

**Objective:**

To establish policies and procedures for County employees regarding attendance at conferences, conventions, trainings, seminars and meetings held outside the County, travel on county business including related expenses such as meals, tolls, and use of County vehicles.

**Policy:**

This policy applies to non-elected County employees, except where guidelines have otherwise been established through a collective bargaining agreement. In those instances, the collective bargaining agreement language shall prevail.

- A. Authorization to attend an in-state conference, convention or training, regardless of cost, and/or authorization to incur travel expenses shall be granted by the respective Department Head in the form of a travel authorization request form signed by the Department Head. No claims for expenses shall be audited, allowed, or paid unless such form is attached thereto. Travel or conference taken prior to receiving proper authorization as described herein may be deemed an unauthorized leave and any claims for expense reimbursement may be denied.
- B. Authorization to attend an out-of-state conference, convention or training regardless of costs and/or authorization to incur travel expenses shall require two part approval. First, the department head shall approve the travel request and second, the department head shall present the request to the County Administrator and/or the Personnel Committee for approval.
- C. Determination that requests for reimbursement of travel expenses are in compliance with established County policy and procedure is the responsibility of each department. All travel expense reimbursements are subject to audit.
- D. Reimbursement for travel arising out of an employee's election or appointment as a director within agencies or groups will be allowed.
- E. Travel inside the county with county vehicle shall be as approved by the department head subject to compliance with the terms and conditions of this policy.
- F. Must have budgeted funds available in the proper accounts.

**Procedure:**

The following procedures must be followed when an employee of the County attends a conference, convention, training, seminar or meeting held outside the County and concerning County goals and objectives.

- A. A travel authorization request must be prepared and forwarded to the department head for approval/disapproval.
- B. If the travel:

1. is for a Department Head
  2. is out of state;
  3. has a total cost estimate (including registration, meals, tolls, parking, etc.)  
exceeding \$500 per person; or
  4. includes three or more staff members from the same department,
- the Department Heads must forward the travel authorization request to the County Administrator for approval. The County Administrator will send a copy to the Personnel Committee chair for information.

C. The County Administrator must submit the travel authorization request for his/her travel to the Personnel Chairman for approval.

D. All travel requests should be approved 30 days in advance of travel.

**Conditions of Reimbursement:**

A. Travel arising out of the performance of an employee's job duties, including all incidental expenditures of funds, shall be reimbursed by the County, providing such expenditures meet all conditions of this policy.

B. Documentation of expenses incurred during travel must be submitted on the County Travel Expense Record Form and attached to the reimbursement request along with a copy of the approved Travel Authorization Request.

**Transportation Allowance:**

A. Travel shall be conducted in the most economical mode of transportation. When public transportation, including air, train, or bus will be used, it should be demonstrated that this form of transportation would be more economical in terms of money and/or time than travel by automobile. Employees will be reimbursed the cost of public transportation incurred when supported by the proper receipt. The County will not reimburse any excess baggage fees for air travel unless it is for equipment/baggage necessary to conduct the county business which is necessitating the travel.

B. Reimbursement for use of personal automobiles to travel on County business will be based solely on the most recent IRS allowable reimbursement rate. Mileage reimbursement will be allowed for the driver of the vehicle only regardless of the number of employees traveling in the same vehicle on the same trip. To maximize savings to the County, employees traveling to the same destination shall carpool whenever possible.

C. Travel will be reimbursed from the employees place of work or the employees home, if leaving from home and not coming into the office, whichever is more economical.

D. Automobile repair or towing expenses for personal automobiles when used for travel on County business are not reimbursable.

E. Tolls and parking expenses will be reimbursed at actual cost incurred by the employee when supported by proper receipt. Traffic or parking violation tickets are the responsibility of the individual charged with the violation(s), with the exception of violation(s) arising out of deficiency in automobiles owned by the County.

F. An employee's travel time (work hours) will be compensated in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

G. Travel time and/or related expenses that exceed the basic, minimum requirements of the travel will be at the employee's own expense (i.e. adding an additional overnight stay for convenience or desire, unnecessary early pick-up or late drop off of rental car, etc.)

H. All travel reimbursement shall comply with Federal Income Tax Regulations §1.162-2, its amendments or any predecessors of this regulation.

**Meal Allowance:**

Alpena County will reimburse you for your meals while traveling for work. Receipts must be submitted. Reimbursement request for meals may not exceed \$50.00 per day. No charges for alcoholic beverages will be reimbursed. When the registration for the conference includes meals, additional meal allowance will not be approved.

**Lodging Allowance**

A. Lodging accommodations shall be arranged in the most reasonable and economical manner.

B. In situations where an individual who is not a County employee accompanies a County employee traveling on County business, no expenses related to the non-County employee are reimbursable. Reimbursable expenses for the employee cannot be more than if the County employee traveled alone.

C. Neither in-room movies nor refreshment bars are approved County expenses.