, 2009	Date Amended: March 7, 2018	Resolution:

**POLICY FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES
AND TRAVEL OF OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES
AND
FOR BOARD MEMBER COMPENSATION**

I. GENERAL

The Board of Directors of The Town of Discovery Bay Community Services District (TODB) believes that it is important that elected and appointed officials and members of boards, commissions and committees and employees remain informed and trained in issues affecting the affairs of the TODB and that attendance at institutes, hearings, meetings, conferences or other gatherings is of value to the TODB and its citizens. The benefits include:

- a. The opportunity to discuss the community's concerns with county, state and federal officials;
- b. Participation in regional, state and national organizations whose activities affect the TODB;
- c. Attending educational seminars improve officials' skill and information levels; and
- d. Promoting public service and morale by recognizing such service.

In order to promote these endeavors, to protect public resources and foster public trust in the use of those resources, as well as comply with state law requirements regarding reimbursement of expenses, the Board hereby sets forth the travel and expense reimbursement policies for the TODB.

Elected and appointed officials, members of boards, commissions and committees, and employees are referred to collectively as "officials" and individually as an "official" in this Policy, except where specifically noted.

All anticipated conferences, conventions and professional meetings shall be budgeted for in the budget. As the trip is being paid for with public funds, it shall be the responsibility of the official undertaking the trip to make every effort to attend the entire conference and as many sessions as possible.

II. EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

A. AUTHORIZED EXPENSES

TODB funds, equipment, supplies (including letterhead), titles, and staff time must only be used for authorized TODB business. Expenses incurred in connection with the following types of activities generally constitute authorized expenses, as long as the other requirements of this Policy are met:

1. Communicating with representatives of county, regional, state and national government on TODB adopted policy positions;
2. Attending educational seminars designed to improve officials' skill and information levels;
3. Participating in regional, state and national organizations whose activities affect the TODB's interests;
4. Implementing TODB-approved strategy for attracting or retaining businesses to the TODB, which will typically involve at least one staff member;
5. Meetings such as those listed above for which a meeting stipend is expressly authorized under this policy.
6. Meetings of District representatives or committees in accordance with an adopted District Representative listing;
7. Unanticipated out of pocket expenses directly necessary to carrying out the business of TODB and alternative methods of payment are not reasonably available under the circumstances;
8. Recognizing service to the TODB (for example, thanking a longtime employee with a retirement gift or celebration of nominal value and cost);
9. Attending TODB community functions; and
10. Promoting, marketing or celebrating TODB milestones, accomplishments, events and activities.

All other expenditures require prior approval by the Board.

Expenses for international and out-of-state travel, other than the Tahoe-Reno basin, require prior Board approval.

B. EXPENSES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Examples of personal expenses that TODB will not reimburse include, but are not limited to:

1. The personal portion of any trip;
2. Political or charitable contributions or events;

3. Family expenses, including partner's expenses, when accompanying official on agency-related business¹, as well as children- or pet-related expenses;
4. Entertainment expenses, including theater, movies (either in-room or at the theater), sporting events (including gym, massage and/or golf related expenses), or other cultural events, unless it is a networking activity of the conference or seminar and directly organized by the sponsor;
5. Alcohol or personal bar expenses;
6. Non-mileage personal automobile expenses, including repairs, traffic citations, insurance or gasoline; and
7. Personal losses incurred while on TODB business. Any questions regarding the propriety of a particular type of expense should be resolved by the approving authority before the expense is incurred.

C. TRANSPORTATION

Reimbursement for travel expenses will be based on the method of transportation that is in the best interest of TODB, considering the traveler's time, the nature of the business to be conducted, the training involved, the typical method of getting to the location, and the overall cost(s) involved. When practical, the least expensive method of travel is preferred. When travelling in a privately-owned vehicle to attend conferences or meetings that are of such distance that it is more economical to take commercial air transportation, the commercial airfare rate will be reimbursable and not automobile mileage. Government and group rates, when less expensive, must be used when available.

1. **Airfare.** Airfares that are reasonable and economical shall be eligible for purposes of reimbursement.

2. **Automobile.** Automobile mileage is reimbursed at Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") rates in effect at the time of travel. These rates are designed to compensate the driver for gasoline, insurance, maintenance, and other expenses associated with operating their personal vehicle. This amount does not include bridge and road tolls, which are also reimbursable.

a. Employees who receive a monthly automobile allowance shall be eligible for the above reimbursement should one or both of the two below listed criteria apply:

I. The employee is authorized by the General Manager to stay overnight at the destination.

¹If trip arrangements are made, as a convenience, for spouse or family members, reimbursement to the TODB for any advanced expenses should be received by the TODB prior to the trip.

II. The employee drives a minimum distance of twenty-five miles (25) from place of employment or residence, whichever is less, to a single destination. The employee is reimbursed for the mileage of the entire trip.

b. Method of calculating distance traveled requires mileage noted for each point-to-point trip segment. To calculate these distances please use Yahoo! Maps, MapQuest, or Google Maps.

c. An official seeking reimbursement shall fill out the required "Expense Report" form for payment and have it signed by the General Manager or his/her designee before submittal for reimbursement.

3. **Car Rental.** With prior approval of the General Manager, rental rates that are reasonable and economical shall be eligible for purposes of reimbursement.

4. **Taxis or Shuttles.** Fares for Taxis, shuttles or similar transportation may be reimbursed, including a 15 percent gratuity per fare, when the cost of such fares is equal to or less than the cost of car rentals, gasoline and parking combined, or when such transportation is necessary for time-efficiency.

D. LODGING

Lodging expenses, including all applicable taxes and fees, will be reimbursed or paid for when travel on official TODB business reasonably requires an overnight stay. If such lodging is in connection with a conference, lodging expenses must not exceed the group rate published by the conference sponsor for the meeting in question if such rates are available at the time of booking. If less expensive and available, travelers must request government rates. If the group rate is not available, reimbursement at the IRS rate in effect at the time of travel for that location shall apply (IRS Publication 463). If the group rate and IRS rate are not available for suitable lodging within 5 (five) miles of the meeting location, reasonable lodging expenses that exceed the group and IRS rates may be preapproved by the General Manager. In no event shall reimbursement exceed 300 percent of the maximum lodging allowance. Receipts are required for lodging expenses.

E. MEALS

A local expense reimbursement policy identifying a "per diem" of reasonable rates for meals is not adopted. Per Diem for official TODB travel shall be set at the IRS M&IE first/last day and full day of travel allowance rate in effect at the time of travel for that location. Meal receipts are not required for reimbursement at the IRS M&IE rates.

If your trip provides for a meal already paid for (such as through registration costs, conference fees, etc.), that meal must be deducted at the applicable IRS meal rate from your M&IE per diem allowance. Continental breakfast items, hors d'oeuvres, snacks, etc. are not considered meals.

Meals directly related to TODB business including, but not limited to, workshops/meetings conducted during meal times; participation at state, county, regional and local events; attendance at community functions; workgroup meetings; employee service appreciation/recognition; milestone celebrations and special occasions are reimbursable at the actual amount expended and supported by receipt.

Documentation of the nature and circumstances of the meal is required within thirty (30) calendar days of occurrence.

F. MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

Officials will be reimbursed for actual telephone, fax, document printing, parking, tolls and other reasonable expenses directly related to TODB business. Telephone bills should identify which calls were made on TODB business.

G. CASH ADVANCE POLICY

From time to time, it may be necessary for an official to request a cash advance to cover anticipated expenses while traveling or doing business on the TODB's behalf. Such request for an advance should be submitted to the General Manager ten (10) working days prior to the need for the advance with the following information:

1. The purpose of the expenditure(s);
2. The benefits of such expenditure to TODB;
3. The anticipated amount of the expenditure(s) (for example, hotel rates, meal costs, and transportation expenses); and
4. The dates of the expenditure(s).

Any unused advance must be returned to the TODB within five (5) working days of the official's return, along with a report and receipts documenting how the advance was used. In the event the General Manager is uncertain as to whether a request complies with this Policy, such individual must seek resolution from the Board.

H. CREDIT CARD USE POLICY

TODB has an agency credit card for TODB business related expenses such as airline tickets, hotel reservations, conference/training registration, meals, supplies, fuel and other similar expenses. With approval of the General Manager, an employee may be issued an agency credit card for the purpose of conducting TODB business. Receipts with appropriate documentation for each charge expense must be submitted within ten (10) working days of use. Except as allowed under Section B(3), TODB credit cards may not be used for personal expenses, even if the official subsequently reimburses the TODB.

I. EXPENSE REPORT CONTENT AND SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Cash advance, petty cash and credit card expenses must be supported by receipt(s) and signed written documentation that verify each expenditure complies with this policy. Such documentation shall be by memo or other written form acceptable to the General Manager.

All travel expense reimbursement requests must be submitted on an Expense Report form provided by TODB. This form shall include the following advisory:

“All expenses reported on this form must comply with the TODB’s policies relating to expenses and use of public resources. The information submitted on this form is a public record. Penalties for misusing public resources and violating the TODB’s policies include loss of reimbursement privileges, restitution, civil and criminal penalties as well as additional income tax liability.”

Expense reports must document that the expense in question met the requirements of this Policy. Officials must submit their expense reports within thirty (30) calendar days of an expense being incurred, accompanied by receipts documenting each expense. Restaurant receipts are not required if being reimbursed for full day or first day/last day per diem at the IRS M&IE rate. Inability to provide timely documentation may result in the expense being borne by the official.

In the event the official does not attend the trip and non-refundable expenses have been incurred for registration, lodging and/or travel, the non-attending official shall submit a written explanation of the reasons for non-attendance to the General Manager. The General Manager shall determine if the public funds advanced must be reimbursed to the TODB. Any decision of the General Manager may be appealed to the Board.

All expenses are subject to verification that they comply with this Policy.

J. REPORTS TO BOARD

At the next regular TODB Board meeting, each elected or appointed official, or member of a board, commission or committee (but not employees) shall submit a written report on the meeting or training attended at TODB expense. If multiple officials attended, a joint report may be made. Submission of the written report is a prerequisite to reimbursement of expenses.

K. COMPENSATION FOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Each member of the Board of Directors shall receive compensation as stipulated in the Board Bylaws, and as may be amended, for attendance (in addition to any reimbursement for expenses) at the following meetings, provided that total compensation complies with the Board Bylaws, as noted in Article 2, Section 2, COMPENSATION.

1. A regular, special, emergency, adjourned regular, or adjourned special meeting of the Board of Directors TODB, or of a regular, special, emergency, adjourned regular, or adjourned special meeting of a committee of the Board of Directors which constitutes a legislative body in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act, commencing with California Government Code Section 54900, which is duly called in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act, commencing with California Government Code Section 54950.
2. Representation of TODB at a public event, provided that the Board of Directors has previously approved the member’s representation at a Board of Directors meeting, either specifically, or by adoption of a list of representatives authorizing attendance of representatives at meetings and representation of TODB.
3. Representation of TODB at a public meeting or a public hearing conducted by another public agency, provided that the Board of Directors has previously approved the member’s representation at a Board of Director’s meeting, either specifically, or by

adoption of a list of representatives authorizing attendance of representatives at meetings and representation of TODB.

4. Representatives of TODB at a meeting of a public benefit nonprofit corporation on whose board TODB has membership, provided that the Board of Directors has previously approved the member's representation at a Board of Directors meeting, either specifically, or by adoption of a list of representatives authorizing attendance of representatives at meetings and representation of TODB.
5. Participation in a training program on a topic that is directly related to TODB, provided that the Board of Directors has specifically previously approved the member's participation at a Board of Directors meeting.

Compensation for meeting attendance shall be submitted on a TODB Expense Report, signed by the Board Member and the General Manager.

For items 2, 3, 4 and 5, a prerequisite to payment for attendance is that the member attending delivers a written report on the member's representation or participation at the next Board of Directors meeting following the representation or participation.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS; VIOLATION

TODB officials should keep in mind that some expenditures may be subject to reporting under the Political Reform Act and other laws. All agency expenditures are public records subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act and other applicable laws. Use of public resources or falsifying expense reports in violation of this policy may result in any or all of the following: 1) loss of reimbursement privileges, 2) a demand for restitution to the TODB, 3) the agency's reporting the expenses as income to the elected official to state and federal tax authorities, 4) civil penalties of up to \$1,000 per day and three times the value of the resources used, and 5) prosecution for misuse of public resources.