

EXPENSE REGULATIONS
ST. CHARLES PARISH COUNCIL
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COUNCIL EXPENSE REGULATIONS

In accordance with the provisions of Article III, Section A.2. of the Home Rule Charter, each member of the St. Charles Parish Council shall receive compensation for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of his duties within limitations established by the Parish Council. The following regulations and guidelines referred to in Opinion No. L92-5-25 are hereby established and correspond to the limitations provided in enacted annual budgets.

ADVERTISING

ASSOCIATION DUES

Dues shall be paid directly to the Association or individual Councilmembers may be reimbursed for dues paid to an Association if funds have been allocated for this purpose in the annual enacted budget.

PRINTING

COUNCIL STATIONERY

A purchase requisition shall be submitted to purchase business letterhead and envelopes for individual Councilmembers. Stationery expenses shall not exceed the limit funded in the annual enacted budget.

P O S T A G E

POSTAGE STAMPS

A purchase requisition shall be submitted to the Council Office for the purchase of stamps, the amount of which shall not exceed the individual annual allocation.

COMMUNICATION

CELLULAR TELEPHONE

A purchase requisition shall be submitted to the Council Office for the purchase of a cellular telephone. Expenses incurred for the purchase and maintenance of cellular telephone equipment shall be paid by the Department of Finance up to the limit allocated for each Councilmember in the annual enacted budget.

Members shall be required to reimburse the Parish for any and all personal expenses incurred on the cellular telephone.

In lieu of the Parish providing a cellular phone, each Councilmember may choose to use a personally owned cellular phone and receive a monthly flat rate reimbursement up to the limit allocated in the annual budget.

COMPUTER

A purchase requisition shall be submitted to the Council Office for the purchase of computer hardware and software. The amount of the purchase shall not exceed the budget allocation.

Members shall be required to reimburse the Parish for any and all personal expenses incurred on the computer.

FAX MACHINES

Fax phone expenses incurred shall be paid by the Department of Finance to the monthly limit allocated for each Councilmember in the enacted annual budget. Councilmembers shall reimburse the Parish for all expenses incurred in excess of the monthly allocation.

A monthly telephone log for long distance fax calls for Parish business charges shall be submitted to the Department of Finance through the Council Staff.

CALLER ID MONTHLY CHARGE

Caller ID expenses incurred shall be paid by the Department of Finance up to the limit allocated for each Councilmember in the annual enacted budget.

MAINTENANCE
OF
PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT

**FAX MACHINES, CALLER ID, CELLULAR TELEPHONE, COMPUTERS,
AND OTHER EQUIPMENT**

A purchase requisition shall be submitted to the Council Office for maintenance or repair services needed for equipment.

Prior to incurring repair and maintenance expenses, a requisition must be secured.

OFFICE SUPPLIES

COUNCIL SUPPLIES

Purchase requisitions shall be submitted to the Council Office prior to incurring expenses for supplies.

Expenditures for general office supplies shall be limited to the amount appropriated to each Councilmember in the annual enacted budget.

Supplies may include but not be limited to daily planners, file folders, pens, tablets, calendars, telephone memo pads.

TRAVEL

SCOPE OF REGULATIONS

The following regulations cancel and supersede all previous travel regulations. All travel expenditures and reimbursements will be governed by these regulations.

TRAVEL WITHIN ST. CHARLES PARISH

MILEAGE

Each Councilmember shall be annually allocated individual funding for *mileage* incurred in the performance of official duties within St. Charles Parish. These duties shall include but not be limited to attendance at Parish Council regular or special meetings, committee meetings, Parish sponsored events, inspections or visits to parish facilities or projects, attendance at civic association meetings, etc. A mileage Allowance (Non-accountable Plan) of \$200.00 per month shall be paid to each council member in lieu of a monthly reimbursement of mileage expenses. This taxable benefit will be disbursed by the St. Charles Parish Department of Finance on the second payroll of each month.

GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

TRAVEL OUTSIDE ST. CHARLES PARISH

The following travel regulations have been established by the St. Charles Parish Council. The regulations and allowances contained herein pertain to the travel of Council Members, the Council Secretary and other appointed Council Staff members on official Parish business outside St. Charles Parish, the expenses incurred thereon and the maximum claims for reimbursement that will be allowed.

Each Councilmember, while traveling on official Parish business, shall only represent the District or Division from which he was elected. Should a Councilmember wish to represent the entire Council, he may only do so after a vote of the entire Council approves such representation.

REPORTING

Prior to traveling on official parish business, a Councilmember shall submit a Parish Travel Request Form.

Prior to final reimbursement for expenses incurred, a Parish Travel Expense Form must be submitted to the Department of Finance.

TRAVEL OUTSIDE ST. CHARLES PARISH

ANNUAL ALLOTMENT

Each Councilmember shall be provided an annual allotment for individual travel for Official Parish Business outside of St. Charles Parish. These funds shall be utilized on the written authorization of the individual Councilmember.

STATE AND NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

Travel to the State and National Conventions shall be included in the General travel budget of the Council within the guidelines of these general travel regulations.

REGULATIONS AND ALLOWANCES

I. EXCEPTIONS TO REGULATIONS

The Travel Regulations established by the Council shall govern reimbursement of travel expenses (transportation, meals, lodging, and miscellaneous expenses) with the following exceptions:

- A. Where allowances are fixed by law
- B. Where the best interest of the Parish call for exceptions; however, no change from the established regulations will be allowed without first securing prior approval from the Council.
- C. Unless exceptions to these regulations are requested and approved, the rates and procedures contained herein will be the only basis upon which reimbursement may be made.

II. TRANSPORTATION

- A. **Travel Routes** - The most direct and usually traveled route must be used by official Parish travelers. All out of Parish mileage shall be computed on the basis of odometer readings or from point of origin to point of return on the basis of an electronic mapping program.
- B. **Method of Transportation** - A common carrier (train, bus or airplane) should be used for out-of-state travel. As otherwise provided herein, air travel will be reimbursed only at coach or economy class rates. The difference between the air coach or economy class rates and first class air rates will be paid by the traveler, if travel was performed at first class rates. If space is not available in less than first class air accommodations in time to carry out the purpose of travel, the traveler will secure a certification from the airline indicating this fact. This certification will be attached to the expense statement. When privately-owned automobiles are used for out-of-state travel, the traveler shall be reimbursed travel cost (transportation, lodging, meals while enroute) not to exceed the cost of travel by coach/economy class air rates. Reimbursement shall be on the basis of the most direct route.

C. Personally-Owned Vehicles -

1. All accidents, major or minor, involving personally-owned vehicles being operated on official Parish business must be reported immediately in writing to the Parish Risk Management Officer together with names and addresses of available witnesses and principals.
2. When two or more persons travel in the same personally-owned vehicle, only one charge will be allowed for the use or expense of the vehicle. The person claiming reimbursement shall report the names of the other passengers.

III. REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL, SUBSISTENCE AND OTHER EXPENSES

A. Transportation - For the purpose of reimbursement, the following regulations are prescribed:

1. A mileage allowance shall be authorized for travelers using personally-owned vehicles while in the conduct of official Parish business. Mileage incurred outside of the Parish shall be reimbursable in the amount established by the Administration. Mileage will be computed as provided for in Section II-A. The traveler shall be required to pay all of his operating expenses of the vehicle such as, but not limited to, fuel, repairs, replacement of parts, and insurance.
2. Persons on official Parish business will be reimbursed for storage and parking fees, ferry fares, and road and bridge tolls.
3. Parish-owned credit cards will not be issued for use in the operation of privately-owned vehicles.
4. In no case will a traveler be allowed mileage or transportation when he is gratuitously transported by another person.
5. Rental automobiles are permitted for transportation when at a location away from the official domicile. Good judgement should be exercised and automobiles should be shared with fellow travelers when possible. Medium to small cars should normally be rented unless the group size cannot be reasonably accommodated. Receipts for car rentals must accompany expense statement.

B. Lodging and Meals -

For purposes of reimbursement, the following rates will apply:

1. **Meals Only (including tips):** Persons on official Parish business will be reimbursed on an actual expense basis on a daily amount not to exceed \$85.00.

Substantiation - Meal expenses shall be listed by **ACTUAL COST PER MEAL** on the Travel Expense Form. Meal receipts are not required.

2. **Lodging Only:** Reimbursements will be made for actual expenses for lodging, at the going rate, for a single occupancy room.

C. Other Expenses - The following expenses incidental to travel may be reimbursed:

1. Communication expense relative to official Parish business.
2. Registration fees at conference.
3. Charges for storage and handling of equipment.
4. Taxi and bus fares.
5. Tips (for baggage handling only).
6. Shuttle services to and from terminals or stations.

D. Special Meals (Meals for others) -

The request for reimbursement must be accompanied by an invoice and a statement of justification which fully describes the purpose of the gathering and lists all persons attending by name and title. The request for reimbursement must show the approval of the Council. The statement will also indicate that the expense is in the best interest of the Parish. If any of the persons attending are on travel status, they are required to deduct from their subsistence reimbursement claim the value of the meal(s) furnished.

E. Restrictions Governing Claims for Reimbursement -

1. In case any travel is made by an indirect route for personal convenience, any extra cost shall be borne by the traveler and reimbursement for expenses shall be based only on such charges as would have been incurred by the most direct and usually traveled route.
2. Items included in any expense account which do not fully conform to these regulations will be disallowed for payment.
3. Routine meal reimbursement shall be limited to actual expenses incurred not to exceed the maximum meal allowance.

F. Receipts or Other Support -

Receipts or other substantiation are required for travel expenses, except for the following:

1. Taxicab, local bus or streetcar fares.
2. Telephone and telegraph under \$2./use.
3. Tips.

IV. GENERAL

- A. Funds for Travel Expense -** Persons traveling on official business will provide themselves with sufficient funds for all routine expenses. Advances of funds for travel shall be made only for meals and lodging. A travel advance shall be paid for each day of authorized travel and each day spent at the destination. Any excess advance funds should be punctually repaid when submitting the travel voucher covering the related travel.

Parish VISA Business Cards issued in a Councilmember's name may be used for convention and seminar travel expenses. VISA Business Card guidelines are detailed in the St. Charles Parish Council VISA Business Card Policy.

The expense claim covering the related travel shall be submitted not later than the 15th day following the completion of travel, and any advance made for the purpose of travel shall be repaid no later than the time the expense claim is submitted.

B. Claims -

All claims for reimbursement for travel shall be submitted on the Parish form, and shall include all details provided for on the form. The form must be signed by the person claiming reimbursement. The purpose for extra and unusual travel must be stated in the space provided on the front of the form. In all cases, the date of departure from and return to domicile must be shown.

The cost of air transportation may be paid through the VISA Business Card or may be invoiced directly to the Parish. The expense statement shall show all expenses in detail to the end that the total cost of the trip shall be reflected by the expense statement. A notation will be made on the expense statement depicting the date of travel, destination, amount, and the fact that the air fare has been paid by the Parish.

C. Lodging -

1. Whenever possible, travelers shall request and make use of special discount rates for lodging.
2. Request for reimbursement for lodging that reflect above average charges will be subject to subsequent review and justification.

D. Advisors and Consultants (Other than Legal Advisor) -

Reimbursement of expenses for travel to be performed by authorized persons who are called upon to contribute time and services as consultants or advisors shall require prior written approval from the Council. Complete explanation and justification must be shown on the travel expense form or attached thereto.

E. Fraudulent Claims -

Any person who submits a claim pursuant to the aforementioned regulations, and who willfully makes and subscribes any such claim which he does not believe to be true and correct as to every material matter, or who willfully aids or assists in, or procures, counsels or advises the preparation or presentation of a claim which is fraudulent or is false as to any material matter shall be guilty of official misconduct. Whoever shall receive an allowance or reimbursement by means of a false claim shall be criminally and civilly liable within the provisions of State Law.

F. Cancellations -

Any person canceling prepaid registration and/or reservations for reasons other than illness validated by a doctor's excuse, death of a family member or unforeseen emergency as recognized by Council vote shall be required to reimburse the Parish for all expenses incurred.

The Council may waive any provision in these regulations when the best interest of the Parish will be served.