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|  | <b>CITY OF DECATUR PERSONNEL POLICY</b> |                        |                          |
| <b>Chapter 05</b>   | <b>Conduct</b>                          |                        |                          |
| <b>Section 05</b>   | <b>Travel</b>                           |                        |                          |
| <b>Revised By:</b>  | <b>Nate Mara, City Manager</b>          | <b>Revised Date:</b>   | <b>December 08, 2025</b> |
| <b>Approved By:</b>   | <b>Nate Mara, City Manager</b>          | <b>Effective Date:</b> | <b>January 1, 2026</b>   |

**05.05 Travel**

It is the City’s policy to pay for, or reimburse, all reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by an employee when the employee travels on City-related business in accordance with this policy.

**A. Transportation.** The most efficient and economical mode of travel must be used. Air travel arrangements are to be made by each department. Air travel must be booked at the most discounted-fare basis whenever possible. When authorized, an employee using a personal vehicle on City business shall be paid an amount per mile equivalent to the current IRS standard mileage rate or shall be paid the equivalent of a coach airline fare, whichever results in the lower cost to the City.

In instances of approved personal vehicle use, reimbursement will also be made for mileage, tolls, and parking fees. Receipts are required for toll and parking fees, as well as for taxi cabs, limos, ride share, and other modes of transportation. The employee must obtain prior approval from the Finance Director to pay for rental vehicles for City of Decatur business travel.

**B. Travel Approval and Cash Advances.** All travel and cash advances must be approved in advance by the employee's Department Director (or their designee), unless otherwise stated in this policy. In addition, any travel out-of-state must be approved by the City Manager.

**C. Lodging.** Expenses for lodging are to be at the single room rate, unless an employee is approved in advance for double occupancy. Extra charges for room service will not be paid by the City. An itemized hotel receipt must be provided, including an itemization for any room service charges to be paid/ reimbursed by the City.

**D. Meal Allowance.** The City shall pay actual necessary food expenses for an employee or City official traveling on City business. Expenses for meals shall either be reimbursed at actual cost as supported by receipts or by per diem allowance.

Even if supported by a receipt, reimbursement shall not exceed the per diem rate for any one meal. Only qualifying meals are reimbursed, that is, travel must include an overnight stay. See also [Per diem rates | GSA](#).

- E. Internet Expense.** Only reasonable and necessary computer related expenses for City business reasons will be reimbursed.
  
- F. Non-Allowable Expenses.** Personal expenses or charges for the following will normally not be reimbursed and must be paid for by the employee:
  - a. In-hotel pay television and movies;
  - b. Dry cleaning and laundry;
  - c. Health club and spas;
  - d. Non-employee children, partners, parents, friends or family members;
  - e. Alcoholic beverages of any type;
  - f. Tips in excess of 15%; and
  - g. Other items of a personal nature.
  
- G. Request for Reimbursement and unexpended funds.** Upon return to the City, a complete accounting of all business expenditures of City funds is to be filed within three days on the City's Travel Expenditure Report form located on the website. Receipts for all expenses, including hotel bills and registration fees, must be attached to the Travel Expenditures Form. Authorized expenses in excess of advance funds received will be reimbursed with proper approval.
  
- H. Travel to Training.** The current IRS standard mileage rate will be paid to employees who must use their personal vehicles to travel to a training destination further than their designated work location or other City locations and/or facilities.

Reimbursement will be made only for the difference in miles from the normal work location to the further training location. Actual mileage readings or a map showing the required mileage from a credible source such as Google Maps must be submitted for reimbursement.
  
- I. Expenses Not Covered in Policy.** The City Manager's (or their designee) approval must be obtained prior to any expenditure of funds for items or changes which are not specifically addressed in the travel policy.

- J. Mileage Reimbursement.** Mileage that is incurred during the course of business will be reimbursed at the current IRS standard mileage rate. An employee must submit a Mileage Reimbursement Form, found on the City of Decatur website, which includes the purpose of the trip, the location of the trip, the beginning mileage and the ending mileage to be reimbursed.
- K. Auto Allowance.** Effective with this policy, the City of Decatur will discontinue the practice of providing automobile allowances to newly hired employees. Employees serving under a contractual agreement with the City Council may be considered for an exception to this policy. All employees seeking reimbursement for the use of their personal vehicle while conducting official City business must submit the approved Mileage Reimbursement Form.
- L. Compliance.** Abuse of this policy, including falsifying expense reports or submitting false claims, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.