

## Operational Policy

<b>Policy title:</b>	Travel Approval and Reimbursement		
<b>Policy number:</b>	DHS OHA-040-009		
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<b>Approved:</b>	Jim Scherzinger, DHS Chief Operating Officer Linda Hammond, Interim OHA Chief Operating Officer		

Additional examples and tips for creating a solid policy document can be found at the Shared and Central Services Policy Committee website: [link to writing tips page](#)

### Purpose

This policy provides guidelines to Department of Human Services and Oregon Health Authority employees and other individuals authorized to travel on official state business for both in-state and out-of-state travel. This policy provides consistency, uniform standards of practice, common forms, and adequate internal controls in the approval process.

### Description

The Department of Human Services (DHS) and Oregon Health Authority (OHA) rules for traveling are governed by the policies administered by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and the Oregon Accounting Manual (OAM) Travel Chapter (40.10.00.PO).

### Applicability

This policy applies to all DHS and OHA staff including employees, volunteers, trainees and interns.

As keepers of the public trust, all agency employees have a responsibility to comply with state and agency policies, administrative rule, and state and federal law. The agency takes this responsibility seriously and failure to fulfill this responsibility is not treated lightly. Employees who fail to comply with state or agency policy, administrative rule, or state and federal law may face progressive discipline, up to and including dismissal from state service.

## Policy

### General Travel Policy

- a. This policy applies to all travel whether or not the travel incurs an expense.
- b. All travel must be preapproved.
- c. All airfare must be purchased according to [DHS|OHA 040-022 Air Ticket Purchase Policy](#) and [DHS|OHA 040-022-01 Air Ticket Purchase Procedure](#).
- d. When traveling on official state business state employees and other authorized individuals are eligible for travel reimbursement if all conditions are met. Eligibility conditions for employees traveling for their employment for OHA and DHS are detailed by this policy. Conditions of reimbursement and clarification of rates for board and commission members depending upon their appointment type (e.g., the Governor or the Agency Director) can be found in section 128

of the Oregon Accounting Manual [OAM 40.10.00](#).

- e. Agency will reimburse or make payments for travel expenses in accordance with DAS Oregon Accounting Manual and agency operating policies.
- f. Travel expenses may include mileage, meals, lodging and certain other miscellaneous items.
- g. All state employee travel expenses will be processed through the Travel Reimbursement Information Processing System ([TRIPS](#)), unless an exception is granted by the Controller.

### **In-State/Day Travel Authorization**

- a. Employees must obtain pre-approval for in-state or day travel from either a supervisor or responsible manager.
- b. Approval may be either verbal or written and e-mail or fax approvals are acceptable.
- c. Employees should use statewide fleet vehicles, carpooling, videoconferences, and teleconferencing whenever possible instead of using a personal vehicle to conduct state business.
- d. Use of a private vehicle requires prior approval in accordance with this policy.

### **Out-of-State Travel Authorization**

- a. All employees traveling out-of-state must have an approved [DHS 1293](#) prior to travel.
- b. When an employee travels out of state and returns to Oregon in the same day authorization may be obtained in the same manner as in-state or day travel authorization. The [DHS 1293](#) must be completed immediately upon the employee's return when an employee transports a client out-of-state: In order to carry out essential casework, which couldn't otherwise be accomplished; and the trip is not an overnight trip or an overnight trip becomes necessary because of emergency circumstances.
- c. If two or more employees attend the same event, form [DHS 1293](#) must be completed for each adult traveler prior to travel. Forms CF0002 and CF0002A must be completed for each child transported out-of-state.

### **Lodging Reimbursement**

Conditions for lodging eligibility and exceptions apply to both in-state and out-of-state travel

- a. A traveler is eligible for lodging reimbursement when the one-way distance from their home or workstation (whichever is closer) is 70 miles or more.
  - a. Managers may grant exceptions for lodging reimbursement in writing for:
    - i. Medical conditions;
    - ii. Travelers who must work before and after their regular work schedule;
    - iii. Travelers who are conducting business in the same area for more than one day;
    - iv. Weather conditions; or
    - v. Unforeseen events.
  - b. Exceptions must be in writing prior to the travel, except in unforeseen events and included with the travel reimbursement request.
- b. Lodging per diem rates vary depending on location.
  - a. Lodging per diem rates can be obtained from the [U.S. General Services Administration \(GSA\) Continental U.S. \(CONUS\)](#) site.
  - b. Individuals reimbursement will be limited to the GSA per diem rate, unless one of the following situations apply:
    - i. If an individual traveling on official state business shares lodging with one or more other traveling on official state business, the traveler will be reimbursed for their equal share of the cost up to the allowed per diem for that location.
    - ii. If an individual traveling on official state business shares lodging with a family member or friend, the traveler will be reimbursed at the single room rate, up to the allowed per diem for that location.

- iii. If an individual traveling on official state business chooses to use non-commercial lodging (stays with friends, family, or in a motor home, tent or trailer) the traveler will be reimbursed the allowable per diem rate of \$25 as described in the Oregon Accounting Manual.
- iv. If an individual traveler requests and is granted an exception to the per diem rate by the Chief Operating Officer, or delegate, where the traveler has provided documentation that the lodging is the most economical option for the agency through a good faith estimate, the traveler will be reimbursed in accordance with the exception.

### **Meal Reimbursement**

Eligibility for meal per diem and the rates of reimbursement vary depending on departure and arrival times and whether the trip is overnight or not.

- a. Meal per diem rates can be obtained from the [U.S. GSA CONUS](#) site for out-of-state per diem rates.
  - a. When a traveler works in multiple areas with different reimbursement rates in one day, the city where lodging is obtained for the night will determine the meal per diem for the eligible meals that day.
  - b. When a traveler works in multiple areas with different reimbursement rates on the last day of travel, the city where lodging is obtained the final night will determine the .
  - c. When a traveler works in multiple areas in the same day with no overnight stay, the highest per diem.
- b. Meal reimbursement for non-overnight travel may be taxable.
  - a. reimbursement when travel is within a “tax home” is not reimbursable. “Tax home” is generally the employee’s regular place of business or official duty station, regardless of where the employee maintains a family home. An employee’s “tax home” is not limited to a particular building or property, but includes the metropolitan area or other general locality in which the employee conducts business.

### **Mileage Reimbursement**

Eligibility for mileage reimbursement when an employee uses a private or personal vehicle for state business depends upon whether the traveler:

- a. Received prior permission from their manager or supervisor;
- b. as within their “tax home.”
- c. Normal commute miles are not generally reimbursable.
- d. use their private or personal vehicle for state business must complete request form [MSC 823](#).
  - a. Travelers read this form carefully before using a private vehicle for state business to learn about insurance and liability issues.
  - b. Mileage reimbursement for use of a private vehicle when conducting government business is based on GSA’s two-tiered rate schedule. The current rate can be found in the [OAM Travel Policy Appendix A](#). A [mileage chart](#) for cities in Oregon is available through the Oregon Department of Transportation.

### **Miscellaneous Travel Reimbursement**

Claims for miscellaneous travel expenses must be business related. If any individual expense exceeds \$25, an original receipt must be attached to the travel claim.

### **Travel Advances**

- a. Travel expense reimbursements to be applied toward travel advances must be claimed by

the 10th of the month following travel month.

- a. Within the same time period a personal check referencing the travel advance number must be sent to the Office of Financial Services, Receiving Unit to return any excess unspent advance.
- b. All outstanding travel advance balances must be repaid by no more than 90 days after issuance. Advances not repaid within 90 days will be:
  - i. reviewed for taxability;
  - ii. and will be deducted from the employee's pay; or
  - iii. submitted to the Office of Financial Services, Accounts Receivable unit for collection.

## Travel Reimbursement

State employee travel reimbursement claims are processed through the agency's electronic travel reimbursement system (TRIPS) unless an exception is granted.

- a.
  - a. All receipts supporting the claim must be verified and maintained by the approving manager or designee.
  - b. A printout of the electronic claim submitted for reimbursement should be attached to all backup documentation.
    - i. Offices must maintain all documentation for audit purposes. Refer to the [State Agency General Records Retention Schedules](#), section 166-300-0025 item 39.
    - ii. When a traveler does not have access to use TRIPS, travel expenses must be reported on the [ME 1297](#) and all receipts supporting the claim must be submitted with the claim for reimbursement to the Office of Financial Services, Travel Unit.
  - c. Travel expenses must be adequately accounted for within 60 days of the date the travel occurred.
    - iii. Expenses not adequately accounted for within the 60 days are considered reimbursed under a non-accountable plan and may be considered taxable under [IRS rules and regulations](#)

## Travel Awards

### Sponsored Travel

Every effort should be made to secure full or partial reimbursement/direct payment of costs from the event sponsor. See [DHS|OHA-040-021 Sponsored Travel Policy](#) and [DHS|OHA-040-021-01 Sponsored Travel Expense Reimbursement Procedure](#).

### References

In addition to the links provided below, employees should also refer to related process maps and protocols, including agency guidelines, departmental or program best practices and program procedure manuals.

[DHS|OHA 040-021](#) Sponsored Travel Policy

[DHS|OHA 040-022](#) Air Ticket Purchase

[DHS|OHA 004-008](#) Travel Advances and Travel Cards  
[DHS|OHA 040-009-01](#): Travel Reimbursement Procedure  
[DHS|OHA 040-009-02](#): Out-of-State Travel Authorization Procedure  
[DHS-040-021-01](#) Sponsored Travel Expense Reimbursement Procedure  
[DHS|OHA 004-008-01](#): Travel Advances and Travel Cards  
[DHS|OHA 040-022-01](#) Air Ticket Purchase

[DAS OAM Travel Policy 40.10.00.PO](#) – Statewide Travel Policy  
[DAS OAM Travel Policy 40.20.00.PO](#) – Travel Advances and Corporate Travel Card  
[DHS|OHA 040-008](#): DHS Travel Advances and Travel Card Policy  
[Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children](#)  
[International Placement of Children](#)  
[TRIPS](#) Information

## Forms referenced

[MSC 1197](#): Sponsored Travel Work Sheet - [PDF](#)  
[DHS 1293](#): Out-of-State Travel Authorization - [Word](#)  
[TRIPS OR ME 1297](#): Travel Expense Claim form. -  
[DHS|OHA 2406](#): Employee Report of Travel Awards - [PDF](#) or [Excel](#)  
[MSC 0823](#): Authorization to use Private Vehicle [PDF](#) or [WORD](#)  
[CF002](#): Consent to Travel – Travel Approval Procedures - [PDF](#)

## Related policies

Insert related policy numbers and titles here

## Contact

Insert contact information here

## Policy history

- Version 1.0  
02/28/2002 - Initial Release
- Version 2.0  
05/09/2002 – Revision
- Version 3.0  
01/02/2003 – Revision
- Version 4.0  
05/12/2008 – Revision
- Version 5.0:  
05/12/2012 - Revision

**Keywords**

Insert keywords here

**Keywords should be designed to help individuals locate this policy when they need it.**

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