

<b>KITTITAS VALLEY FIRE &amp; RESCUE</b> <b>Policies and Procedures</b>
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GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	Section 200
TRAVEL POLICY	200.06

**200.06 Policy:** This policy establishes guidelines for traveling on District Business and to establish valid business expenses for which District employees may qualify for payment or reimbursement.

**200.06.1 Reference:** RCW 42.24.115  
 Policy 200.05 Training Request  
 U.S. General Services Administration  
 Federal Travel Regulation Chapter 300, Part 300-3

**200.06.2 Responsibilities:**

**200.06.2.1** The Fire Chief, or in their absence the Deputy Fire Chief, and/or Finance Administrator/District Secretary shall be responsible for directing travel and approving reimbursement and enforcing the provisions of this policy.

**200.06.2.2** It shall be the responsibility of all members to familiarize themselves with this policy and follow the guidelines when traveling.

**200.06.2.3** Employees are to exercise judgment in incurring travel expenses on District business. Excessive or unnecessary travel expenses will not be approved or reimbursed. Travel should be by the most direct route available, and the mode of transport should be the one which is most economical and consistent with the purpose of the trip.

**200.06.2.4** Employees are expected to complete expense reimbursement requests and provide receipts within five business days of return from travel.

**200.06.3 Travel Authorization:**

**200.06.3.1** Employees who wish to travel away from the District for official training or other business purpose must be authorized to do so by the Fire Chief through submission of a Training/Travel request as outlined in Policy 200.05 Training Request.

**200.06.3.2** Travel requests will be evaluated to ensure that the means of travel are the most economical and advantageous to the District.

**200.06.4 Travel Expense Reimbursement:**

**200.06.4.1 Mileage:** Employees shall make every effort to use a District vehicle instead of their personal vehicles. In the event that a staff car is not available and a personal vehicle must be used, then the employee will be reimbursed at the IRS rate.

- If a District vehicle is available and the employee chooses to drive their personal vehicle then reimbursement is at the IRS Charitable Rate. Current

year can be found on the IRS web site. District fuel or credit cards may not be used to fuel personal vehicles.

**200.06.4.2 Lodging:** It is KVFR's policy that actual, reasonable costs will be reimbursable for lodging expenses. Hotels of moderate and reasonable comfort with the best available or government rate should be sought. Each traveler should use their best judgment in selecting a location and hotel to stay, recognizing that their health and safety are of paramount importance.

The GSA website at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov) should be used as a benchmark for what constitutes reasonable cost. A receipt must be obtained and submitted with the expense form in order to be reimbursed for lodging expenses.

- **75-Mile Rule:** Reimbursement is allowed for lodging expenses when the meeting, conference, convention or training session is located more than seventy-five (75) miles (most direct route) from employee's employment location. Inclement weather could create an exception to this rule, if the safety of District personnel would be enhanced by changing travel times. The other exception to this rule would be if the hours of the conference run late and it is not feasible to return home. This exception will be approved before the conference, meeting, or educational event, by the fire chief or his/her designee.

**200.06.4.3 Meals:** Meals while traveling are reimbursed according to the Per Diem Rates from the U.S. General Services Administration; [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). These per diem amounts include tips. Receipts are not required for meals not exceeding per diem rates. Enter Washington State and select Find Per Diem Rates. This will bring up a chart, select the county that you are in and click the last column of the chart. This will bring up the chart to be used in determining the amounts of each meal. Use the rates for the county that you are in. If the county you are in is not listed, such as Kittitas County, the Standard rate would apply.

- The IE column on the chart refers to Incidental Expenses. According to the Federal Travel Regulation Chapter 300, Part 300-3 incidental expenses are fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, and hotel staff. Therefore, this amount is not included in the meal amount.
- Acceptable tipping rates are maximized at 15% of the amount of the total bill (including tax). These amounts include tax and tip. Tips in excess of 15% may not be given on a bill paid by a District credit card. When submitting an expense reimbursement request, the employee may pay more than 15% for the tip, but not be reimbursed for it. Where identifiable costs of meals are included in the lodging rate or registration fee of a meeting, conference, convention, or formal training session, the meal costs are deducted from the employee's allowable travel reimbursement amount.
- Business related meals that involve meetings while travelling are not restricted to the per diem amounts. The meal receipt must be turned in with an itemized list of what was purchased (no alcohol), a list of who was present at the meeting and the reason for the meeting.
- Meals served on airlines do count as provided meals.
- Alcoholic drinks cannot be purchased on the District credit card.
- Room service meals are subject to the same meal limit guidelines and the employee must submit an itemized meal receipt attached to the hotel bill.

**200.06.4.3.1** When traveling out-of-town for the day only:

- Breakfast will only be reimbursed if the travel begins before 6:30am.
- Dinner will only be reimbursed if travel ends after 6:30pm.
- Travel times start and end from the place of business.

#### **200.06.4.4      Miscellaneous Travel Expense Reimbursement**

**200.06.4.4.1**      Reimbursable miscellaneous travel expenses (receipts are required) include:

- Taxi fares, airfare, bus tickets, motor vehicle rentals, parking fees, and ferry and bridge tolls.
- Registration fees required for attendance at a convention, conference or official meeting.
- In-room internet charges if the employee has a need to access their District email or conduct official business.

**200.06.4.4.2**      The following expenses are considered as personal and are therefore non-reimbursable:

- Fines for violations of motor vehicle laws.
- Valet service, entertainment expenses, and other items of similar nature.
- Taxi fares, vehicle rental and other transportation costs to or from places of entertainment.
- Cost of personal trip insurance and medical and hospital service.
- All alcoholic beverages.