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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, management and technical teams, work groups, ad hoc committees, staff, special consultants, and individuals of specific invitation to travel 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, when authorized to travel for Council-related purposes. Travel expenses for which reimbursement is allowable will be confined to those expenses essential to transacting official Council business.

Unless approved by authorized Council staff, the claimant must have a meeting invitation, which lists them as an attendee of the meeting and has been approved by the Executive Director or his designee. Approximately three weeks prior to every Council-funded meeting, a memorandum is sent to the appropriate Council and/or Advisory Body members inviting them to attend. This invitation includes the dates, times, and locations of the meeting along with the allowable per diem rates for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses, and is an operational travel order.

All travelers will have access to Concur <https://www.concursolutions.com/>. Concur is a web-based product that integrates purchasing travel with the expense claim process.

Council Travel Claim Policies

General Information

The Council observes the General Service Administration (GSA) reimbursement rates for mileage, commercial transportation, and per diem rates for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses as the *per se* accounting of actual 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 the GSA meal and hotel limits unless prior approval is granted by the Executive Director for costs above the limit for the area. The table on page 8 shows the current maximum GSA meal and hotel limits in several key locations where meetings relating to Council business are expected to be held.

For Council meetings, lodging is provided within a room block. If the mode of booking selected by the claimant incurs a higher cost, the additional cost is the responsibility of the claimant. Reimbursement will be made at the greatest financial advantage to the Council.

For locations not listed in the table on page 8, please access the Federal GSA website (<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>) to view current maximum per diem rates or contact the Council office.

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 \$30 per item must be submitted with a receipt or original credit card receipt.

Travel may be performed by common carrier (i.e., air, train, bus, etc.), privately-owned vehicle, or other means. The Council will reimburse the method of transportation which will result in the greatest financial advantage to the Council, considering cost and other relevant factors. In general, the Council will reimburse for an amount no greater than the lowest coach 30-day advance airfare amount available to the claimant. If the mode of travel selected by the claimant incurs a higher cost, the additional cost is the responsibility of the claimant.

First class or other upgraded travel will not be reimbursed without prior approval from the Executive Director and will be authorized only in certain unusual instances. When upgraded travel is incurred at the preference of a claimant at a cost higher than the lowest advance coach airfare amount, the claimant shall be reimbursed at the 30-day advance coach airfare amount.

Reimbursement of means of travel will be from the traveler's designated workstation, or home in the case of no designated work location. The Council will not reimburse for companion travel without prior approval from the Executive Director and written justification of cause.

Full and Partial Travel Days

For each full 24-hour calendar day of travel status, authorized travelers will be reimbursed at the Federal lodging and meals and incidental expenses rates for the location of travel status, as shown in the table on page 8. Without prior approval from the Executive Director or Deputy 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 percent 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 percent of the applicable per diem rate, regardless of the time of day the trip begins or ends. In the event you are unable to complete your travel on the last approved date, you may be eligible for full per diem on that date, but would be ineligible for any per diem the next day if your travel is completed by 6:00 a.m.

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 parking. Receipts are required for miscellaneous expenses that exceed \$30 in cost.

Baggage Fees

Baggage fees for the first piece of luggage on domestic flights will be reimbursed. Baggage fees for additional luggage will be at the expense of the traveler unless advance approval by the Executive Director or Deputy Director is obtained.

Telephone Calls and Internet Connections

Telecommunication and internet connection charges are generally not reimbursed, but may be judged reimbursable, if necessary, for direct Council business at reasonable cost, when itemized on the claim by date, length of time, and general nature of business. Judgment will be based on the necessity of Council-related purpose.

Tips

Tips for meals, porters for luggage and housekeeping service are considered part of the meals and incidental expenses per diem rate and are not subject to further reimbursement.

Tips for taxi's or shared ride services are allowed but should be limited to 20% of the total fare.

Reimbursement of tips for any other purpose will be judged reimbursable based on 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 location.

Privately Owned Vehicles

Mileage will be reimbursed at the designated GSA mileage rate, **67 cents per mile (effective January 1, 2024)**. 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 the 30-day advance coach airfare.

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

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.

Concur (Direct Travel)

Reservations may be made by logging into Concur <https://www.concursolutions.com/> and purchasing a ticket through Direct Travel. You can view available tickets within a window of selected fares. You will receive an email with a copy of your invoice/itinerary attached.

EasyBiz (Alaska Airlines)

Reservations may also be made online by using the Council's EasyBiz account with Alaska Airlines. Contact the Council office to enroll in this option and receive appropriate information.

Booking on your own

Reservations may also be made from the airline carrier directly or other vendors, however, reimbursement will generally be only for the lowest 30-day advance price available from Direct Travel or Alaska Airlines EasyBiz, unless extenuating circumstances prevail.

Changing and Canceling Airline Reservations

Changes for airline reservations after travel has started should be only if extenuating circumstances indicate. If changes are not cost neutral to the Council, expenses may be disallowed, and reimbursement requested. Same day change fees may not be authorized without documentation as to the necessity of the change.

If a change in your itinerary or cancellation of your trip is necessary, contact either the airline carrier, Direct Travel or EasyBiz, whichever made your original reservations.

Direct Travel Contact Details:

Your Travel Consultants

Service Team #5

Toll-free Phone: [877.848.4471](tel:877.848.4471)

Email: serviceteam5@dt.com

Payment for Airline Tickets

The Council is billed directly for all travelers using Direct Travel through Concur or Alaska Airline EasyBiz for Council-approved travel. Reimbursement for tickets from the airline carrier or other vendors is through the travel expense claim. All airline purchases must be recorded on the expense claim.

Private Airplanes, International Travel, and Miscellaneous

Private airplanes may be used with prior approval from the Executive Director, with reimbursement at the lowest non-refundable advance purchase coach ticket rate. International travel is a special category of travel and requires advance approval by the Executive Director at least 60 days in advance of anticipated travel. In the event an individual secures an unapproved travel seating upgrade from the 30-day advance coach fare for personal reasons, the Council will reimburse for no more than the 30-day advance coach fare price.

Expense Claim

Travel expense claim forms must be submitted electronically through Concur. Travel Expense Claim forms and necessary receipts must be submitted within 60 days after travel is completed. Claims submitted after 60 days will be processed by approval of the Executive Director or designee. Claims for travel reimbursement received after the end of the contract payment year will 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 more than 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

Include all air travel. Incidental 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 \$30.

All claims for reimbursement will be digitally signed by the traveler, verifying the authenticity of the charges.

Maximum Per Diem Reimbursement Rate Limits

The following table lists current per diem rates (**effective October 1, 2023**) for cities and counties most commonly visited for Council business. Rates for additional locations are available from the Council office.

	California							Oregon							Washington							Idaho					
	City	Dates	County	Lodging	Meals	Meals		City	Dates	County	Lodging	Meals	Meals		City	Dates	County	Lodging	Meals	Meals		City	Dates	County	Lodging	Meals	Meals
California	Costa Mesa & Los Angeles	Oct 1 - Oct 31	Los Angeles/ Orange County	183.00	74.00	55.50	Oregon	Lincoln City/ Newport	Oct 1 - June 30	Lincoln	131.00	69.00	51.75														
		Nov 1-Dec 31		169.00					July 1-Aug 31		202.00																
		Jan 1-Sept 30		183.00					Sept 1 - Sept 30		131.00															Portland	Oct 1 - Oct 31
	Eureka	Oct 1- May 31	Humboldt	124.00	Nov 1-May 31	152.00																					
		June 1- Aug 31		173.00	Jun 1-Sept 30	182.00																					
	Foster City/ San Mateo		San Mateo	222.00	74.00	55.50		Seaside	Oct 1- Jan 31	Clatsop	130.00	69.00	51.75														
									Feb 1- Jun 30		135.00																
	Monterey	Oct 1- May 31	Monterey	184.00	74.00	55.50		July1-Aug 31	222.00																		
		Jun 1 - Aug 31		251.00				Sept 1 - Sept 30	130.00																		
		Sept 1- Sept 30		184.00																							
	Sacramento		Sacramento	145.00	69.00	51.75		Olympia/ Tumwater	Oct 1-Oct 31	Thurston	132.00	74.00	55.50														
	San Diego/ La Jolla	Oct 1 - May 31	San Diego	194.00	Nov 1- Aug 31	153.00																					
		Jun 1 - Aug 31		230.00	Sept 1 - Sept 30	132.00																					
	San Francisco	Oct 1 - Dec 31	San Francisco	288.00	79.00	59.25	Seattle	Oct 1 - Oct 31	King	232.00	79.00	59.25															
		Jan 1 - Mar 31		333.00				Nov 1 - Apr 30		176.00																	
		Apr 1 - Aug 31		270.00				May 1-Sept 30		232.00																	
		Sept 1 - Sept 30		288.00			Spokane		Spokane	127.00	74.00	55.50															
	San Jose		Santa Clara	245.00	74.00	55.50	Tacoma		Pierce	132.00	69.00	51.75															
	Santa Barbara	Oct 1 - June 30	Santa Barbara	214.00	74.00	55.50	Vancouver	Oct 1-Oct 31	Clark/Cowlitz/ Skamania	182.00	74.00	55.50															
		July 1-Aug 31		289.00				Nov 1 - May 31		152.00																	
		Sept 1- Sept 30		214.00				June 1-Sept 30		182.00																	
	Santa Cruz	Oct 1 - May 31	Santa Cruz	143.00	69.00	51.75	Westport/ Ocean Shores	Oct 1 - Jun 30	Grays Harbor	111.00	74.00	55.50															
		Jun 1 - Aug 31		181.00				July 1-Aug 31		146.00																	
		Sept 1- Sept 30		143.00				Sept 1 - Sept 30		111.00																	
	Santa Rosa		Sonoma	157.00	74.00	55.50																					
							Boise		Ada	165.00	74.00	55.50															