

TRAVEL OVERVIEW

In general, “travel” is defined as travel outside the district boundaries where the employee is acting as a representative of the District. In this case, the District may reimburse for some or all of the qualified expenses. Approval to travel must be obtained before taking any trip.

5.01 Employee Travel-Extended Stay

- Prepare Travel Request, obtaining all needed signatures.
- Use Employee Travel Expense Summary Report found on the Business Services webpage, for registration and advance for travel expenses.
- Allow 10 days for processing.
- Always attach documentation, this includes a copy of registration, conference agenda, etc.
- State date and time of departure, as well as return.
- Registration must be paid from a purchase order.
- All signatures must be present for payment to be considered.
- Provide traveling employee with Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Form found on the Business Services webpage.
- Hotel invoices must be itemized.
- Parking and other miscellaneous expenses will be paid based on submitted receipts.
- When claiming mileage, most current Employee Travel Expense Summary Report must be attached with explanation of to and from destinations. Mileage can be calculated using a web based mileage calculator (i.e. Rand McNally, Google Maps, Mapquest). Mileage reimbursement rate shall not exceed the approved GSA rate found at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/transportation-airfare-pov-etc/privately-owned-vehicle-pov-mileage-reimbursement-rates>. GISD may reimburse at a rate lower than the GSA rate.
- If the employee owes money back to the District, it can be paid by cash, personal check, money order or cashier’s check.

5.02 One Day Trips

Trips in which the employee leaves and returns in the same day are considered **One Day Trips**. When preparing a travel request for a One Day Trip, the following guidelines apply:

- Secure supervisor approval for travel including date, location, and reason for travel.
- Meal expenses will not be reimbursed per IRS guidelines. Employees must stay overnight or have an extended work day to qualify for meal reimbursement.

- Turn in any toll road or parking receipts, as well as mileage calculation.
- Employees receiving a Travel Stipend will not be reimbursed for mileage for travel within Region XIII boundaries.
- Use Employee Travel Expense Summary Report for reimbursement and attach all itemized receipts and mileage calculation. Credit card receipts are not an acceptable substitute for itemized receipts.
- Employee must sign as well as Director/Principal and turn in for payment.

One Day Trips are only reimbursed after the fact and only with itemized receipts. This is different than with an extended stay trip.

General Travel Guidelines

- Travel within the district boundaries is reimbursed, only with approval from Human Resources, at the District's current mileage rate. No lodging or meal expenses are allowed for In-District travel.
- Registration and other non-travel expense must be paid by requisition/purchase order. These types of purchase orders should be prepared in advance and in accordance to the registration deadlines.
- Payments for per diem expenses, actual expenses, and advances requested on the Employee Travel Expense Summary Report are payable only to employee/sponsor noted on the travel request.
- Travel expenses are composed of the cost incurred to reach a destination and return. Living expenses (within established per diem rates) during the trip are also included.
- The CFO reserves the right to modify travel reimbursement requests when less expensive options are available to the employee or travel reimbursement requests are considered excessive.

These costs are more fully described in the following sub-chapters.

5.03 Lodging

Lodging covers the cost of the daily room rental for District employees, students, or administrators. The original hotel bill or receipt must be furnished after the trip. The District is exempt from state sales tax; however, city and county tax will be paid. A Texas Sales tax exemption form and a Texas Hotel Occupancy tax exemption form are available on the Business Services webpage and are included in this manual directly after this chapter. The District will pay state sales tax on out-of-state travel. Taxes are not included in the per diem. Room service, laundry, phone calls, etc. should not be claimed as an expense.

The preferred method of payment for all hotel stays is by district check or district credit card. Advance for lodging costs cannot be made payable to the employee.

Lodging cannot be paid by using employee's personal credit card unless prior permission has been granted by Business Services.

Lodging cannot be booked using employee's hotel reward points. Point usage cannot be reimbursed by the District due to the lack of an itemized hotel receipt.

Credit card receipts are not an acceptable substitute for itemized lodging receipts.

5.04 Meals

Employees may receive reimbursement for actual cost of meals not to exceed a meal allowance of \$40 per full day. **Employee meals will not be reimbursed unless overnight lodging is required. This is the cost of obtaining food, not snacks or incidentals during the trip.** The cost should be clearly itemized on the bill. **Credit card receipts are not an acceptable substitute for itemized meal receipts.** The cost of alcoholic beverages is not a reimbursable expense. **Tax is included in the per diem rates. Gratuities are a reimbursable expense up to full day meal allowance, not to exceed 15%. Gratuities may be reimbursed if a sponsor is paying for an entire group.**

5.05 Transportation

- This is the cost of traveling to a destination and returning while on district business. For all travel expense claims, the Employee Travel Expense Summary Report is used. Mileage can be calculated by using a web based mileage calculator (i.e. Rand McNally, Google Maps, Mapquest). Print a copy and attach it to the travel form.
- Travel requests, which are **not approved**, should be returned to the originator and clearly marked "DISAPPROVED" across the travel request form. The supervisor should note the reason for disapproval on the form.
- When documentation is required for expenses, the documents should provide a separate accounting for student(s) expenses, sponsor expenses, and bus driver expenses (if necessary). Students are required to sign the expense report documenting that meal money was received. Expenses for group or individual travel not approved in advance should not be submitted with the travel request form. Original or certified original expense receipts should be used.

5.05.A Car Rental

All car rentals must be made using Enterprise Rent-A-Car or National.

When entering the purchase order, please include the GISD CD number and billing number. Both have been provided to the campus/department secretaries.

After everything has been approved, use the purchase order to make the reservation.

5.05.B Taxi/Uber/Lyft

GISD employees are encouraged to use car rentals but may use Taxi/Uber/Lyft if unavoidable. All receipts are required for reimbursement.

5.05.C Air Fare

Employees will be reimbursed for actual cost of air travel for district related business. Air travel requests must be pre-approved by the Superintendent or designated District management. At such time as the approval is received, the employee is responsible for making their air travel arrangements. Receipts are required for reimbursements to be processed.

5.05.D Air Travel versus Automobile Travel

The most efficient means of travel should be taken. The district will reimburse the lesser of the cost of air fare to the destination versus mileage reimbursement for the use of personal vehicle or car rental.

5.06 Out of State Travel

All out of State travel must be pre-approved by the CFO. The State of Texas has special reimbursement rates for other cities in other states.

<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120>

If the employee travels to a city in a state that is not listed, then they are reimbursed at the average reimbursement rate for food and lodging for that state. The District will pay state sales tax on out of state travel.

5.07 Student Travel

- All Student Travel must be pre-approved by the campus administrator or department director.
- The sponsor of the group must be a Georgetown ISD employee and is solely responsible for the group adhering to all Georgetown ISD Board policies and guidelines.
- Board Policy CNB (LEGAL) prohibits the use of a 15-passenger van to transport students.
- Each group sponsor is responsible for booking to ensure all travel is within the district guidelines.
- The group sponsor is responsible for obtaining adequate number of chaperones for the number of students traveling and for ensuring all chaperones have completed the volunteer background check with Human Resources.
- Meals are based on departure/arrival time and date. Itemized receipts must be collected to be reimbursed for meals. Student meals include \$5 for breakfast, \$7 for lunch and \$10 for dinner for a daily total of \$22.
- The meal allowance of \$22 per day applies to all in state travel for students and can be requested in advance of the trip.
- For student advances, the sponsor must submit a list of students traveling with the requisition for the advance check to the campus administrative assistant for processing. A completed Cash Advance Form will need to be submitted with the requisition request. The

form can be found on the Business Services webpage and immediately following this section of the manual. A check will be made payable to the employee/sponsor who disburses funds to each student. Student must sign when accepting cash and return all unused cash to the sponsor.

- Hotel stays are only allowable expenses if travel is outside the 100 mile radius of the campus/facility. Campus administrator or department director must approve any exceptions to this guideline in writing prior to the trip.
- The preferred method of payment for all hotel stays is by district check or district credit card. Advance for lodging costs cannot be made payable to the employee.
- Lodging cannot be paid by using employee's personal credit card unless prior permission has been granted by Business Services. A detailed check-out receipt of the stay must be given to Business Services upon return.

5.07.A Charter Bus

Contact the Athletic Office (Ext. 5106) for a list of approved Charter companies.

Get a quote and send to your campus administrative assistant/bookkeeper to generate a PO. Charter buses will be paid for out of your Activity Account.

Outside organizations/booster clubs cannot pay for the charter bus directly. They can make a deposit into your Activity Account to cover the cost.

Once the invoice is paid for the trip, send reimbursement report to Transportation Department with the round trip mileage. For each charter bus used, Transportation will reimburse your Activity Account \$2.25/mile. One charter bus equals two school buses.

5.08 Chaperone Travel

With very limited exception, the District does not pay for chaperone travel. Chaperones must pay their own travel and undergo the same background checks as other volunteers. One example of an exception would be where a female teacher is traveling with all male students. Exceptions must be approved by Business Services or the CFO.

5.09 Meal Reimbursement – Extended Work Day

Meals may be reimbursed to employees for a required extended work day. Criteria include:

- Employee on duty past regular work hours.
- Employee conducting district related business.
- Employee leaving for a remote worksite before 4:30 p.m.
- Out of district work location.

5.10 Travel Reimbursements

All travel reimbursements must be submitted by the last business day of June. The District does not reimburse employees for travel past 60 days from the date of travel.