

CITY OF BINGEN

Administrative Policy and Procedure Travel and Meal Reimbursement

1.0 General

- 1.1 This document sets the City of Bingen's policy and procedure for travel and meal reimbursement.
- 1.2 Any questions or comments shall be directed to the City Administrator.
- 1.3 This policy and procedure shall apply to all City employees and council members.

2.0 Policy

It is the City of Bingen's policy to provide sufficient and appropriate reimbursement for employee and council member travel costs, including meals and to cover those costs in a reasonable manner when conducting official City business, according to law, including Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations.

3.0 Procedures

When City employees and council members travel on official business, the City should pay reasonable amounts for appropriate transportation, meals, lodging, and miscellaneous approved expenses. An employee or council members is expected to show good judgment and an appreciation for economy when incurring travel expenses.

3.1 Travel Reimbursement

- a. **Documentation:** Approval for expenses allowed must be documented on the Request for Travel Form (Appendix A). Upon return from authorized travel, all travel must be documented using the Conference/Travel Accounting Form (Appendix B).
- b. **Authorization :** All travel must be authorized in writing and in advance by the employee's supervisor and mayor, and by the mayor for council members, and as applicable below:
 1. The supervisor and mayor shall determine the most cost effective mode of travel. Employees required to travel by air shall travel economy class whenever available. It is prohibited to use any private aircraft for official City business.
 2. An employee or council member must obtain permission from supervisor and mayor to use City vehicles. Gasoline for City vehicles must be obtained using a city gas card or city credit card.
 3. When an employee or council member is authorized to use a personal vehicle for official travel outside of the City, an employee shall be compensated by at the current mileage rate as established by the Internal

Revenue Service (IRS). The current rate can be found on the IRS website, <http://www.irs.gov/taxpros/article/0,,id=156624,00.html>.

4. When authorized by the mayor and supervisor a rental car may be used by a city council member or city employee. The rental car shall be for official business only.
 5. Employee's or council member's reasonable lodging expenses should be covered while traveling on official City business. Employees and council members are expected to make lodging reservations in advance whenever possible and to insure that lodging is secured at the most reasonable rate possible.
 6. As appropriate, City issued credit cards may be used by City employees, when on official City business, for accommodations, travel, meal costs, gas use for City vehicles and emergency City vehicle repairs.
 7. The City Administrator may pay registration, lodging and transportation (air, train, bus, rental car) to the vendor after receipt of an approved Request for Travel Form (Appendix A) with back-up documentation before incurring the expenses or 15 days before the travel date, whichever is earlier.
 8. No advance for travel expenses shall be allowed to any city council member or city employee, except as set forth herein.
 9. Within 5 days of the conclusion of the travel, the Conference/Travel Accounting Form (Appendix B) must be completed and submitted to the City Administrator.
 10. Employees who submit false or double claims for reimbursement may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.
- c. **Allowable Expenses:** Allowable expenses may include air travel, lodging, conference registration, meals, rental car and gas for City or rental car. Miscellaneous expenses such as photocopying or other clerical requirements, business telephone calls, parking fees, ferry tolls, taxi fare, fax transmission, and other bona fide miscellaneous expenses, baggage handling, etc., may be reimbursed upon presentation of actual receipts or other suitable documentation. The Mayor or the Mayor's designee will have the final authority to accept or reject claims for reimbursement.
- d. **Not Reimbursable Expenses:** Certain travel expenses are considered personal and not essential to the conduct of official City business and are not reimbursable. Examples of such expenses may include but are not limited to laundry or valet service, entertainment expenses (television or movie rentals and theater or show tickets), cost of transportation to and from places of entertainment, alcohol or tobacco purchases, room service charges, cost of personal reading material, barber or beauty expenses, personal toiletry articles, postage, medical or dental expenses and theft, loss or damage of personal property.

- f. Use of City Owned Vehicle: No employee or council member is to use any City owned vehicle unless it is for official business purposes.

3.2 Meal Reimbursement

a. Meals with Overnight Stay:

- 1. Any city council member or city employee shall be reimbursed for the actual cost of meals including taxes and tip not to exceed the following schedule based on vendor receipt, if meals are paid by the council member or employee.

Breakfast: \$11.00

Lunch: \$14.00

Dinner: \$21.00

City council members and city employees may use a city credit card to pay for eligible meal expenses.

- 2. Meal cost maximums are not applied on a "per diem" basis, therefore purchasing a lesser meal so as to exceed the maximum on another meal is not acceptable. Each meal purchased is subject to that meal maximum and any unused excess cannot be carried over to another meal.
- 3. The City will not pay for alcoholic beverages.
- 4. Payment for table service, commonly referred to as a tip, is not to exceed 15% of the meal price (including sales tax).
- 5. Where conference registration or training tuition fees include one or more meals, the City shall only reimburse for those meals not covered by such fees. Where a conference offers meals in conjunction with the conference program, but does not include those meals in the registration fee, the City shall pay for those meals selected by the city council member or city employee. Reimbursement for meals offered by the conference or training but not used by the city council member or city employee will not be reimbursed.
- 6. If a city employee or city council member has a special diet need due to a documented disease and necessary meals or accommodations can not be met by the conference, meals paid for during the conference or training session will be reimbursable per above. Documentation that the special diet is required must be signed by a physician or similar medical provider and shall be provided on the Request for Travel Form and Conference/Travel Accounting Form.

b. Meals without Overnight Stay:

- 1. Generally, there is no reimbursement for meals not associated with overnight travel.

2. Meals that are included in the cost of registration for a training class or conference are allowed. Meals not included in the cost of registration for a training class or conference are at the employee's expense, or the employee may bring his/her lunch to the training or conference session.
3. Meals that are part of a working business breakfast, lunch or dinner regarding regional/city issues are allowed for reimbursement. In any particular case, the mayor, in her sole discretion, shall determine what a working lunch is.
4. To avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, employees shall not allow consultants, vendors, or others with official business with the City to pay for or furnish meals or beverages.

**CITY OF BINGEN
REQUEST FOR TRAVEL FORM**

Instructions:

1. Any travel resulting in an overnight(s) stay must be approved by the department supervisor and mayor in advance.
2. This form must be submitted at least 15 days prior to the date of travel to the mayor.
3. Advance payment shall only be made to vendors providing services such as registration, lodging and some transportation.
4. Supporting documentation must be presented at the time of request for travel including conference registration information.
5. In the expense Table, list type of expense (i.e. registration, lodging, meals), description of expense (i.e. Red Lion Inn, meals as needed, parking) and cost (including any taxes and/or other charges).

Information:

Employee _____ Department _____

Name of conference, meeting, etc. _____

Location _____

Departure Date _____ Return Date _____

Do you propose to use your personal vehicle? Yes No

Expense Table

Type of Expense	Description	Cost
Estimated Amount of Travel Expenses		

I hereby certify that the travel expenses requested above will be incurred by me while on official City business.

Employee Signature

Date Signed

Approved:			
Supervisor	Date Approved	Mayor	Date Approved

**CITY OF BINGEN
CONFERENCE/TRAVEL ACCOUNTING FORM**

Instructions:

1. This form must be completed within 5 days from the date of travel, signed by the employee and supervisor and forwarded to the City Administrator
2. Reimbursement for meals and mileage shall be based on the City's Administrative Policy and Procedure – Travel and Meal Reimbursement.
3. Includes receipts for all conference and travel expenses including meals charged to City credit card.

Information:

Employee _____ Department _____

Name of conference, meeting, etc. _____

Location _____

Departure Date _____ Return Date _____

Did you use your personal vehicle? Yes No If yes, complete the following:

Miles one way from City to conference, meeting, etc. _____ x _____ cents/mile = \$ _____

Expense Table

Date	Registration	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Lodging	Mileage	Misc.	Prepaid Total	Credit Card Total	Total Reimbursement
Totals										

I hereby certify that the above represents those expenses incurred by me while on official City business.

Employee Signature

Date Signed

Approved:			
Supervisor	Date Approved	City Administrator	Date Approved