

REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande

“Incline my heart to your decrees
and not to unjust gain”
Psalm 119:36

POLICY:

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that (a) adequate cost controls are in place, (b) travel and other expenditures are appropriate, and (c) to provide a uniform and consistent approach for the timely reimbursement of authorized expenses incurred by Individuals.

SCOPE:

Elected and appointed persons who serve on canonical or ad hoc committees of the Diocese as well as DRG employees travelling on DRG business (collectively “Individuals”) may be reimbursed for travel and lodging expenses.

PROCEDURE:

1. Expense Report
Expenses will not be reimbursed unless the Individual requesting reimbursement submits a written Expense Report, using the Expense Report template provided by the Diocese. Claims for reimbursement of expenses must be submitted monthly by the 15th of month following the month in which the reimbursable expense has been incurred.
2. Receipts
Receipts are required for all expenditures such as airfare and hotel charges. No expense in excess of \$25.00 will be reimbursed to Individuals unless the Individual requesting reimbursement submits with the Expense Report written receipts or a credit card receipt showing the vendor’s name, a description of the services provided (if not otherwise obvious), the date, and the total expenses, including tips (if applicable).
3. General Travel Requirements
 - a. Means of Travel. Individuals should seek the most cost effective means of travel to minimize expense to the Diocese.
 - b. Advance Approval. All trips involving air travel or at least one overnight stay must be approved in advance by the Individual’s committee chair, supervisor, CATO or Business Manager, as appropriate.
 - c. Necessity of Travel. When a WebEx or Teleconference has been convened, no Individual, unless s/he is the host of such conference, shall be reimbursed for travel expenses to/from the Bosque Center.
 - d. Personal and Spousal Travel Expenses. Individuals traveling on behalf of the Diocese may incorporate personal travel or business with their DRG -related trips; however, Individuals shall not arrange DRG travel at a time that is less advantageous to the Diocese or involving greater expense

to the DRG in order to accommodate personal travel plans. Any additional expenses incurred as a result of personal travel, including but not limited to extra hotel nights, additional stopovers, meals or transportation, are the sole responsibility of the Individual and will not be reimbursed by the DRG. Expenses associated with travel of an Individual's spouse, family or friends will not be reimbursed by the Diocese.

4. Reimbursement for Travel

The cost of transportation to and from scheduled Diocesan meetings shall be reimbursed as follows:

- a. Use of Personal Vehicle: Individuals using their personal vehicle shall be reimbursed for actual miles driven to attend scheduled meetings. Mileage incurred incidental to such travel including side trips and extended stays following a scheduled meeting shall not be reimbursed. Mileage will be reimbursed at the current rate established by the Internal Revenue Service. In the case of Individuals using their personal cars to take a trip that would normally be made by air, mileage will be allowed at the currently approved rate; however, the total mileage reimbursement will not exceed the sum of the lowest available round trip coach airfare. Additional incidental expenses incurred (meals, lodging, etc.) shall not be reimbursable when, together with mileage, they exceed the cost of the lowest available round trip coach airfare. For long-distance travel, car rental (when possible) should be used instead of personal vehicle, if more cost-effective.
- b. Air, Bus and Commercial Travel Expenses: Air travel reservations should be made as far in advance as possible in order to take advantage of reduced fares. The Diocese will reimburse or pay only the cost of the lowest coach class fare actually available for direct, non-stop flights from the airport nearest the Individual's home or office to the airport nearest the destination. Local ground transportation costs shall be reimbursed when commercial travel is utilized. For travel in excess of 500 miles, the cost of added meals and lodging may be included in determining the most cost effective means of travel.
- c. Saturday Stays: Individuals traveling on behalf of the DRG are not required to stay over Saturday nights in order to reduce the price of an airline ticket. An Individual who chooses to stay over a Saturday night shall be reimbursed for reasonable lodging and meal expenses incurred over the weekend to the extent the expenses incurred do not exceed the difference between the price of the Saturday night stay ticket and the price of the lowest price available ticket that would not include a Saturday night stay. To receive reimbursement for such lodging and meal expenses, the Individual must supply, along with the Expense Report, documentation of the amount of the difference between the price of the Saturday stay and non-Saturday stay airline tickets.
- d. Frequent Flyer Miles and Compensation for Denied Boarding: Individuals traveling on behalf of the Diocese may accept and retain frequent flyer miles and compensation for denied boarding for their personal use. Individuals may not deliberately patronize a single airline to accumulate frequent flyer miles if less expensive comparable tickets are available on another airline.

5. Reimbursement for Meals and Lodging

- a. Meals: Individuals traveling on behalf of the DRG are reimbursed for the reasonable and actual cost of meals supported by a valid receipt (including tips, which should not exceed 15% of the total bill) subject to a maximum per diem meal allowance of \$60 per day and the terms and conditions established by the Diocese relating to the per diem meal allowance. In addition, reasonable and necessary gratuities that are not covered under meals may be reimbursed. Individuals should make every effort to minimize the costs incurred.
- b. Lodging: Individuals traveling on behalf of the DRG may be reimbursed at the single room rate for the reasonable cost of hotel accommodations. Convenience, the cost of staying in the city in which

the hotel is located, and proximity to other venues on the Individual's itinerary shall be considered in determining reasonableness. Individuals shall make use of available corporate and discount rates for hotels. "Deluxe" or "luxury" hotel rates will not be reimbursed. The actual cost for lodging, as supported by a valid receipt, shall be fully reimbursed, with following limitations:

- i. Individuals shall utilize the Bosque Conference Center lodging facility when rooms are available. Individuals choosing not to use available rooms shall be reimbursed up to the room rate established by the Conference Center.
- ii. Where the Diocese has an established local hotel contract and the Bosque Center is not available, Individuals are asked to stay in contracted facilities. Individuals choosing not to use contracted hotels or facilities shall be reimbursed up to the rate charged at the nearest locally contracted hotel or facility.

6. Ground Transportation

Individuals are expected to use the most economical ground transportation appropriate under the circumstances and should generally use the following, in this order of desirability:

- a. **Courtesy Cars:** Many hotels have courtesy cars, which will take you to and from the airport at no charge. The hotel will generally have a well-marked courtesy phone at the airport if this service is available. Individuals should take advantage of this free service whenever possible.
- b. **Airport Shuttle or Bus:** Airport shuttles or buses generally travel to and from all major hotels for a small fee. At major airports such services are as quick as a taxi and considerably less expensive. Airport shuttle or bus services are generally located near the airport's baggage claim area.
- c. **Taxis and Transportation Network Companies:** When courtesy cars and airport shuttles are not available, a taxi or Transportation Network Company (e.g. Uber or Lyft) is often the next most economical and convenient form of transportation when the trip is for a limited time and minimal mileage is involved. A taxi, Uber or Lyft may also be the most economical mode of transportation between an Individual's home and the airport.
- d. **Rental Cars:** Car rentals are expensive so other forms of transportation should be considered when practical. Individuals will be allowed to rent a car while out of town provided that the cost is less than alternative methods of transportation.

7. Parking/Tolls

Parking and toll expenses, including charges for hotel parking, incurred by Individuals traveling on DRG business will be reimbursed. The costs of parking tickets, fines, car washes, valet service, etc., are the responsibility of the employee and will not be reimbursed.

8. Non-Reimbursable Expenditures

The Diocese maintains a strict policy that expenses in any category that could be perceived as lavish or excessive will not be reimbursed, as such expenses are inappropriate for reimbursement by a nonprofit, charitable organization. Expenses that are not reimbursable include, but are not limited to:

- a. Travel insurance.
- b. First or Business Class tickets or upgrades.
- c. When lodging accommodations have been arranged by the Diocese and the individual elects to stay elsewhere, reimbursement is made at the amount no higher than the rate negotiated by the DRG. Reimbursement shall not be made for transportation between the alternate lodging and the meeting site.
- d. Limousine travel.
- e. Movies, liquor or bar costs.
- f. Spa or exercise charges.
- g. Clothing purchases.

- h. Valet service.
- i. Car washes.
- j. Toiletry articles.
- k. Expenses for spouses, friends or relatives. If a spouse, friend or relative accompanies Individuals on a trip, it is the responsibility of the Individual to determine any added cost for double occupancy and related expenses and to make the appropriate adjustment in the reimbursement request.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years by Diocesan Council and recommendations for amendments will be made to the Standing Committee.

FORMS:

Expense Reimbursement Request (updated yearly at
<https://www.dioceserg.org/ForCongregationsClergy/policies-manuals-forms>)

Endorsed by Diocesan Council: November 9, 2016

Approved by Standing Committee: December 7, 2016