

Travel Reimbursement Policy

MRRA Policy #004

This administrative regulation sets forth the policy of the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Agency (MRRA) regarding the payment of travel expenses for MRRA officials or employees while traveling on official MRRA business.

1.1 Limitations on Travel Expenses

1. Travel expenses will be reimbursed only when travel occurs within the continental United States, unless specifically approved by the Director.
2. The MRRA will not reimburse expenses of the official's or employee's spouse or guests.
3. The employee shall use the most economical and practical mode of travel both from the standpoint of time and cost.
4. Two or more employees attending the same event shall share one vehicle unless a supervisor gives prior approval.

1.2 Allowable Expenses

A. Auto Travel - Personal Car.

When a personal car is used, reimbursement will be made for any tolls, parking fees and mileage. Employees required to use their private vehicles for MRRA business shall be compensated at the current IRS rate for mileage reimbursement. Nothing contained herein shall prohibit the use of a privately owned vehicle for out-of-state travel. Whenever private transportation is authorized for MRRA business out-of-state, total transportation expenses paid may not exceed the cost of commercial transportation had that been used.

All employees who drive private vehicles to conduct MRRA business shall ensure that they are properly licensed, and that any private vehicle used for MRRA business is properly registered and insured. If an employee is involved in a vehicle accident while driving or traveling in their private vehicle and conducting MRRA business within the scope of the employment, the insurance policy for that private vehicle will provide insurance protection for the employee. Therefore, it is essential that the employee consult with their insurance agent to determine adequate insurance coverage. The MRRA will reimburse the employee for the amount of insurance deductible paid by the employee up to a maximum of \$500.

B. Plane Fare.

Air travel will be reimbursed at the coach rate only. If the employee desires to arrange first-class travel, the employees will pay the difference between the coach rate and first-class travel. Airfare for the employee's spouse or guest will be paid by the employee.

C. Rail Transportation.

Rail transportation may be approved if there is no significant difference in fare and time between rail and other forms of commercial travel.

D. Ground Transportation.

Expenses to and from airports, such as airport limousine, taxicab or bus transportation, are qualified expenses. Road tolls and parking fees are also included. Vehicle rental, after reaching destination by commercial transportation, is permissible when it is necessary and is the most economical and practical means of transportation. Vehicle rental should be limited to subcompact, compact, or intermediate sizes.

E. Hotel Rooms.

The MRRRA pays only the single-room rate. If a double room is required, the employee will pay the difference between the single and double room rate, if any. If two employees share a double room the double room rate is allowable. At the time of registration, the employee should state that he/she is a MRRRA employee in order to ascertain whether or not a government rate is available.

F. Meals.

Generally, travelers are to be reimbursed for meal expenses at the set per meal entitlement rates as adopted by the General Services Administration of the United States Government. (U.S. General Services Administration (<http://www.gsa.gov/>)-Per Diem Rates)¹. When receipts for meals are required, reimbursement will be based on an actual cost basis as evidenced by a receipt up to the applicable maximum per meal entitlement amount.

The Executive Director may approve reimbursement for the actual cost of a meal with the copy of the meal charges above the per diem rates.

G. Telephone Calls:

Business related telephone calls are an allowable reimbursement when receipts of said calls are submitted to the MRRRA. One long distance telephone call to the employee's home (not exceeding ten (10) minutes in length) will be allowed when the employee is away on an overnight trip. Employees are encouraged to use calling cards whenever possible.

1.3 Procedure for Travel Approval and Travel Advance

1. The employee shall complete the Travel Approval/Advance form.

¹ Instructions: Select U.S. Per Diem Rates by Location (Continental USA) to view rates for the contiguous United States

2. The employee shall submit the form to the Director for approval no later than ten (10) days before the departure date.
3. The MRRA will deduct from the employee's first available paycheck, in lump sum, any travel advances outstanding for more than thirty (30) days after the completion of the trip if the Travel Expense Form is not filed as required by this policy.

1.4. Procedure for Travel Reimbursement/Reconciliation

1. Within ten working days after the completion of the trip, the employee must complete the Reconciliation of Travel Expense Form and reimburse any money owed to the MRRA.
2. A receipt, ticket stub or other appropriate documentation must be attached to the form to substantiate each itemized expense (excluding reasonable tips). Items not sufficiently justified may be disallowed.
3. If, during the payment process, expenses disallowed by this policy are discovered, the MRRA will charge the payment accordingly and notify the department.