



L.E. Phillips Memorial
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INTRODUCTION

Professional staff development is an essential part of the Library's commitment to excellence. Staff development may occur through in-house training programs, seminars, state and national conferences, and meetings of professional organizations. These programs are offered to encourage staff and management to remain current in their respective professional disciplines. Division Heads should encourage employees to attend training sessions that will enhance employee skills and improve operations.

When attending a conference, seminar or meeting on official Library business, employees are expected to conduct themselves in a manner becoming of a Library employee and follow the Library's Code of Ethics.

The POLICY ON TRAVEL has four goals:

- To fairly reimburse employees, in a timely, efficient manner, for actual, necessary, and reasonable itemized travel costs that were incurred while on official, authorized Library business.
- To maintain appropriate internal controls to insure compliance with federal, state, and local laws.
- To maintain the status of an "accountable plan" under IRS regulations in order to minimize the tax impact for employees.
- To define standards for reimbursement of eligible expenses and procedures for processing expense claims.

The following sections identify the procedures that have been established to achieve these goals.

OVERVIEW

TRAVEL/TRAINING AUTHORIZATION

A signed *Training/Travel Statement* form is required whenever an employee intends to travel outside the City of Eau Claire and adjacent municipalities to attend training. The Administrative & Purchasing Coordinator will review all expenses projected on the *Training/Travel Statement* form for conformity to this policy.

It is the individual's responsibility, with the help of the Administrative & Purchasing Coordinator, to prepare the *Training/Travel Statement* form and submit it for approval prior to the date of travel.

It is the responsibility of the employee's direct supervisor and Library Director and/or Deputy Director to review the *Training/Travel Statement* form. By signing it, the supervisor and Director or Deputy Director are stating that the travel/training is necessary, meets the criteria of this policy and is an appropriate charge against the Library's operating budget.

This form should be routed, in order, to:

- Administrative & Purchasing Coordinator
- Employee's Supervisor
- Deputy Director (for total expenses less than \$500), or Director (for expenses totaling \$500 or more)

Allow ample time for routing if any prepayments for lodging or registration are required. The employee should make every effort to obtain early registration discounts. Payments are made on Friday if the completed form is received by the Administrative & Purchasing Coordinator by the preceding Wednesday at noon.

All information requested on the form must be filled in, or the form will be returned, unprocessed. In addition, complete conference or training brochures/schedules must be attached to the *Training/Travel Statement* form. The brochure information should include: actual place, dates, and times of the training, conference, convention or seminar, and breakdown for any meals that are included in the registration fee.

If the training involves registration only, all attendees may be combined on one *Training/Travel Statement* form by attaching a list of attendees. If the training involves meals, mileage, hotels, etc., a separate form must be prepared for each attendee.

A *Training/Travel Statement* form approved for one person cannot be transferred to another person.

Detailed instructions for travel reimbursement are included in the following sections.

Procurement Card Use:

The Library's procurement card is the preferred method of payment for travel expenses under the following conditions:

- A *Training/Travel Statement* form has been approved prior to charges made on card.
- All procurement card procedures are followed.

- When a Library procurement card is used for a travel expense, a detailed receipt should be attached to both the *Training/Travel Statement* form and the procurement card statement.
- Personal charges to Library procurement cards are not allowed. If personal charges are incurred and paid with a procurement card, the employee will reimburse the Library an additional \$10 for each personal expense charged to the procurement card.

TRAVEL/TRAINING REIMBURSEMENTS

Employees should record their actual travel times and expenses on the *Training/Travel Statement* form after completion of the event and submit the completed form to their supervisor, within 10 working days. All *Training/Travel Statement* forms must be completed and returned, even if there is no amount due, or if the travel is cancelled.

- Record actual date and time of departure and return (Note: If your travel plans include personal travel as well as professional, you will need to note this on the *Training/Travel Statement* in the “notes” section on the back of the form.)
- Record actual expenses paid by the employee with the exception of meals which will be reimbursed at the current General Services Administration (GSA) per diem rates.
- Sign and date the form.

Detailed receipts for travel expenses paid directly by the employee and for charges made on a Library procurement card **MUST BE ATTACHED** to the *Training/Travel Statement* form with the exception of gas receipts when employee is using their personal vehicle (gas receipts are still required for rental vehicles) and meals. Examples of these detailed receipts include parking; shuttle or taxi services; hotel receipts; bus, train, or plane ticket receipts; and so on. Employees will **NOT** be reimbursed without copies of such receipts.

Every effort should be made to reconcile travel statements within 10 working days of your return to avoid employee income tax liability for payments made to, or on behalf of the employee. If the travel does not require an overnight stay, any meal reimbursement will be considered taxable income. This will be listed on your paycheck stub.

Travel reimbursements will be paid through payroll, listed as “Travel Reimb/Advance (No Tax)” on your check stub.

This policy automatically updates whenever there are changes in the IRS standard mileage rate, GSA per diem rates, the City of Eau Claire fuel rate or rental vehicle rate.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

TRANSPORTATION METHODS

Local Rental Vehicle

The Library encourages travelers to use a rental vehicle. A rental agreement is negotiated with a local dealer. Administrative & Purchasing Coordinator will make all arrangements with the rental agency, letting the company know that the rental is under City contract and it must be paid for with a Library procurement card.

The preferred rental vehicle is a standard/mid-size car. Advance approval is necessary to upgrade to a larger car or van.

Rental vehicles are not to be used for personal business under any circumstances except an emergency. This means that rental vehicles may not be used for errands or to extend the travel for personal business or a vacation. Family members or companions are not allowed to drive or ride in a rental vehicle. This reflects contract terms that provide the lowest rate possible to the Library.

Rental options such as insurance, fuel fill, GPS, satellite radio, and toll pass waiver should be declined. Volunteers are not included in this contract.

The gas tank of the rental vehicle should be full when it is returned. If the rental vehicle does not have a full tank of gas when returned, the employee will be responsible for the cost of the gas over and above what the gas would have cost if the employee had filled up the tank at a gas station. Employees will be reimbursed for gas by attaching detailed receipts, indicating the number of gallons purchased and the price per gallon paid, to the *Training/Travel Statement*.

Personal Automobile

The use of personal automobiles for out-of-town travel is generally limited to trips of a short distance, in situations where other modes of transportation result in excessive time, or when use of an airline or rental vehicle is not practical.

If an employee chooses to use a personal vehicle instead of a rental vehicle, the reimbursement rate used will be the lower of the rental equivalent or the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate. No additional payment will be made for fuel, maintenance, etc.

All Library employees and volunteers who use a non-library vehicle for Library purposes must carry the required minimum personal insurance on that vehicle, provide proof of that insurance to the Administrative & HR Coordinator, and sign and submit a *Personal Automobile Insurance Acknowledgment* form to the Administrative & HR Coordinator prior to receiving Library authorization or reimbursement for such use.

No mileage reimbursement will be made for local area training. The local area is defined as the City of Eau Claire and any contiguous city, town, or village, specifically, The City of Altoona, Town of Seymour, Town of Washington, Town of Brunswick, Town of Union, Town of Wheaton, and the Village of Hallie.

Rental equivalent calculation:

The rental equivalent rate combines the daily car rental fee with an allowance for gas. The car rental fee is determined by the City's contract with the rental agency.

The gas allowance assumes 28 mpg at a cost per gallon that is adjusted each January and July. Please see the Appendix for an example of the rental equivalent calculation.

Mileage reimbursement is limited to one vehicle per four people when traveling to the same conference or training session and it is practical for all attendees to travel at one time. Vacations or other personal reasons for separate travel are not considered as a basis for additional reimbursements. Exceptions require Library Director authorization.

The calculation does not include mileage for picking up passengers or driving them to their homes.

When calculating mileage for the use of a personal vehicle, the employee should travel by the most direct route. Any person traveling by another route without justification will assume any additional expense.

If an employee combines personal travel with a business trip, reimbursements for travel expenses and meals will be based on estimated distance and time for the business portion only and will not include any portion of the personal travel. A rental vehicle cannot be used if personal travel is included.

The allowance for the use of a personal vehicle should not exceed the lowest cost of the most practical means of transportation to the training site. For example, the maximum payment for travel to and from the Minneapolis airport will not exceed the cost of a round trip shuttle.

If an employee uses a personal vehicle and the vehicle breaks down while the employee is out of town, any additional cost (motel & meals, etc.) will not be covered by the Library. If a rental vehicle is used, the Library will incur the additional costs due to a breakdown and bill the costs back to the rental agency.

Air Travel

Air travel is generally an optional method of travel for trips over 400 miles. All air travel must be booked through the Administrative & Purchasing Coordinator, who will make a summary of cost effectiveness. Reimbursement for air travel is limited to the lowest class reasonably available. Some airlines offer reduced fares which require a Saturday night stay. In that case, the employee has the option of doing so, provided the cost of the flight plus the additional cost of food and lodging do not exceed the regular airfare. An employee may exercise this option if there is not a loss of working days, or if the additional days required are taken as vacation leave.

The passenger coupon of the airline ticket should be attached to the travel voucher. (See the example in the Appendix.) If the flight is booked online, a copy of the web page indicating the flight charges should be attached to the reimbursement form. Insurance coverage costs for employees traveling by air are not reimbursable.

Personal Automobile vs. Air Travel

A traveler has the option of using a personal auto rather than flying. However, the lower

of mileage or the lowest flight rate will be reimbursed. When an auto is taken in this circumstance, the following costs will not be reimbursed:

- Lodging, and meal expenses while driving to and returning from the destination over and above that required when flying.
- Tolls and other miscellaneous expenses incurred while driving.
- Any estimated expenses that may have been incurred if the traveler traveled by air:
 - mileage to and from airport
 - in-town cab fares
 - airport parking

*Note: An employee's time, in excess of getting to and from the destination by air, must be taken as vacation leave.

Alternative Travel Arrangements

When two or more employees are traveling to the same destination (in excess of 400 miles) and one chooses to fly while the others drive, reimbursement is limited to the lower of:

- Total cost of airfare (at lowest cost) times the number of employees.
- Round trip miles times the current mileage rate (based on one trip per each four employees).

The traveler(s) wishing to fly will be reimbursed for their airfare. The remaining allowable amount will be available for auto expense.

Lodging, meals and miscellaneous expenses incurred while driving to and from the destination will not be reimbursed.

*Note: An employees' time, in excess of that required in getting to and from the destination by air, must be taken as vacation leave.

Traveling to Chicago

Employees traveling to the Chicago area currently have a travel option of driving from Eau Claire, driving to Tomah and then taking the train, or driving to Minneapolis and then taking the Mega Bus. There are a number of factors to be considered including: length of trip, number of hotel nights, number of people traveling to the same training, parking, cost of plane ticket vs. cost of rental equivalent, and the logistics of driving in Chicago.

Consideration of these factors means the preferred method of travel may vary with each situation. If sufficient justification is provided, the employee does not necessarily have to choose the least expensive method of transportation. If the cost difference between the employee's preferred travel and the other method exceeds \$150, the employee's reimbursement will be limited to the Library's lowest cost plus \$150.

Travel Time / Standard Travel Distance

The Travel Time/Standard Travel Distance table (see Appendix) is used for estimating meal allowances and for payroll purposes. Travel time will generally be estimated on the basis of 50 mph, in order to allow for rest stops, refueling, etc.

Mileage is the shortest distance from city center to city center via State & Federal

highways. If mileage is not listed on this table, it will be calculated using a mapping website, such as Google Maps or MapQuest. with Eau Claire 54701 as the beginning address.

LODGING

Overnight lodging is generally reimbursed when a training session begins at a time that would require an employee to leave the City prior to 6:00 a.m. to reach their destination allowing ample time for registration and locating the first session or to return home after 10:00 p.m. based on the Travel Time Table shown on previous pages. Employees should stay in a comfortable room at a good commercial hotel that does not exceed the current General Services Administration (GSA) per diem rates for that community.

The general rules for sharing a room are as follows:

- 1) The Library does not require employees traveling to the same training/meeting to room together. Rooming with other staff members is optional; however, approval of trainings/meetings where staff chooses not to room together will depend on Library budgetary constraints.
- 2) The Library requires that rooms be limited to the lowest price room available for a standard single rate.
- 3) If you choose to bring a guest, you will be required to pay for any additional charges assessed for the guest.

The maximum hotel rate is established by GSA. Any exception must be approved in advance by the Library Director.

Lodging for government functions may be tax exempt. Notice must be given to the hotel when making reservations. The hotel may require some type of government identification, a copy of our tax-exempt certificate and/or pre-payment of lodging. Sales and room taxes are generally not reimbursed for lodging in Wisconsin as the Library is part of a tax-exempt municipality.

Hotel/motel room charges will be reimbursed at actual cost for a standard single room. Employees should observe hotel checkout hours in order to avoid a charge for the day of departure. An employee who is required to remain in one location for an extended period of time is expected to find lodging at weekly and/or monthly rates.

An original hotel receipt must be obtained upon checkout and include the dates of the stay and all hotel charges, even if the hotel has been pre-paid. A photocopy of the receipt, a hotel statement, or a copy of your credit card receipt is **not** adequate support for reimbursement.

An exception to the 6:00 a.m. rule may be made for inclement weather based on weather reports one day prior to the day of travel.

An exception to the 6:00 a.m. rule may also be made when training extends for two or more days, and the round-trip travel time is more than two hours. In those cases, the employee may qualify for overnight lodging reimbursement.

Other special circumstances may warrant an overnight stay, but must be requested in advance and approved by the Library Director.

REGISTRATION

Pre-registration is usually required for training, and paid directly by the Library on the employee's behalf. In cases where the employee registered themselves, a completed enrollment form must be attached to the *Training/Travel Statement* form.

MEAL ALLOWANCE

Reimbursements for out-of-town meals are allowable under the following conditions:

24%	Breakfast:	The employee is required to leave home before 7:00 a.m., based on the standard travel time estimate.
30%	Lunch:	The employee must leave their work area before 10:30 a.m. or return after 1:30 p.m.
46%	Dinner:	The employee's expected return time, using the standard travel time estimate, is after 6:00 p.m., or the employee leaves before 5:00 p.m. en route to training.

Per Diem amounts

Meal expense is reimbursed per diem according to the GSA. The website address for GSA is <http://www.gsa.gov>.

Receipts are not required since the reimbursement will not exceed the applicable per diem rate. The applicable per diem meal allowance, including tax and tips, is based on location and travel times. An employee may qualify for a locale's rate for one meal and another locale's rate for a different meal.

- Reimbursements for meals are considered taxable wages unless the travel includes an overnight stay.
- Meals that are included in the cost of lodging or registration will be substituted for normal meal costs. However, a continental breakfast provided at a seminar or by the hotel will not reduce the meal allowance.

Generally, employees may not accept meals or other gratuities from vendors or persons having business interests with the Library. However, if employees attend a national conference, or equivalent, where vendors sponsor extracurricular functions, the employees may participate if the event is open to all attendees regardless of their customer affiliation. If employees wish to attend private vendor functions, the employees must reimburse the vendor for all costs of meals and entertainment. The Library does not reimburse entertainment expenses.

There is no reimbursement for meals when attending training in the local area which is defined as the City of Eau Claire and any contiguous city, town, or village, specifically, The City of Altoona, Town of Seymour, Town of Washington, Township of Brunswick, Town of Union, Town of Wheaton, and the Village of Hallie unless the cost of the meal is included in the registration fee or when it is required that a meeting be held during lunch. Such a business luncheon will be an authorized expenditure if it is a meeting with individuals on Library business and it is not practical to meet at another time. This does

not include division staff meetings or other meetings with only Library employees in attendance unless specifically approved by the Library Director.

MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES (REQUIRED FOR REIMBURSEMENT)

Parking

Parking is an allowable expense under the following:

Overnight Parking at Hotel Stops: every effort should be made to obtain free parking. If the traveler fails to obtain available free parking, the parking charge will not be reimbursed. The least expensive parking option available at the site should be utilized, (i.e., self-parking rather than valet).

Airport Parking: on-site parking at the Minneapolis airport is quite expensive. When more than two days parking is required, every effort should be made to obtain off-site parking. Several off-airport lots are available.

Other Parking: other parking charges incurred while on official business outside Eau Claire will be reimbursed upon presentation of receipts.

Parking and other mileage reimbursements will not exceed the cost of round-trip shuttle service for the number of employees traveling.

Shuttle Service

Shuttle service to and from the Minneapolis airport is available through Groome Transportation (www.groometransportation.com). (This service should be used in lieu of driving to Minneapolis and parking whenever possible.

Telephone Calls

Telephone calls are reimbursed if necessary for official business. Date, place and phone number must be on hotel bill, or a statement attached to the *Training/Travel Statement* form giving date, place, person called and nature of business required.

Cell Phone Charges

Generally, charges on personal cell phones while traveling will not be reimbursed. If an employee incurs an unusual expense, he/she may submit a copy of his/her cell phone bill showing the time used and a calculation of the cost, if it is not indicated on the bill.

Porterage

Necessary gratuities to hotel employees will be reimbursed. These may not exceed \$10 for each stay at a hotel. All other tips and fees to porters, bellboys, maids, etc., will not be reimbursed.

Taxi Service

Taxi or ride share service from the hotel to the conference site is an allowable expense if no shuttle is available or is less than the cost of the shuttle for the number of employees travelling. Every attempt should be made to seek the lowest cost method, taking the number of travelers into consideration. Tips/gratuities should not exceed 15% of the fare.

Internet Service

Internet service charges are approved for reimbursement only in cases authorized

in advance by the Library Director for work related purposes.

Tolls

Highway tolls are reimbursable when accompanied by a receipt.

REIMBURSEMENT FROM OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Travel and training that is completely reimbursed by another governmental agency is exempt from the Library's travel policy, with the understanding that the employee will comply with the reporting requirements of the agency. Since the Library will pay the employee's time if the travel and training are related to Library business, the employee must submit a *Training/Travel Statement* form, with the required approvals. All travel and training expenses, including travel advances, must be paid by the sponsoring agency. If the Library pays any portion of the expenses, other than wages and benefits, the employee is subject to the Library's travel policy. A copy of the reimbursement form sent to the outside agency must be attached to the Library's *Training/Travel Statement*.

TRAVEL ADVANCES

Travel advances are available to the traveler by indicating the amount requested on the *Training/Travel Statement* form. The advance should not exceed estimated out-of-pocket expenses and will be made only for amounts of \$100 or more. All travel advances will be paid through the payroll system on the closest pay date to the date of travel.

Travel advances are the responsibility of the employee. If a theft or other disappearance of this money occurs, it is the employee's responsibility. Travel advances are based on the estimated dates and times indicated on the form. Actual dates and times will be used to calculate reimbursable expenses when the *Training/Travel Statement* form is reconciled.

VEHICLE RENTAL WHEN TRAVELING BY AIR

Normally, employees will not use rental cars when traveling by air; however, when transportation is required at the destination, and public transportation is inconvenient and costly in time, a rental car may be used. An explanation of the circumstances should be included with the *Training/Travel Statement* form. A rental car should be evaluated against other modes of transportation. Many times, extensive travel at the destination can be done at less cost by a rental car rather than multiple taxi fares. This is especially true if a number of employees are involved.

An insurance option providing collision coverage with a \$100 deductible clause is an allowable expense. Rental companies also offer personal accident insurance (death and dismemberment). This option is covered under group health insurance policies for employees that are covered under the Library's health insurance plan and is under Workmen's Compensation while traveling on official business for the Library. If additional coverage is purchased, it will be considered a personal expense and will not be reimbursed.

TRAVELING WITH A COMPANION

An employee who is on official Library business may travel with companions. However, travel expenses incurred by, or because of, the companions will not be reimbursed. For example, if an employee chooses to drive a personal vehicle in order to accommodate companions, their reimbursement will be based on the lowest cost public transportation available.

No expense of the companions should be charged to the Library, claimed as tax-exempt, or be eligible for any Library discount.

The cost of lodging to be reimbursed by the Library will be equal to the lowest priced room required for the number of employees traveling to the same training.

COMPENSATION FOR TRAINING & TRAVEL

Exempt Employees

Exempt employees are paid their regular salary for travel and training related to Library business. There is no salary adjustment for training and travel time that may occur outside of their normal working hours.

Any exceptions to the travel and training policy for exempt employees must be approved by the Library Director and kept on file in Administration.

Non-Exempt Employees

Non-exempt employees will be compensated for hours actually in training sessions and for travel time. Any social, "networking," or other extracurricular hours will not be compensated.

Though the Library compensates for meals while traveling to and from trainings, conferences, conventions, seminars or meetings out of the local area, meal break times will not be compensated during travel or training, unless the meals are included in actual training sessions. Driving time will generally be calculated on the basis of the standard miles as described previously in this policy.

These employees will use Code 100 on their timesheets for both the training and travel time. An example of paid travel time follows:

An employee travels for six hours on Day One. On Day Two, they attend class for eight hours; Day Three they attend class for six hours; and on Day Four, attend class for nine hours and travel for six hours. Actual hours each day are recorded on the time-sheet. Total time is 35 hours.

Employees have the option to take an additional number of hours of paid leave (vacation, floating holiday) to reach their usual number of hours per week when gone on travel.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL PROVISIONS

Non-exempt employees who choose to drive their personal vehicles rather than use other means of public transportation will be compensated, if applicable, on the basis of the transportation that results in the least amount of compensable time.

The *Request for Training/Travel Statement* forms, when submitted for approval, must include accurate calculations of the additional straight time and/or overtime that will be incurred due to the travel and training.

The hours of travel and training reported on the employees' time sheets must match those on the *Request for Training/Travel Statement* form or be supported by explanations

for any differences.

These provisions supersede any training arrangements that are not in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Divisions may use flex-time within the standard work week to minimize overtime for travel.

REPORTING TRAVEL ON TIMESHEETS

Qualifying travel and training time is recorded on the timesheet as Code 100.

APPENDIX

JANUARY 2021 RENTAL EQUIVALENT CALCULATION

IRS Rate	\$0.585*
Car Rental Fee	\$34.75 per day for the first 24.5 hour period, each additional hour after 24.5 add \$11.29 for each hour up to two hours then charge for an additional day (\$34.75)
Mileage Adjustment	29 mpg @ \$2.996* per gallon *to be adjusted January 1 st and July 1 st . Contact the Administrative offices for current rates.

Example 1:

Destination:	Milwaukee (476 miles round trip)
Departure:	4/23 @ 1:00 pm
Return:	4/24 @ 4:00 pm

A) At the IRS Rate: (476 miles * \$0.585)	\$278.46
B) Rental Equivalent:	
Rental rate for one day plus two hours (\$34.75 + \$11.29 + \$11.29)	\$ 57.33
Mileage adjustment: (476 / 29 mpg * \$2.996/gal)	<u>\$ 49.20</u>
Total reimbursement	\$106.53

Example 2:

Destination:	Milwaukee (476 miles round trip)
Departure:	4/23 @ 1:00 pm
Return:	4/24 @ 8:00 pm

A) At the IRS Rate: (476 miles * \$0.585)	\$278.46
B) Rental Equivalent:	
Rental rate for two days	\$ 68.20
Mileage adjustment: (476 / 29 mpg * \$2.996/gal)	<u>\$ 49.20</u>
Total reimbursement	\$117.40

In these examples, the rental equivalent is the amount that would be reimbursed for the personal use of a vehicle since it is lower than the IRS rate.