

## **Travel and Meeting Expense Reimbursement Policy**

### **Overview**

It is the policy of Winnefox Library System to reimburse staff for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred during approved work-related travel.

Employees seeking reimbursement should incur the lowest reasonable travel expenses and exercise care to avoid impropriety or the appearance of impropriety. Reimbursement is allowed only when reimbursement has not been, and will not be, received from other sources. If a circumstance arises that is not specifically covered in this travel policy, then the most conservative course of action should be taken.

Business travel policies are aligned with system reimbursement rules. All business-related travel paid with Winnefox Library System funds must comply with company expenditure policies.

### **Authorization and responsibility**

With the exception of travel in the normal course of the job (such as member library visits, or local store stops for supply purchases), staff travel must be authorized. Authorized travelers should verify that planned travel is eligible for reimbursement before making travel arrangements. When travel is combined with lodging and other reimbursements, the System requests that the authorized traveler submit a travel reimbursement form and supporting documentation within 30 days.

An individual may not approve his or her own travel or reimbursement. The travel authorization and reimbursement form must be signed by the director or the assistant director. The business manager will approve travel reimbursement for the director.

Designated approval authorities are required to review expenditures and withhold reimbursement if there is reason to believe that the expenditures are inappropriate or extravagant.

### **Personal funds**

Travelers should review reimbursement guidelines before spending personal funds for business travel to determine if such expenses are reimbursable. Winnefox Library System reserves the right to deny reimbursement of travel-related expenses for failure to comply with policies and procedures.

Travelers who use personal funds to facilitate travel arrangements will not be reimbursed until after the trip occurs and proper documentation is submitted.

### **Exceptions**

Occasionally it may be necessary for travelers to request exceptions to this travel policy. Requests for exceptions to the policy must be made in writing and approved by the director or the assistant director. Exceptions related to the director's expenses must be submitted to the business manager.

## **Travel Expenses/Procedures**

### ***General information***

Authorized business travel for staff that includes prepayments must be pre-approved. Winnefox Library System will not reimburse for late fees. Travelers should seek to avoid sales tax wherever possible by using the system's tax exempt status..

### ***Permissible prepaid travel expenses***

Before the travel, Winnefox Library System may issue prepayments for airfare, rail transportation, conference registration fees and cash advances. Applicable policies and methods of payments for these prepayments follow.

**Airfare.** Travelers are expected to obtain the lowest available airfare that reasonably meets business travel needs. Airfare may be prepaid by the business office.

Travelers are encouraged to book flights at least 30 days in advance to avoid premium airfare pricing.

**Rail transportation.** Winnefox Library System will prepay rail transportation.

**Conference registration fees.** Conference registration fees can be prepaid with a credit card or check through the business office. Business-related banquets or meals that are considered part of the conference can be paid with the registration fees; however, such meals must be deducted from the traveler's per diem allowance.

### ***Reimbursements***

Requests for reimbursements of travel-related expenses are submitted on a Travel Reimbursement form. This form must be accompanied by supporting documentation. If the requested reimbursement exceeds 20 percent of the total pre-trip estimate, the Travel Reimbursement form must be signed by the director or the assistant director.

These forms should be submitted to the business office within thirty days after the trip is completed. Travel Reimbursement forms not submitted within this time frame require exception approval from the director or from the assistant director.

Reimbursement of travel expenses is based on documentation of reasonable and actual expenses supported by the original, itemized receipts where required. Reimbursements that may be paid by Winnefox Library System are shown below.

**Airfare.** If the airfare was not prepaid by the business office, an original itemized airline receipt, an e-ticket receipt/statement or an Internet receipt/statement is required. The receipt must show the method of payment and indicate that payment was made.

**Rail transportation.** If rail transportation was not prepaid by the business office, an original itemized receipt, original e-ticket receipt/statement or Internet receipt/statement is required. The receipt must show the method of payment and indicate that payment was made.

**Automobile (personally owned—domestic travel).** Proof of a valid driver's license issued within the United States and personal automobile insurance are required for expenses to be reimbursed. Drivers should be aware of the extent of coverage (if any) provided by his or her automobile insurance company for travel that is business or not personal in nature.

Reimbursement for use of a personal automobile is based on the IRS Standard Mileage Rate.

**Conference registration fees.** If the conference fee was not prepaid, Winnefox Library System will reimburse these fees, including business-related banquets or meals that are part of the conference registration. Original receipts to support the payment are required. If the conference does not provide a receipt, then a cancelled check, credit card slip/statement or documentation that the amount was paid is required for reimbursement.

A prorated amount for the meals provided must be deducted from the traveler's per diem. See Meals (per diem) for more detail. Entertainment activities such as golf outings and sightseeing tours will not be reimbursed.

Registration fees paid directly by an individual will not be reimbursed until the conference is completed.

**Lodging (commercial).** The cost of overnight lodging (room rate only) will be reimbursed to the traveler if the authorized travel is 45 miles or more from the traveler's home or primary worksite.

Exceptions to this restriction may be approved in writing by the director or by the assistant director.

Winnefox Library System will reimburse lodging expenses at reasonable, single occupancy or standard business room rates. When the hotel or motel is the conference or convention site, reimbursement will be limited to the conference rate.

**Meals (per diem).** Per diem allowances are reimbursable for travel outside the Winnefox Library System boundaries.

Winnefox Library System per diem rates are based on the U.S. General Services Administration Guidelines, which vary by city location. In addition to meals these rates include incidental expenses such as laundry, dry cleaning and service tips (e.g., housekeeping or porter tips). Incidental expenses, unless specifically cited in this policy, will not be reimbursed

Per diem reimbursements are based on departure and return times over a 12-hour time frame and are prorated accordingly.

0-12 hours    ½ of per diem

12-24 hours    per diem

24-36 hours    1 ½ per diem

If a free meal is served on the plane, included in a conference registration fee, built in to the standard, hotel room rate or replaced by a legitimate business meal, the per diem allowance for that meal may not be claimed.

Receipts are not required for per diem allowances. Per diem allowances are reimbursed after the trip is completed.

**Business meals.** Travelers are required to follow Winnefox Library System expenditure policies when requesting reimbursement for business meals. The purchase of a meal for someone other than the traveler must be preapproved by the director or assistant director. Original itemized receipts are required. Purchase of alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed.

**Business expenses.** Business expenses, including faxes, photocopies, Internet charges, data ports and business telephone calls incurred while on travel status, can be reimbursed. Original itemized receipts are required if available.

**Parking.** Original receipts are required for parking fees (including airport parking) totaling \$25 or more. The lodging bill can be used as a receipt when charges are included as part of the overnight stay.

**Telephone calls.** The costs of personal telephone calls are the responsibility of the individual.

**Tolls.** Original receipts are required for tolls totaling \$25 or more.

**Visa, passport fees and immunizations.** If these items are required for international travel, their reimbursement is left to the discretion of your supervisor. If approved by the designated authority, original itemized receipts are required.

### **Nonreimbursable Travel Expenses**

The following items that may be associated with business travel will not be reimbursed by [Company Name]:

- Airline club memberships.
- Airline upgrades.
- Business class for domestic flights or first class for all flights.
- Child care, babysitting, house-sitting, or pet-sitting/kennel charges.
- Commuting between home and the primary work location.
- Costs incurred by traveler's failure to cancel travel or hotel reservations in a timely fashion.
- Evening or formal wear expenses.
- Haircuts and personal grooming.
- Laundry and dry cleaning.
- Passports, vaccinations and visas when not required as a specific and necessary condition of the travel assignment.
- Personal entertainment expenses, including in-flight movies, headsets, health club facilities, hotel pay-per-view movies, in-theater movies, social activities and related incidental costs.
- Travel accident insurance premiums or purchase of additional travel insurance.
- Other expenses not directly related to the business travel.

### **Travel for Non-Employees**

Additional costs for travel, lodging, meal or other travel expenses for spouses or other family members will not be reimbursed unless the individual has a bona fide company purpose for engaging in the travel or attending the event. Such travel is generally limited to senior management and should occur infrequently.