

**ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY  
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**Subject: Travel and Reimbursement of Related Expenses**

**Number: F10**

**Approved:**

**Date: 12/21/06**

**I. PURPOSE**

To provide a uniform method for administering the SSA Travel Policy and Procedure (P&P), consistent with the County Travel P&P, to ensure SSA's resources are spent in a manner that maximizes and provides full accountability of those resources. To provide for reasonable and equitable reimbursement of expenses incurred by individuals while on SSA business travel.

**II. POLICY**

To reimburse individuals for those reasonable, actual, and necessary expenses incurred by them on behalf of SSA in carrying out their official duties.

**III. PROCEDURE**

**A. Case-Related Travel**

Case-related travel is defined as travel necessary to conduct face-to-face visits with clients, assess prospective caretakers, conduct pre-placement visits, transport children to or from placements or visits, interview witnesses, monitor placement facilities, and other business which is required to provide child welfare services to specific children.

Case-carrying staff frequently travels by automobile to nearby counties to provide services on cases under their supervision. No specific authorization is required; staff shall leave information regarding their destination(s) on a field itinerary sheet or on Schedule. The Senior Social Services Supervisor (SSSS) shall be advised in advance when staff plans travel which requires an overnight stay or travel by airplane.

**1. Meal Reimbursement:**

Staff may be reimbursed for the allowable and approved cost of meals, including customary gratuity/tips, while conducting business out of county. If staff spends \$55 a day or more, they should be prepared to provide an explanation of the necessity for the expense. Staff may also be reimbursed for the cost of meals purchased for a child who is physically in the custody of staff at mealtime. A receipt is required for reimbursement of the child's lunch. Reimbursement shall be claimed on a "Mileage & Other Expenses Claim" (F003-Mileage/Other, 12/2008) (Attachment A).

**2. Hotel Expense, Car Rental, and Ground Transportation:** Staff may be reimbursed for the cost of lodging, ground transportation (taxi, airport shuttle, train, bus) from an airport to the travel destination, or car rental expense. Original paid (zero balance) receipts are required for reimbursement purposes. See Section C, "Local and Public Transportation" and Section E, "Lodging."

- a. Complete "Out-Of-County and In-County Travel Request" form (F063-02-2000, Attachment B).
- b. Obtain SSSS and Program Manager signatures for approval. Deputy Director approval is not required for case-related travel.

**3. Airplane Travel**

Tickets should be purchased through the County travel contract vendor, Carlson Wagonlit Travel, 6 Jenner, Suite 110, Irvine, CA 92618.

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., West Coast Time, Monday-Friday.

Phone: 949-450-8550 or 800-444-1371. Fax: 949-450-8555.

After Hours Phone: 1-888-336-9588.

Should you have questions, contact SSA Administration Reception at 714-541-7700 and ask to speak to a Travel Coordinator.

Airline tickets should be obtained under conditions and procedures described in Section D, "Air Transportation."

- a. Contact Carlson Wagonlit Travel on-line or call them to make tentative airplane reservations.
- b. Complete "Out-Of-County and In-County Travel Request" form (F063-02-2000) ( Attachment B).
- c. Complete SSA Case-Related Air Travel Authorization Form (F063-03-106 6/2009) ( Attachment C).

Service Fee Enter \$19.00  
Unit number See your timesheet  
OBJ number 2600/2700\*  
Job number for SSW S32100  
Check applicable program PP, FR, FM, ER  
Job number for Minor S80101  
Others S32000

\*OBJ number:

Code 2600TT Expenses related to carrying out training, conference, or case-related travel, including, but not limited to: meals, hotels, gasoline for rental cars, ground transportation, parking expense, and registration fees for meetings, conferences, and PSI classes.

Code 2700 Expenses related to carrying out activities related to meetings (not training, conference, or case-related travel), including, but not limited to: meals, hotels, gasoline for rental cars, ground transportation, and parking expense.

- d. Obtain SSSS and Program Manager approval on both forms.
- e. Fax both forms to SSA/Administration/Reception at 541-7791.

#### 4. **Cash Advance**

Staff may request a cash advance for travel expenses (hotel, meals, ground transportation, parking) when travel plans are made at least two weeks in advance. The Request for Cash Advance requires additional approvals. No cash advance will be made for purchase of airline tickets.

- a. Complete the "Out-Of-County and In-County Travel Request" (Attachment B), as directed above.
- b. Complete "Cash Advance Request" (Attachment C). Attach to the "Out-Of-County and In-County Travel Request" form, above.
- c. Obtain Program Manager signature on both forms.
- d. Forward both forms to the Division Director for approval. The Division Director will forward the forms on to the Agency Director and SSA/Financial Services for approval.
- e. SSA/Financial Services will notify you when your check is ready for pickup. You will be given a memo "Cash Advance Policy" (Attachment D).
- f. File a "Mileage & Other Expenses Claim" (Attachment A) within five (5) working days after return for trip-related expenditures. The expenses must be itemized and receipts must be included for those expenditures requiring receipts as identified on the back of the Mileage and Other Expense Claim form. Additionally, the IRS requires receipts when meal expense exceeds \$75 for any one day. Include only those expenses associated with the trip for which the cash advance was given. Staff will be expected to attach a check repaying any amount advanced and not spent. Any amount of cash advanced that is not repaid can be deducted from funds paid to the staff person by the County of Orange.

Expenditure coding to be used on the "Mileage & Other Expenses Claim" is as follows:

Code 0701 Phone  
Code 2400 Tuition

Code 2600TT	Expenses related to carrying out training, conference, or case-related travel, including, but not limited to: meals, hotels, gasoline for rental cars, ground transportation, parking expense, and registration fees for meetings, conferences, and PSI classes.
Code 2601	Mileage
Code 2700	Expenses associated with carrying out activities related to meetings (not training, conference, or case-related travel), including, but not limited to: meals, hotels, gasoline for rental cars, ground transportation, and parking expense.

Note that the difference between coding costs to code 2600TT or code 2700 relates to whether or not the expenses are related to training, conference, or case-related travel.

#### 5. **Travel Outside California and the United States**

Blanket CEO approval has been issued for travel by social worker, nurse, or foster parent to transport minors to relatives or other placement; transport of the minors themselves; social worker travel to inspect or monitor placements of children outside California and the United States; and other court order travel. Approval for this type of travel is delegated to the Agency Director, Director of Children & Family Services, and Deputy Directors of CFS ( Attachment E).

### **B. Non-Case Related Travel**

Non-case related travel is defined as travel to attend conferences, meetings or other functions that are work related, but not specifically required to provide mandated services to a particular client.

#### 1. **Non-General Area County Travel**

Travel to a non-general area county, with or without an overnight stay, requires approval by the Division Director and Agency Director, even if no cost is involved.

- a. For air travel, the traveler contacts Carlson Wagonlit Travel to obtain the cost of the planned travel. Airline tickets may also be obtained under conditions and procedures described in Section D, "Air Transportation."
- b. The completed "Out-Of-County and In-County Travel Request" (F063-02-2000) ( Attachment B) is forwarded to the employee's supervisor for approval.
- c. Form is forwarded to the Division Director for approval.
- d. After approval, form is forwarded to SSA/Financial Services, where it is logged in and forwarded to the Agency Director for approval.
- e. Once reservations are approved, Carlson Wagonlit Travel will email a copy of the "E Ticket" and itinerary to traveler or the person who made the reservations.

#### 2. **General Area County Travel**

All travel, with no overnight stay, to general area counties, which include Orange, Riverside, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, San Diego, Ventura, Imperial, Kern, and Santa Barbara counties, requires supervisory approval. Approval must be received before the travel takes place and expenses are incurred and must be essential to agency operations. If an overnight stay is involved, approval by the Division Director and Agency Director is required.

- a. Traveler completes an "Out-Of-County and In-County Travel Request" (F063-02-2000) (Attachment B).
- b. Form is forwarded to traveler's supervisor for approval.
- c. Traveler submits a "Mileage & Others Expenses Claim" (F003-Mileage/Other 12/008) (Attachment A) with a copy of "Out-Of-County and In-County Travel Request" attached to claim expenditures related to the approved travel requests. Meals will not be authorized for in-county travel. Expenses that may be authorized include transportation and registration only for travel within the County.

- d. When travel plans are made well in advance, staff may request that registration fees be paid to the vendor in advance by forwarding the completed and approved "Out-Of-County and In-County Travel Request" (Attachment A) and "County of Orange Social Services Agency Requisition" (F063-03-96 (R6/09), Attachment F), along with the completed registration form, to SSA/Purchasing, #15.

### **3. Cash Advance Request**

- a. To obtain a cash advance, complete "Cash Advance Request" (Attachment C). This form must be attached to the approved "Out-Of-County and In-County Travel Request" (Attachment B).
- b. Forms are forwarded to SSA/Financial Services, who will obtain appropriate Director's approval for the cash advance and issue the check.

## **C. Local and Public Transportation**

Actual reasonable and necessary cost of local transportation, including taxi, local buses, shuttle, and limousine services and customary tips/gratuities, to and from the point of departure (e.g., John Wayne Airport) is eligible for reimbursement. The most economical mode (e.g., personal vehicle vs. taxi) should be used whenever practicable.

Car rental may be authorized for County business travel if there is a valid need and cost savings over other modes of available transportation. Car rental arrangements may be made directly with a commercial car company or through a travel agent. In either case, the following guidelines will apply:

1. Government rates should always be requested;
  2. The most reasonably priced rental car that meets the official requirements of the trip should be used;
  3. Claims for reimbursement of other than a standard vehicle will require justification;
  4. Original paid rental agreement/receipt for all car rentals are required for reimbursement purposes; and
5. When it is a requirement of the car rental agency, gas tanks must be full when the vehicle is returned whenever practicable in order to avoid any additional refueling charges from the car rental agency.

When renting vehicles in Orange County from a contracted rental car vendor that has accepted County self-insurance as a part of the contract, the renter need not purchase optional insurance. The County travel contract vendor, Carlson Wagonlit Travel coordinates with Enterprise rent-a-car to provide heavily discounted car rental rates and, based on a contract with the State, the car rental will be billed directly on a card-less program through American Express and the renter need not purchase optional insurance. When traveler returns to work, send the receipt for the car rental to SSA/Administration Reception, Building 150.

When renting vehicles from a non-contracted rental car vendor, optional insurance, including collision damage waiver (CDW) and loss damage waiver (LDW), should be purchased. The insurance cost should be itemized on the rental receipt. The traveler is liable when driving an uninsured vehicle. The insurance policy must include the following limits:

1. Damage Waiver - No deductible.
2. Personal Accident Insurance - Not applicable. Note: All County employees are covered under Worker's Compensation for accidents incurred while conducting County business.
3. Liability Protection - \$100,000/\$300,000 or more to meet the legal requirements of the state in which the vehicle is rented.

Expense Incurred Due to Damaged Rental Car - Costs associated with damage to an automobile rented while on County business may be reimbursable as a claim. Travelers should contact CEO/Risk Management for more information in the event of a loss to determine what documentation is needed to evaluate the claim for possible payment.

## **D. Air Transportation**

Tickets should be purchased through the County travel contract vendor, Carlson Wagonlit Travel. Under exceptional circumstances, airline quotes, reservations, and ticketing may also be accomplished through other travel agencies or directly with an airline, if approved by the manager.

The cost of airline tickets obtained through another travel agency or directly with an airline will require the employee to purchase the tickets and obtain reimbursement by submitting a "Mileage and Other Expenses Claim" (F003-Mileage/Other 12/2008). Attachment A) airline receipt, and 2) "Out of County and In County Travel Request" (F063-02-2000) (Attachment B). Travel advances will not be made to travelers for the purchase of airline tickets.

Travel by air should be at the most economical and practical rate available.

**1. Special Travel Promotions by Airlines**

If the cost of a travel promotion, such as a "friend flies free" offer, is less than the available non-promotional rate, then the special rate should be used whenever possible.

For example, if a traveler is traveling to San Francisco and the lowest cost airline is offering a "friend flies free" promotion for \$150 roundtrip, which is less expensive than the \$200 non-promotion roundtrip fee, the promotional rate should be used. If another authorized person is attending the same event, this traveler shall be considered the "friend flying free." If there is no other such representative traveling, the traveler may take a guest only if the promotional rate is lower than the non-promotional rate. All additional costs for such guests will be the personal responsibility of the traveler or his/her guest.

**2. Frequent Flyer Miles**

Any frequent flyer credits issued by an airline for travel associated with County business will belong to the person named as "traveler" by the issuing airline. While the County has no official means to intercept earned frequent flyer credits, travelers are encouraged to apply such credits toward future County business travel whenever practicable.

**E. Lodging**

Lodging quotes or reservations may be accomplished through a travel agency or directly with a lodging establishment. Reimbursement of lodging is based on actual reasonable and necessary costs incurred for the business purpose of the trip.

Lodging at other than hotels or motels (e.g., apartments, cabins, etc.) is reimbursable when it results in a lower cost to the County. However, payment to another individual to stay in their home is not allowed and will not be reimbursed.

Lodging shall be reserved at the standard government room rates whenever practicable. A traveler, if accompanied by someone who is not a traveler authorized for County business (e.g., spouse, children, friend, etc.), is entitled to lodging reimbursement at the standard single room rate.

Lodging expenses must be documented with a paid (zero balance) itemized original bill to be submitted with a "Mileage & Other Expenses Claim" (Attachment A) for reimbursement purposes. Express checkout receipts that do not provide an itemized account of all lodging charges are not adequate documentation for reimbursement.

**F. Meals**

This policy provides for reimbursement of actual necessary and reasonable expense of meals, excluding alcoholic beverages, including customary gratuity/tips, while conducting official County business. An exception is for meals that are included as part of registration fees paid in advance by the County for which no separate reimbursement will be made. The IRS requires receipts when meal expense exceeds \$75 for any one day.

**G. Extended Lodging and Meal Expenses**

Actual necessary and reasonable expenses for extended lodging and meals will be eligible for reimbursement when the additional cost of the extended travel is less than the additional cost of traveling the day before the event.

For example, if a traveler departs on Saturday for a Monday event, Saturday night lodging and meal expense will be eligible for reimbursement if this additional expense is less than the additional cost of traveling on Sunday. Documentation must accompany the "Mileage & Other Expenses Claim" (Attachment A) to justify these "extended" expenses.

**H. Miscellaneous Expenses**

1. **Baggage Handling** - Actual reasonable and necessary baggage handling expenses are eligible for reimbursement.
2. **Parking** - Necessary reasonable expenses for self-parking in pay-to-park lots when attending meetings or other County business is eligible for reimbursement. An actual expense for valet parking is eligible for reimbursement when no other reasonable parking option is available.

**I. Mileage & Other Expenses Claim Form**

The "Mileage & Other Expenses Claim" form (Attachment A) is available as an EXCEL template. All staff is encouraged to use this template, as it makes form preparation, review, and data entry more efficient. This EXCEL template is available from the SSA Payroll Supervisor (714) 245-6158.

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**IV. ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Mileage and Other Expenses Claim
- B. Out-Of-County and In-County Travel Request
- C. Cash Advance Request
- D. Cash Advance Policy
- E. Case-Related-Court Ordered Air Travel Authorization
- F. County of Orange Social Services Agency Requisition