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TRAVEL RULES

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AUTHORIZATION TO CLAIM EXPENSES

All nonfederal Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) members of the Council, Scientific and Statistical Committee, advisory subpanels, technical teams, work groups, ad hoc committees, staff, and special consultants performing authorized services are eligible to receive reimbursement for limited per diem travel expenses when away from their home station or while away from their work location in the metropolitan area of their residence. Travel expenses for which reimbursement is allowable will be confined to those expenses essential to transacting official Council business.

In order to claim travel expenses, the claimant must have a current **Photo Identification (ID) card** issued and signed by the Executive Director. **Photo ID cards** are issued to each nonfederal individual in the Council membership at time of appointment or interim benchmark. The claimant must also have a meeting invitation, which lists them as an attendee of the meeting and has been signed by the Executive Director or his designee. Approximately three weeks prior to every Council-funded meeting, a memorandum is sent to the appropriate Council membership inviting them to attend. This invitation, typically in memorandum form, includes the dates, times, and locations of the meeting along with the allowable per diem rates for lodging and meals and incidental expenses.

COUNCIL TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT POLICIES

The Council observes the General Service Administration (GSA) reimbursement rates for mileage, commercial transportation, and per diem rates for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses; additional information may be found in 41 CFR Part 301 and will be provided by the Council office upon request. Meals and lodging will be reimbursed at actual costs up to the GSA meal and hotel limits unless prior approval is granted by the Executive Director for actual costs above the limit for the area. The table on page five shows the current maximum GSA meal and hotel limits in several key locations where meetings relating to Council business are expected to be held.

Miscellaneous travel costs submitted for reimbursement must have adequate explanation of the nature and purpose of the expenses and must show the cost is reasonable and related to the conduct of official Council business. Requests for reimbursement over \$25 per item must be submitted with a receipt or original credit card receipt.

Means of travel shall be by the method of transportation which will result in the greatest financial advantage to the Council, considering cost and other relevant factors. Travel may be performed by common carrier (i.e., air, bus, etc.), privately owned vehicle, or other means. First class travel is not allowed without prior approval from the Executive Director and will be authorized only in certain unusual instances. Reimbursement of means of travel will be from the traveler's designated work station, or home in the case of no designated work station.

Full and Partial Travel Days

For each full 24-hour calendar day of travel status, the actual costs of lodging and meals and incidental expenses are limited to the maximum meal and hotel limit for the particular location of travel status, as shown in the table on page 5. Without prior approval from the Executive Director, there will be no per diem reimbursement for travel less than 12 hours total duration. For travel exceeding 12 hours but less than 24 hours, meals and incidental expenses will be reimbursed at 75% of the applicable per diem rate, and lodging will be reimbursed up to the full allowance with an overnight stay. For the first and last days of multiple day travel, meals and incidental expenses will be reimbursed at 75% of the applicable per diem rate, regardless of the time of day the trip begins or ends.

Miscellaneous Expenses

Miscellaneous expenses may include costs incurred for the conduct of Council business such as fees, service tips, transportation between lodging and meeting sites, and telephone calls. Receipts are required for miscellaneous expenses which exceed \$25 in cost.

Telephone Calls and Internet Connections

Telephone calls and charges for internet connections for Council-directed business may be judged reimbursable, at reasonable cost, when itemized on the claim by date, length of time, and general nature of business. Use local phone numbers when accessing internet providers to avoid long distance charges and restrict use to Council business only.

Tips

Tips for meals are considered part of the meals and incidental expenses per diem rate and are reimbursable up to the maximum per diem rate. Reimbursement of tips for any other purpose will be judged reimbursable on the basis of described necessity to business travel and at a reasonable amount.

Travel within a 30-Mile Radius

Without approval by the Executive Director, meals and lodging expenses will not be paid within a 30-mile radius of an individual's home or work station. Meal expenses will be allowed up to one-half the appropriate per diem rate if official Council business is carried on as part of a meeting taking place coincident with a meal.

Privately Owned Vehicles

Mileage will be reimbursed at the designated GSA mileage rate, **44.5¢ per mile effective January 1, 2006**. Use of a privately owned conveyance must be justified by comparison with use of commercial transportation, with consideration being given to total distance of travel, number of destination points on the itinerary, and the number of travelers. When a privately owned conveyance is used as a matter of personal preference and such use is not determined to be advantageous to the Council, reimbursement will be limited to the lesser amount as determined by cost comparison between the mileage reimbursement cost and the use of commercial transportation, such as air travel through American Express One Business Travel Services (see Commercial Airlines - Making Reservations).

When two or more people travel together in a privately owned vehicle, the names of all travelers need to be stated on each travel claim submitted.

Mileage for Council staff will be measured from the Council office location to the point of destination and return.

Rental Cars

The use of rental cars is discouraged. Airport shuttles, group use of taxis, and other more economical options should be used in lieu of renting cars. Reimbursement will be made for use of rental cars when unusual circumstances justify the need. In most cases, reimbursement will not be made for the use of rental cars in excess of the individual cost of available public transportation unless cost comparisons are stated on the expense claim that demonstrate an economic advantage to the Council. When two or more people travel together in a rented vehicle, the names of all travelers must be stated on each travel claim submitted.

Commercial Airlines

American Express One Business Travel Services currently handles the travel arrangements for Council business.

Making Reservations

- Make your reservations as soon as possible to avoid the extra cost associated with short advance notice or few remaining seats on a particular flight.
- Reservations can be made by contacting **American Express One** at **800-958-8815**.
- When contacting American Express One, begin by identifying yourself to the travel agent and state you are traveling as a member of the Pacific Fishery Management Council.
- The agent is to quote the government fare and lowest fare, which in most cases will be the government fare. If the lowest fare quoted is less than the government fare, choose the lowest fare instead of the government fare for your desired flight, unless you believe there is substantial probability you will need to cancel the ticket or the price differential is less than 5%. Electronic tickets should be used because additional fees are charged for "paper" tickets. Please verify your fax number or email address with the travel agent.
- You will receive a fax or email with a copy of your invoice/itinerary attached. The email will also refer you to an internet AirWeb site for flight information; however, it is not necessary to access the site because your itinerary is already attached to the email itself.

Changing and Canceling Airline Reservations

If a change in your itinerary or cancellation of your trip is necessary, contact either the airline carrier or American Express One, whichever made your original reservations.

Delivery of Paper Airline Tickets

Tickets are sent directly to the traveler by American Express One. American Express One will issue electronic tickets unless you specifically request paper tickets at the additional cost. **Paper tickets are discouraged unless absolutely necessary.**

Payment for Airline Tickets

The Council is billed directly for all travelers calling American Express One Business Travel Services for Council-approved travel. Reimbursement for tickets purchased directly from the airline carrier is through the travel expense claim. In either case, the traveler is responsible for attaching the remaining stub of the ticket, a copy of the electronic ticket, or a copy of the itinerary to the travel expense claim form.

Private Airplanes

Private airplanes may be used with prior approval from the Executive Director, with reimbursement at the current GSA airfare rate.

TRAVEL EXPENSE CLAIM

Please return Travel Expense Claim forms and necessary receipts to the Council office within 30 days after travel is completed. Claims for travel reimbursement received over 60 days after travel is completed may not be paid.

Disallowance

A disallowance to the claim submitted may occur at the time the travel claim is processed for payment. This may occur because there is a lack of necessary receipts, lack of a cost comparison when the private mileage option is chosen over commercial travel options, claims in excess of allowed rates, or an error made in the computation of costs shown on the claim. Please review any disallowance and contact the Council office should you have any questions about the amount reimbursed. Amounts disallowed may be reconsidered for payment upon presentation of the necessary receipts or additional information.

Claim Form Instructions

Fill in your *Name, Address,* and *Travel Order Number* in the sections provided.

Period of Claim, fill in the month and year that the travel occurred (e.g., March 2005).

Purpose of Travel, write in the name of the meeting or event you traveled to (e.g., March Council Meeting).

Date column, list each day on a separate line that you were in travel status.

Fill in the city from which you left under the *Travel Origination;* the city to which you are traveling under *Travel Destination;* and the reverse on the day of return.

Private Car columns, enter the miles driven that day. Calculate the allowable cost by multiplying the number of miles by **\$0.485 per mile.**

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner columns, list the actual costs of meals. Reimbursement of these costs will not exceed the per diem rates listed in the Travel Rules without prior approval by the Executive Director.

Lodging column, list the actual costs of lodging, not including hotel taxes. Make sure a receipt is attached for such expenses. Reimbursement of lodging costs will not exceed the per diem rates listed in the Travel Rules without prior approval by the Executive Director.

Add all expenses claimed across each line and place the amount under the Daily Total column.

The *Miscellaneous Costs* section provides an opportunity to claim bus and taxi fares, hotel taxes, airport parking, and charges for other Council business-related expenses. These costs must have adequate explanation of the nature and purpose of the expense and show the cost is reasonable and related to the conduct of official business. A receipt needs to be provided for such costs over \$25.

All claims for reimbursement must be signed in ink by the traveler verifying the authenticity of the charges.

Maximum Per Diem Reimbursement Rate Limits

The following table lists current per diem rates (effective January 23, 1006) for cities and counties most commonly visited for Council business. Rates for additional locations are available from the Council office.

State	City	County	Maximum Lodging ¹	Full Day Meals & Incidental Expenses ²	First & Last Day M&I ³	
CALIFORNIA	Eureka	Humboldt	60	39	29.25	
	Foster City	San Mateo	86	54	40.50	
	La Jolla	San Diego	(Oct 1-Dec 31)	120	64	48
	(Jan 1-May 31)		127	64	48	
	(Jun 1-Sep 30)		120	64	48	
	Los Alamitos	Orange County	96	64	48	
	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	(Oct 1-Dec 31)	96	64	48
	(Jan 1-Sep 30)		104	64	48	
	Sacramento	Sacramento	94	59	44.25	
	San Diego	San Diego	(Oct 1-Dec 31)	120	64	48
	(Jan 1-May 31)		127	64	48	
	(Jun 1-Sep 30)		120	64	48	
	San Francisco	San Francisco	130	64	48	
	San Mateo	San Mateo	86	54	40.50	
	San Jose	Santa Clara	101	59	44.25	
	Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara	(Oct 1-Jan 31)	100	59	44.25
	(Feb 1-Jun 30)		133	59	44.25	
	(Jul 1-Aug 31)		173	59	44.25	
	(Sep 1-Sep 30)		133	59	44.25	
	Santa Cruz	Santa Cruz	(Oct 1-May 31)	70	54	40.50
(Jun 1-Aug 31)	85		54	40.50		
(Sep 1-Sep 30)	70		54	40.50		
Santa Rosa	Sonoma		100	64	48	
OREGON	Coos Bay	Coos	60	39	29.25	
	Gladstone/Clackamas	Clackamas	67	39	29.25	
	Lincoln City/Newport	Lincoln	(Oct 1-Jun 30)	74	49	36.75
	(Jul 1-Aug 31)		94	49	36.75	
	(Sep 1-Sep 30)		74	49	36.75	
	Portland	Multnomah	98	49	36.75	
	Seaside	Clatsop	(Oct 1-Jun 30)	71	54	40.50
	(Jul 1-Aug 31)		98	54	40.50	
	(Sep 1-Sep 30)		71	54	40.50	
WASHINGTON	Seattle	King	124	64	48	
	Olympia/Tumwater	Thurston	68	49	36.75	
	Tacoma	Pierce	74	59	44.25	
	Vancouver	Clark	98	49	36.75	
	Westport/Ocean Shores	Grays Harbor	81	44	33	

¹ Lodging does not include state or local taxes. Show current photo ID card to be tax exempt. Reimbursement requires receipt with expenses limited to single room rate.

² Incidental expenses include fees and tips, transportation between lodging and restaurants, and telephone calls directly related to Council business.

³ For the first and last days of travel, meals will be reimbursed at 75% of the applicable per diem rate regardless of the time of day the trip begins or ends.

