

**City of Urbandale**  
**Employee Travel, Training and Meals Policy and Procedures Manual**  
**Originally Adopted August 7, 2007**  
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**Last Reviewed October 2018**

The City of Urbandale has prepared this policy to establish a consistent basis for the actions of City personnel with regards to City-paid travel, training, and meal expenditures and to provide broad guidelines for the reimbursement of such expenditures. It is the policy of the City to reimburse employees for all necessary and reasonable expenses incurred while on authorized City business. Guidelines cannot replace judgment, interpretation and analysis of individual situations.

**1) Guidelines**

- A) The purposes of the guidelines are:
  - 1) To be fair and equitable. An individual working for the City should neither gain nor lose personally because he or she has incurred reasonable business expenses. Individuals incurring similar expenses are to be reimbursed or not reimbursed consistently throughout the City.
  - 2) To be responsible and prudent in spending our taxpayers' and the City's money. Funds should be spent and documented knowing it will be audited, both internally and by external auditors.
  - 3) To ensure proper documentation is maintained by the City to support all reimbursable expenditures, and to ensure the documentation standards required by the State of Iowa, IRS, and other agencies are met.
- B) If guidance in this policy is in conflict with other City of Urbandale purchasing policies, this policy's guidance supersedes general purchasing requirements for all travel, training, meals and related expenses.
- C) If at any time en-route, during, or returning from a City business trip, a weather emergency, natural disaster, threat to national or regional security, or other circumstances occur that are outside the control of the employee, and deviations from planned travel itineraries result, the employee is expected to utilize rational judgment in regards to their personal safety given the situation. Any expenses incurred by an employee in one of the above situations will be reviewed on a case by case basis to determine if they are reimbursable or personal expenses. Communication of any emergency situation should be directed to the employee's supervisor, Department Director, or City Manager as soon as possible.

**2) Definitions**

- A) For purposes of this policy, references to "conferences" will imply any such trainings, programs, schools, special events, seminar, workshop, consortium, function or meeting that is being attended by a City employee for, on behalf of, or representing, the City of Urbandale.
- B) For purposes of this policy, references to "employee" will refer to any City official, elected official, full or part-time employee, board/commission/committee member or volunteer that has been approved to attend any such conference, and for which the City is assuming to pay travel expenses for.

### **3) Review and Enforcement Procedures**

- A) All expense reports are reviewed by the Finance Department to ensure compliance with City policy, State regulations and prudence in incurring expenses on behalf of taxpayers and the City. Reviews will be made for documentation requirements and for the propriety of the expense under this policy.
- B) Employees must submit one of the applicable forms, located at Appendices of this document, each time a travel, training or meal expense is processed. All information must be completed, and signed by the employee.
- C) Exceptions noted during the review process must be resolved or the claimed expenses will not be reimbursed. In extenuating or unique certain circumstances the City Manager may approve a one-time exception to a policy. Any exceptions must be properly documented and included with submission.
- D) A knowing and intentional violation of this policy by employees may constitute a basis for employee discipline, including and up to termination of employment.
  - 1) Lack of knowledge or understanding of the policies set forth in this document is NOT an excuse for violation. It is up to all Department Directors to ensure their staff understands this policy prior to travel. If clarification of the policy is needed, any such questions should be addressed prior to travel.
- E) As with any employee reimbursements, the IRS has very specific rules about what must be considered taxable wages to an employee. The City must comply with the IRS guidelines, and thus requires documentation to support those decisions. If an item is found to be taxable wages to an employee, the City will follow current payroll procedures for getting any taxable items added to the employee's paystub so that taxes can be calculated, and W-2 wages are properly reflected. Actual reimbursements will be paid gross through normal vendor payment processing; only the tax implications will run through payroll.

### **4) Authorization for Travel and Training**

- A) All predicted travel and training requests should be included in the annual budget setting process.
  - 1) For any budgeted travel/training, authorization has already been given through the budget process; further pre-authorization is not required prior to incurring the expenses, notwithstanding any specific procedures established by Department Directors for their staff.
  - 2) If an unplanned travel or training need arises during the year and is not budgeted, a request for the trip, including an estimate of all expenses (including overtime for non-exempt employees) must be submitted to the Department Director for approval, or in the case of a Department Director, to the City Manager for approval.
    - (a) If the unbudgeted travel is out-of-state, the request must also be approved by the City Manager prior to expenses being incurred.
    - (b) All travel requests are to be reviewed by the Department Director using job relevancy and City benefit as a basis for approval or disapproval of the request. Items that could be considered are:
      - o Federal, State or local mandated training: Required training for licensing, certification, or other qualifications.

- Preparatory Training: Applies where an employee's future job responsibilities, in all probability, will incorporate and require new or little used skills which can be readily acquired only by outside training.
  - Legislative/Intergovernmental: Meetings that appear to hold high potential for long-term positive or negative effect(s) upon the City and/or Department.
  - National, Regional, or State conferences and workshops: Attendance contingent upon quality of workshop/conference as this relates to staff member's current job responsibilities.
- 3) **Authorized Role in a Professional Organization:** If an employee serves in a leadership capacity or as a City representative in their respective professional organization. Such organizations include both structured organizations (one that requires dues/official membership) and informal groups of common-role members or cities (ie: metro managers/mayors/finance, etc.), if participation is deemed beneficial to Urbandale's operations.
- a) Any participation in professional organizations that may require time commitments during normal work hours must be approved by Department Director and City Manager prior to the commitment to participate in order to be considered for payment as "hours worked".
- Any expenses incurred by an employee serving in a capacity with a professional organization is eligible to be reimbursed for only those expenses that are not reimbursed by the professional organization, and subject to the limits established by this policy.

## **5) Travel Expense Procedures:**

### **A) Registrations**

- 1) Conference/workshop registrations can be paid by City check issued to vendor, by City credit card, or by employee reimbursement. Every effort should be made to receive the early registration discount, if available.
- (a) For any payment method, a completed registration form should be filled out by the employee and submitted along with the appropriate form to their Department Director for approval.
- A purchase order is not required for conference registration; however an Employee Travel & Training Expense Form must be completed and attached to all registration forms. All forms are located in the appendices of this manual.
  - If any documentation needs to be sent with the check to the vendor, the requestor should attach items to the form and make note on the form.
  - The documentation copy should be approved by the Department Director (or City Manager), and forwarded to the Finance and Records Department for processing.
  - If conference registration forms do not include complete training information regarding dates, times and location of the training, additional information on these topics must be included with the payment request.
  - If conferences include any costs for voluntary, supplemental, recreational, or other excursion activities, these costs would normally be considered the responsibility of the employee, unless specifically

related to the purpose of the conference, and approved by the Department Director/City Manager. Supporting documentation or official activity descriptions must be included with any reimbursement requests.

- *IE#1: If as part of a Community Development conference, there are options for excursions into the host City to tour some new styles of City development projects, this would be a “related purpose” item, and would be subject to reimbursement.*
- *IE#2: If as part of a Police conference, there was a recreational golf outing available, this would not be considered a “related purpose” item and would not be reimbursable.*
- If a conference sponsors a special event, where a meal is served, such as an annual banquet, the cost of attending that event, up to \$50, will be reimbursed for the employee only, not for spouses or guests. Additionally, the meal allowance dollar value of the meal being purchased will be reduced from daily meal allowances as noted in Section 5.D.2 below.
- Any and all costs related to guest/spouse travel or attendance are not reimbursable by the City.

## **B) Lodging**

- 1) Employees are expected to utilize lodging discounts provided through the conference, if available, and select moderately priced accommodations within an acceptable travel distance from the conference location. Hotel locations that result in excessive commuting or taxi expenses should be avoided whenever possible.
- 2) Lodging is limited to the standard room rate for single occupancy for the minimum number of nights required to attend the conference. The employee should request the government or corporate rate where available.
  - (a) If multiple employees are authorized to travel and choose to share accommodations, the hotel room size should be appropriate to the number of employees sharing lodging. In this case, the highest seniority employee should submit the entire lodging expense, and make note of all the employees covered by the expense.
- 3) Itemized receipts should be retained by the employee upon checkout, and turned in with their travel expense forms regardless of whether the City paid the hotel directly or if being reimbursed.
- 4) Lodging can be reimbursed in advance (check issued to vendor or to the employee), by City credit card, or by employee reimbursement after travel is complete. Purchase orders are not required for lodging.
  - (a) If requesting a check in advance of travel, a written confirmation of total daily rate (including all taxes) for a single occupancy standard room applicable to the dates of travel must be obtained from the hotel. This confirmation must be submitted with Employee Travel & Training Expense Form, as shown in Appendix A.
- 5) Lodging will be reimbursed for travel under the following conditions:
  - (a) In-state travel within a 2-hour driving distance:
    - Lodging will not be reimbursed for any in-state travel within a 2-hour driving distance, except in the event of weather emergency that causes unsafe driving conditions (see Section 1.D).

- If the conference is a multi-day event, one day of lodging will be reimbursed for each additional conference day after the first day. *IE: a 3 day conference would be reimbursed for 2 nights of lodging.*
- (b) In-state travel more than a 2-hour driving distance:
  - Single day conferences may be eligible for one day of lodging, if location, hours of the event, or other factors justify an overnight stay. Such instances must be approved in advance by the Department Director.
  - If the conference is a multi-day event, one day of lodging will be reimbursed for each full day (minimum of 8 hours) of the conference. This will allow for employees to drive in the night before a conference and check-out on the last day of the conference.
- (c) Out-of state travel:
  - For conferences requiring air travel or ground transportation (see Section 5.C), lodging is assumed to start the night prior to the conference start date and check-out on the last day of the conference. Lodging would be reimbursed for each full day (8 hours) of the conference. In the case of partial day events (which may allow for travel the morning of) or for late evening end times (which may eliminate flight options for return travel or may create unsafe driving conditions/fatigue for return travel) an exception may be made based on the judgment of the Department Director and the employee.
  - If lodging is approved for the night after a conference ends, the employee may only stay at the conference hotel if it offers a reduced rate (government rate - under \$150 not including taxes) room option. Additional nights at higher priced room rates will be considered a personal expense for any amount over \$150.

## **C) Transportation**

### **1) General Considerations:**

- (a) Employees should use the most expedient mode of transportation available, and determine the lowest cost option of travel. Options include air, rail or automobile travel. In cases where multiple employees are attending the same conference, consideration should be given to economical feasibility of carpooling or rail travel versus flying. A City vehicle should be utilized whenever possible.
- (b) In general, any travel destination that is more than 4 hours of drive-time is considered acceptable to evaluate air travel options. Exceptions may arise during off-peak seasons and during airfare sales, so air travel to closer destinations may be approved if airfare is shown to be more economical.
- (c) If air travel is more economical than driving, but the employee chooses to drive their personal vehicle, the employee may only be reimbursed up to the value of what airfare would have cost, or the actual costs incurred for gas, parking, tolls, etc., and including overtime for non-exempt employees (see Section 8.E.1.a), whichever is less.
  - Airfare costs can be documented through creating the most advantageous (cost efficient) mock itineraries through any internet travel site, such as Expedia, Kayak, or Travelocity. The mock itinerary must be printed and submitted with the Employee Travel & Training

Expense Forms. Non-exempt employees may choose to drive, instead of fly, but only subject to the provisions of Section 8.E.1.a regarding overtime costs.

## 2) Air Travel

- (a) Every effort should be made to obtain the lowest possible round-trip coach fare, with reasonable consideration given to the time and distance of travel involved. Any upgrades, seat selection costs, or other enhancements are personal expenditures, and will not be paid by the City.
- (b) An employee may elect to utilize a travel company to book their flights and hotel accommodations, but any administrative, booking, service, or commission fees charged by a travel agent in excess of \$8 per round-trip flight, will not be paid by the City. If an employee utilizes an internet travel website, they may submit up to \$8 in booking fees per round-trip flight for payment by the City.
- (c) If an employee is required to change a flight prior to the conference due to business reasons, any change fees will be reimbursed by the City with prior approval from the Department Director. Change fees due to personal conflicts are not reimbursable. In the event of a conference cancellation or reschedule through the conference itself, reimbursement for any associated travel penalties should be pursued through the conference sponsor.
  - If at any time during an air travel trip, a leg or entire itinerary is required to be changed, resulting in additional fees or unused portions of a ticket, full disclosure and documentation of the situation is to be reported to the Department Director and City Manager as soon as possible. Circumstances will be reviewed on a case by case basis to determine what, if any, portion of the costs may be the responsibility of the employee.
- (d) If an employee combines business with personal travel, or if an indirect route is taken as a result of personal travel, only the business portion of the trip is reimbursable. This amount may not exceed the amount of reimbursable expenses which would have been incurred had the trip been strictly for business purposes. In the case of airfare, the employee must document the lowest reasonable cost for round trip coach airfare to the business destination using the mock itinerary noted in Section 5.C.1.b, as well as submitting the actual expenses. A mock itinerary, as described in Section 5.C.1.b, should be submitted showing the costs for the business portion of the trip.
  - If business travel is extended to save costs (*ie: a Saturday night stay for air travel*), then the additional expenses associated with extended travel may be reimbursed up to the cost of airfare had the employee not extended the trip. These additional expenses include the additional cost of lodging, meals, ground transportation and incidental expenses incurred in the vicinity of the original business destination. Additional expenses are only reimbursable for the employee, not any additional travel companions, spouse or dependents. Documentation of the airfare cost savings, as described in Section 4.C.1.b must be submitted with reimbursement requests.

- (e) Costs for parking at the airport are reimbursable up to the daily rate for the number of lodging days allowed for the same trip, plus one. *IE: for a trip with 3 days of hotel stay, 4 days of airport parking are allowed.*
- (f) Costs for any additional luggage, after the first bag, or overweight luggage are not reimbursable unless special equipment or supplies are required to be taken as part of the conference. *IE: if a Police tactical training requires the officer to bring all of their gear, this may require extra luggage or overweight luggage fees.*

### **3) Ground Transportation**

- (a) Employees are encouraged to use a City vehicle for conference travel in lieu of a personal vehicle whenever a City vehicle is available. When a City vehicle is used, the employee will be reimbursed for all gas receipts, if the gas is not charged directly to the City, as well as any toll charges and necessary parking fees during the conference. Receipts for all items should be retained for submission with the Employee Travel & Training Expense Form.
  - Commuting to and from work in a City vehicle is generally prohibited with the exception of public safety vehicles that may be used to respond to emergencies from the employee's residence. Use of other City vehicles for commuting is prohibited unless specifically authorized by the City Manager, with notice given to the City Clerk to ensure the proper recording of this taxable benefit in accordance with IRS regulations.
  - Employees traveling on City business with a City vehicle may use the City vehicle for legitimate incidental purposes (driving to meals, etc.).
- (b) Employees may use their personal vehicle for business travel only if the use of a City vehicle is not feasible.
  - Employees using personal vehicles for business purposes will be reimbursed based on miles traveled, less the employee's normal to and from work commuting miles and at the allowable rate established by the IRS. This rate is regularly reviewed and adjusted based on IRS guidelines. *IE: An employee normally drives 5 miles each morning to work, and 5 miles back home. If they instead drive to a conference 20 miles away, then they would be eligible for reimbursement of 30 miles for that conference (20 to conference, 20 from conference, less 10 commuting miles).*
  - Any employee that receives a monthly car allowance is not eligible for personal vehicle mileage for any in-state travel. Travel to an out-of-state conference is eligible for reimbursement.
  - If an employee elects to use a personal vehicle when a City vehicle is available for use, the employee may only be reimbursed for the lesser of actual gas receipts or mileage.
- (c) In order to be reimbursed for mileage, an employee must complete a Mileage Reimbursement Form, which requires proof of insurance to be on file with the City Manager's Office.
- (d) Whenever an employee is utilizing a City vehicle, or personal vehicle for City business, it is the policy of the City of Urbandale, that all drivers and passengers must wear safety belts. In addition, all employees are

required to comply with all traffic regulations, laws and ordinances when operating a City vehicle or personal vehicle for City business. At no time should employees jeopardize the safety of themselves, other City employees, or the public when operating motor vehicles.

#### **4) Rental Vehicles**

- (a) Department Director or City Manager must give advance authorization prior to renting any vehicles for business purposes.
  - If a conference location requires the use of ground transportation to go to and from the hotel to the conference sight, renting a car may be considered. If the cost of renting a car is more practical to the City, as compared to other means of transportation such as taxi or subway, a vehicle may be rented for use during the conference. The employee is responsible for obtaining the best available rate on a standard-sized rental car. If more than 2 employees are attending the same conference, the size of vehicle may be adjusted according to the capacity needed to accommodate the number of people traveling. Luxury and convertible models are not permitted upgrades.
  - All rental cars must be rented through the City of Urbandale's corporate accounts. The existing corporate account numbers are as follows:
    - Budget – X628585
    - Avis – Y076597
    - Hertz – 2160106
    - National – OSMB62ASupplemental insurance options covering the rental vehicle through the rental agency are not reimbursable as a travel expense, as all aspects of the rental are covered under the City of Urbandale's ICAP insurance policy when reserved under the City's corporate account
- (b) Detailed receipts for rental cars should be retained and submitted on the Employee Travel & Training Expense Form as shown in Appendix A.

#### **D) Meals**

- 1) For eligible meals, reimbursement shall be allowed for actual meal expenses incurred, including up to 15% tip on each meal, and subject to limits laid out below.
  - (a) Meal receipts are generally eligible for reimbursement if:
    - The meal was not already provided as part of a paid registration; and
    - Participation in the business-related conference was directly authorized.
    - For any training provided by the local ILEA (IA Law Enforcement Academy), reasonable priced meals are available through ILEA, and will be paid for by the City. If the employee chooses not to have the City purchase the ILEA meal, no meal receipts are eligible for reimbursement.
  - (b) Meal reimbursement forms can be found in Appendix B.
  - (c) It should be noted that eligibility for reimbursement does not imply whether the meal will be considered taxable or excludable wages under IRS



guidelines. The City will follow applicable IRS guidelines to determine taxability.

- 2) Those traveling on City business will use discretion in keeping meal costs to reasonable levels. It is expected that the employee's meal expense will not exceed \$50 per day for three meals, not including tip. The \$50 limit is applicable to both in-state and out-of-state travel.
- 3) Meal allowances will be broken down as follows: Breakfast \$10, Lunch \$14, Dinner \$26. These allowances are only taken into account on travel days, and when a conference provides some meals for the employee as part of the registration fee. If a meal is provided, the cost allowance for the respective meal will be removed from the daily maximum of \$50. *IE: If the conference provides lunch, the daily maximum would be \$50 less \$14, or \$36. This \$36 can be split up however the employee chooses: \$5 for breakfast and \$31 for dinner or \$20 for breakfast and \$16 for dinner; just as long as the total doesn't exceed \$36, not including tip.*
  - (a) If the conference registration fee includes a meal, and the employee chooses to purchase a meal elsewhere, the employee shall be responsible for the cost of that meal unless medical reasons require that the employee separately purchase a meal.
  - (b) Documentation from the conference agenda that includes enough detail to determine if meals are being provided must be submitted with expense forms. If insufficient documentation is provided, it will be assumed that any meal periods that fall during conference hours are being provided.
- 4) Costs for meals may be made through reimbursement or through advances using the Employee Travel & Training Form as shown in Appendix A.
  - (a) If an employee is requesting their meal allowance in advance, requests must be made 2 weeks in advance of the conference to allow for adequate processing time through accounts payable. Documentation of the conference dates, and number of meals eligible for reimbursement must be provided along with the request.
  - (b) When an advance is made, the employee is still responsible for retaining all receipts during the conference and will be expected to turn in all receipts supporting their meal expenses. If actual meal expenses are less than the amount advanced, the difference will be calculated by the Finance & Records Department and the employee notified immediately. *IE: if an employee goes to a 2 day conference where lunch is provided both days, the employee would be advanced \$72. If the employee only turns in receipts for \$60, the employee would turn in a check or cash for the remaining \$12. If instead the employee turns in receipts for \$80, then none of the funds need to be returned.*
  - (c) **For all meal receipts, the employee should retain the original itemized copy of the receipt that shows the specific items ordered, total cost, tax and tip. The submission of a credit card receipt with only the total cost of the meal will not be reimbursed.**
    - The total cost of the meal submitted for reimbursement must exclude any liquor expenses, in accordance with State regulations.
    - Tips in excess of 15% of the total meal cost (excluding liquor) are considered a personal expense of the employee and will not be reimbursed. *IE: If an employee has a receipt with \$25 of food and \$10*

*of liquor, for a total of \$35 and gives a 15% tip (\$5.25 in tip), the employee may only be reimbursed for the \$25 of food and tip of \$3.75 (15% of \$25).*

- Tips in excess of 15% that are required and automatically applied to a bill (ie: groups of 8+ get charged an automatic 20%, etc.) may be reimbursed.
- 5) Meals incurred during approved travel times will be reimbursed according to the same schedule noted in Section 5.D3. *IE: If an employee is flying in the night before a conference and the flight leaves at 3pm, the employee can claim up to \$26 for dinner the night of his/her flight. If the flight left at 10am, the employee could claim up to \$40 (\$14 for lunch and \$26 for dinner) in meals for the travel day.*

#### **E) Incidentals**

- 1) An employee is allowed to claim up to \$5 per day for incidental items that will typically not have a receipt available, such as bellman, valet or airport luggage handler tips, parking meter fees, etc. The \$5 in incidentals is based on an honor system, and should generally be expected to correspond with hotel or airport arrival and departure days.
- 2) Fees for tolls, taxi or shuttle service, etc, where a receipt is readily available upon request, must have a receipt submitted for reimbursement. Origination and destination information should be documented on the receipts.
- 3) Reasonable costs associated with high-speed internet connections in hotels are reimbursable if being used for business purposes.

#### **F) Foreign Currency Conversions**

- 1) If travel is required in a foreign country, all expenses paid in foreign currency shall be reimbursed based on the daily currency rate as defined by <http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic>. The currency rate can be obtained by day of travel, and should be printed and submitted with travel receipt documentation. If a personal credit card is used for expenses in foreign currency, and there is any discrepancy between the posted conversion on the above website, and the credit card statement, the City will reimburse the employee for the actual amount shown on a credit card statement.

### **6) Specifically Prohibited Expenses**

A) Prohibited expenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Personal items, such as personal grooming items,
- Any hotel mini-bar charges,
- Gifts
- Entertainment and recreation expenses, including hotel movies and health club access at a hotel or other venue,
- Golf outings, fitness events, or other recreational activities sponsored by the conference or otherwise,
- Alcoholic beverages
- Any expenses for spouses, guests or family members that are not employees of the City, and are not attending the function as a representative of the City.
- Loss of personal items due to air travel baggage issues will not be reimbursed by the City, as these losses are the responsibility of the air carrier.

## 7) Reporting Expenses

- A) As a general concept, all reported expenses should include enough documentation to support the legitimacy of the item as a proper City business expense. Thus, employees should be preparing all documentation to “tell the story” about the situation independent of any other receipts paid at a different time. This can be accomplished by including a memo or other notes to make sure items have explanation where needed. Employees cannot rely on previously submitted documentation to complete their justification.
- B) All receipts should be kept by the employee during any travel period. Upon return to the City, and within 2 weeks of travel, the employee must complete the applicable forms contained in the Appendices of this policy.
  - 1) A new form and supporting documentation should be completed each time an expense is processed. *IE: if registration is paid first, then airfare 2 months later, then meals & lodging submitted after they return, that employee will have submitted 3 separate forms for the same trip.*
- C) Expense reports require the approval of the Department Director for all employees, or in the case of a Department Director’s expenses, the approval of the City Manager is required.
- D) All original receipts being submitted should be securely attached to one of the receipt Header Pages, located in the Appendices. All items submitted need to be “scan ready” so they can be incorporated into the LaserFiche system. Do not put tape over the date/time/total information, as it makes thermal ink disappear over time. Unreadable receipts will not be accepted.
- E) Follow all instructions on each form. Any questions on the forms should be directed to the Finance and Records Department. If amounts advanced for travel exceed the allowable expenses submitted, the employee will be notified by the Finance and Records Department and the employee must pay, by cash or check, made payable to the City of Urbandale, any remaining balance.
- F) If a personal vehicle was used as transportation, the miles eligible for reimbursement should be documented on the City’s standard mileage reimbursement form, and should be completed separate from any other miles the employee may have incurred as part of a separate business purpose. All expenses submitted should be related to the current business trip.
  - 1) Mileage submitted should be actual incurred, or documented through an online mapping service (ie: Mapquest) that will calculate mileage from one specific address to another.
- G) Any travel reimbursements received by the employee from a third party must be promptly remitted to the City by forwarding the check to the Finance and Records Department. *IE: if a State or Federal grant reimburses for airfare to Police training.*

## 8) Wages While Traveling

- A) Employees in positions considered non-exempt, may be eligible for compensation for the time they spend traveling. The compensation an employee receives depends upon the kind of travel and whether the travel time takes place within normal work hours or outside of normal work hours.
- B) Normal work hours, for the purposes of this policy are defined as 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. This definition applies to normal work days (Monday through Friday) and to

weekends (Saturday and Sunday). Employees that do not work normal work hours (ie: 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> shift public safety) will convert to this schedule while traveling on City business to ensure appropriate and consistent payment.

**C) One Day Trips**

- 1) When non-exempt employees are required to travel to another City, with no overnight stay, all travel time involved counts as time worked. The only times excluded are meal periods and the time spent traveling between the worker's home and the point of departure. If an employee is leaving directly from their home and traveling to a conference, the employee's normal commute time shall be excluded from compensated hours worked. *IE: if the employee drives 15 minutes to pick up a City vehicle at City Hall prior to leaving for a conference, then the hours worked will start when the employee leaves the parking lot of City Hall, and ends when they return the vehicle to City Hall. If however, the employee drives 2 hours to the conference directly from home, then he/she would have to deduct the 30 minutes of normal commute time he/she typically has each day.*
- 2) In order to determine if a non-exempt employee will receive overtime for the hours incurred for a one day trip, normal 40 work hour rules apply. *IE: if the employee "works" 12 hours Monday at a conference, but then takes half the day off on Friday, he/she will have only worked 40 hours for the week, and thus receive no overtime. If however, the same employee worked a full day on Friday, he/she would be eligible for 4 hours of overtime for the week.*

**D) Multiple Day Trips**

- 1) Within Normal Work Hours:
  - (a) Any portion of authorized travel time that takes place within normal work hours (8am to 5pm) on any day of the week, is treated as "work hours".
  - (b) When a non-exempt employee travels between time zones, the time zone associated with the point of original departure should be used to determine whether the travel falls within normal work hours.
- 2) Outside Normal Work Hours:
  - (a) Any portion of authorized travel time (with the exception of driving time, as noted in Section 7.E) that takes place outside of normal working hours is considered to be "outside travel hours" and are not counted as hours worked.
  - (b) When a non-exempt employee is required to travel outside of normal working hours, as a passenger in a plane or any other mode of transportation (other than an automobile) the employee will not be compensated for that portion of travel time that takes place outside of normal work hours.
- 3) When a non-exempt employee travels between time zones, the time zone associated with the point of original departure should be used to determine whether the travel falls within normal work hours.

**E) Travel Time in an Automobile**

- 1) By law, all authorized travel time spent driving an automobile (as the driver, or as a passenger) is treated as "hours worked", less the normal commute time for the driver and passenger (as noted in Section 8.C.1 above), regardless of whether the travel takes place within normal work hours or outside of normal work hours. If total work hours (drive time, plus actual conference hours, plus

any regular work hours) exceed the maximum allowed hours in the assigned work week, the non-exempt employee(s) will be eligible for overtime.

(a) For non-exempt employees, the option to elect driving instead of a more expedient option can be made with Department Director and City Manager approval. However, the total cost, including any resulting overtime, associated with the option will be taken into account when computing the amount of travel reimbursement granted. *IE: If airfare was \$300, and mileage would be \$350, the employee would typically be eligible for \$300 in travel reimbursement. However, if the driving option resulted in the employee earning \$100 worth of overtime for the hours spent driving, the employee would only be eligible for \$200 in travel reimbursement.*

(b) If an exempt employee chooses to drive a car as a personal preference when another authorized mode of transportation is available, and the travel time by car would exceed that of the authorized mode, only the estimated travel time associated with the authorized mode will be eligible for compensation as hours worked.

2) Documentation of travel time reimbursements will be reimbursed through normal payroll processing. All documentation supporting any travel time being reimbursed should be documented in the employee's time sheet.

## **9) Wages While At A Conference**

A) Regardless of travel time, hours spent attending conferences as a representative of the City of Urbandale will count as hours worked for both exempt and non-exempt employees. Work hours will be counted based on conference agenda's stated start and stop times.

1) As a general rule, a full day conference (8 a.m. to 4 p.m. or 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.), including reasonable breaks between sessions, is considered a full 8 hour day worked. If a conference includes an evening gathering, in which food is served, that portion of the conference does not count towards hours worked. *IE: Opening night of the conference has a "meet & greet" event with cocktails and appetizers from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The 2 hours of the event would not count as hours worked. Further, if this type of event charged a fee to attend, and the City paid for it under Section 4.A.1.a as part of conference registration, any food served at such an event will count as a dinner meal allowance.*

- Exceptions to this rule will be evaluated on an individual basis when needed.