

# HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF LUMBERTON

## *TRAVEL POLICY*

### **Purpose**

To provide for the most efficient means of transportation for the Housing Authority of the City of Lumberton business at the least cost and to provide for the accurate accounting of travel expenses and for their timely reimbursement.

### **Scope**

This policy shall apply to all business travel for the HACL employees, commissioners, residents, and prospective professional employees of which is funded in whole or in part by funds under the control of the HACL.

### **Policy**

All out-of-state travel by the Executive Director and Board of Commissioners must be approved by the Board of Commissioners. The Executive Director shall approve ALL staff travel, as budgeted by the Board of Commissioners.

#### **1. Use of Automobiles**

##### **a. HACL-Owned Vehicle - If Available**

When travel by automobile is determined to be feasible, a HACL owned car, if available, MUST be used instead of a private car. If a HACL car is available but a private car is used, the Executive Director must approve use of private car. The reimbursement rate will be determined by the mileage rate set by the IRS.

##### **b. Private Cars - Use of Car for Official Business**

The HACL provides reimbursement for employees at the current standard mileage rate as set by the IRS for use of private cars on official business when a HACL car is not available.

A private vehicle may be used for convenience instead of flying when on HACL business, provided that the total reimbursement for travel mileage does not exceed the available coach fair for that travel no less than thirty (30) days from the scheduled time of travel.

##### **c. Required Documentation**

Travel shall be documented by the certification of mileage driven, supported by third party verification of distance between the starting point and the point of travel, i.e. Google Maps, MapQuest, etc.

#### **2. Duty Station for the HACL employees is the closer of their personal residence OR the work site address of which the employee reports to each regular work day.**

When a private car is used, actual business mileage is reimbursable. Mileage is measured from the closer of duty station or point of departure to destination and return.

3. When more than one employee attends the same meeting every effort should be made to carpool.
4. Receipts are required for the following:
  - a. Motel/hotel
  - b. Taxi, limousine, bus, etc.
  - c. Air fare (passenger receipt from actual ticket booklet)
  - d. Tolls
  - e. Parking
  - f. Registration fee (documentation of what the fee amount is and what it covers; i.e., meals, snacks, etc.)
  - g. Rental vehicles
  - h. Storage
  - i. Passport (when required for state travel)
5. Air travel shall be coordinated by the employee/commissioner with the assistance of the Executive Director or his/her designee. The HACL will reimburse for coach travel fare rates only. If the airline reservation is changed or canceled for the personal benefit of the employee, it shall be the employee's responsibility to pay any penalties or charges.
6. Daily Travel Status (not overnight) does not require a Travel Request/Authorization form since no per-diem is allowed without an overnight stay. However, business mileage is an eligible reimbursement for same-day travel.
7. Overnight Travel Status - Approved Travel Request/Authorization is required prior to travel. Actual (not estimated) time of departure and time of return must be recorded on travel reimbursement form and must be a destination 35 miles or more from employee's home or duty station.

Cancellations of travel reservations (air, lodging, and registration fees) if made for the convenience of the employee are the employee's expense. These charges are the HACL's expense only if the employee is requested by the HACL to cancel the travel.

*\*The time of departure and arrival must be recorded on the reimbursement form and must include a destination at least 35 miles from employee's point of departure.*

8. Approved Travel Request/Authorization is required if one or more of the following apply for out-of-state travel and overnight travel.
9. Telephone Calls must be for HACL business and identified as to destination (person or company) and purpose of call(s) on Travel Reimbursement form.

An employee who is in travel status for two or more consecutive nights in a week is allowed one personal, long-distance telephone call for each two nights for which reimbursement to the employee may not exceed \$3 for each in-state call or \$5 for each out-of-state call (receipt required).

10. Travel Reimbursement Requests shall be filed for approval and payment within 30 days after the travel period ends for which the reimbursement is being requested. "Travel Period" is defined as the calendar month during which the travel occurred.

11. **Per Diem – Per Diem Method Expenses** other than registration fees, transportation to and from the travel destination and lodging for out of state travel will be covered by a "per diem" allowance. The per diem rate for in-state travel will be \$69.00 per day and \$95.00 per day for out of state travel. No receipts required.

The per diem rate for meals will cover incidental meal expenditures i.e. tips and gratuities.

For partial days on travel, reimbursement for meals and incidentals will be allowed based on the following schedule:

	<i>In-State</i>	<i>Out-of-State</i>
<i>Breakfast</i>	16	25
<i>Lunch</i>	20	30
<i>Dinner</i>	33	40
<i>Total</i>	\$69	\$95

Breakfast: Reimbursement will be authorized provided the traveler began his/her travel day before 7:00 a.m.

Lunch: Reimbursement will be authorized provided the traveler began his/her travel before 11:00 a.m.

Dinner: Reimbursement will be authorized provided the traveler returns after 6:00 p.m.

No reimbursement will be allowed when meals are included as a part of the registration fee unless approved by the Executive Director.

In lieu of the per diem method described above, the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners shall approve meal and incidental costs of the Executive Director and other Board members when the cost is in excess of per diem.

Actual receipts with justification will be required from the Executive Director and Board of Commissioners for meals in excess of per diem.

12. Travel with Family Members/Companions – The HACL does not prohibit the accompanying of family members or companions with employees or commissioners on business travel. However, the HACL shall not directly provide any reimbursement for travel expenses other than for the employee/commissioner.
13. Travel Advance – The HACL may provide a travel advance in an amount not to exceed the total anticipated cost for the travel. The anticipated costs shall include lodging, travel, per diem, registration, parking, baggage fees, and any other costs related to the business travel.
14. Effective Date – This policy is effective December 23, 2015 and supersedes all other policies that might have been in effect prior to the acceptance of this policy statement.
15. Auditing Travel Expense Accounts – **The Finance Director will make periodic reviews of travel expense accounts and verify their compliance with this policy. During the review process, if it is found that a balance is due back to the Agency from an employee or Board member, no further travel will be approved until such balances have been paid.**

Adopted this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of December, 2015.



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Ms. Pam Hunt, Chairperson  
HACL Board of Commissioners