

BRUNSWICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
TRAVEL POLICY
REVISED JUNE 17, 2009
EFFECTIVE: IMMEDIATELY

I. PURPOSE

This administrative policy provides guidelines for reimbursement of authorized travel expenses incurred while traveling on County business.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all County employees and all elected and appointed officials.

III. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of Brunswick County to reimburse all legitimate and necessary expenses incurred while traveling on County business. It is the responsibility of each agency to ensure that budgetary requirements are met prior to spending funds for travel. Employees traveling on County business must have authorization from the County Administrator. It is the responsibility of the traveler and the authorizing official to ensure that the best possible rates are obtained when traveling on County business.
- B. Travel expense accounts are open to the public and must be able to sustain the test of public review. Economy, prudence, and necessity are of primary concern, when planning and paying for travel. Travel costs should be limited to only those expenses that are necessary to providing essential services to the County's citizens. Further, travelers and travel planners must seek ways to reduce the cost of essential travel.
- C. Covered travel includes trips outside of the County of Brunswick for conferences, conventions, workshops, seminars, educational and training courses, forums and other business activities related to the administration of municipal government.

IV. PRODECURES

The Department of Finance is responsible for administering the County's travel policy and procedures contained herein.

A. Travel Authorization

The County Administrator will approve all travel requests in advance of travel and travel reimbursements for the County employees. Request for Staff Travel form must be submitted to the County Administrator by the first Tuesday of each month for consideration. The Board of Supervisors will approve all travel requests in advance for the County Administrator.

B. Travel Reimbursement Requirements

Although not all-inclusive, the following information is required for expense reimbursement and must be submitted to the Finance Department.

1. Authorization approvals
2. Reason for travel.
3. Hard-copy confirmations of expenses if online methods were used to procure services (i.e., airline tickets).
4. Reason for business phone calls, internet connectivity, or facsimiles.
5. Itemized receipt for lodging and meals.
6. Receipt for registration fees.
7. Receipt for public transportation (i.e., taxi, shuttle, metro).
8. Department/Agency Head approval.

C. Method of Payment

1. Expenses must be Reasonable and Necessary. The County of Brunswick will reimburse individuals traveling on official County business for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred.
2. Travelers must keep receipts and accurate records of all expenses to ensure correct reporting and submission of travel reimbursements. Meal receipts should include a detailed, itemization of meals purchased and submitted on the Employee Reimbursement Voucher form.
3. The Department/Agency Head must approve and submit Employee Reimbursement Voucher form to the Finance Department within 5 working days after completion of the trip.
4. All registration fees, hotel deposits, airline tickets and other expenses requiring prepayment must be submitted to the Department of Finance at least two weeks in advance of the date of travel. Supporting documentation must include authorization for travel.
5. Credit Card Usage.
 - A. All credit card use must follow guidelines as outlined in the *County of Brunswick - Credit Card Policy and Procedures* as adopted by the Board of Supervisors on July 20, 2005.
 - B. Lodging arrangements made in advance of approved travel may be reserved using the business credit card. If a credit card is not available at time of trip, a letter of authorization should be requested from the Department of Finance. Said letter gives authorization for the named employee to place specified charges on the credit card.
 - C. Direct bill charges are encouraged, where possible, as the preferred method of payment.
 - D. In circumstances where credit card purchase or direct billing is not possible for lodging, the Department Head may request a check to

be issued to the specified establishment. In order for a check to be processed in advance of a trip, arrangements must be made in advance of the planned stay using the following procedures:

- The lodging establishment must be contacted to request a quoted price for lodging, giving a date of arrival and departure, number of rooms, inclusive of taxes, parking fees, etc. Quoted prices must be on the establishment's letterhead/billing statement. Facsimile will be accepted.
- Requests are to be submitted to the Department of Finance in a timely manner and are subject to the appropriate approvals and deadlines as any other invoice. No manual checks will be issued for this purpose.
- If none of the aforementioned options are taken prior to the planned trip, the employee will be personally responsible for payment upon check-out. A request for reimbursement can be presented on an Employee Reimbursement Voucher form and approved by the Department Head.
- Reimbursement will be issued in accordance with the Accounts Payable Policy and Procedures.

D. Travel Expense Settlement

1. Travel expense settlement documentation must be submitted to the Finance Department within five (5) working days after return from travel. All documents supporting the expense claimed must be originals which must be signed by the traveler. By signing the travel reimbursement request, the traveler certifies the accuracy of all information and the legitimacy of the travel. The signature of the traveler's supervisor certifies that the supervisor agrees that the travel was necessary and the requested reimbursements are proper.
2. Review of Documents
The Finance Department will audit each travel expense settlement documentation for completeness, conformance to the County's travel guidelines, required approvals and required documentations.
3. Agency Directors are responsible for all travel within their agencies. They shall ensure that travel funds are used in the best interest of the County. Improperly completed and/or undocumented expenses will not be processed.
4. Reimbursement by Check
All properly prepared and documented travel expense settlement documentations that are received by the Finance Department will be processed in accordance with the Accounts Payable Policy and Procedure.
5. Employees with balances due to the County should attach a personal check, payable to the County of Brunswick, including supporting documentation, and submit it to the Treasurer, 228 North Main Street.

E. Reimbursable Expense

1. Transportation

a) County Vehicle

County vehicles should be used whenever practical for official business. Employees are encouraged to carpool when necessary. Reimbursements for fuel, parking, tolls and necessary repairs will be honored with appropriate receipts.

b) Private Vehicle

If other means of transportation are not feasible or the use of a private automobile better serves the County's purposes, the use of a private automobile must be authorized. The traveler will be reimbursed at the current approved mileage rate, plus parking and toll fees if documented with receipts. The mileage rate will be the rate published by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in Publication 535, Business Expenses, which is available on the Internet at www.irs.gov. The mileage rate will be published annually, or more frequently, if required, by the Department of Finance.

c) Air and Rail Tickets

Reimbursement for airfares will be allowed at coach rates. All travelers are expected to book flights in advance to take advantage of available credits, reduced rates or discounts to reduce the cost to the County. Reimbursement for first class travel is prohibited.

d) Related Transportation Costs

- i. Taxicabs and public conveyance, including tips, will be allowed if travel by such means is necessary. Receipts are required for charges.
- ii. Ferry fares, road and bridge tolls and parking charges are reimbursable with proper receipts.
- iii. If a rental car is necessary, the most economical model should be selected. The rental car receipt should be attached to the letter submitted. The use of rental cars should be approved in advance by the Department Head.

2. Lodging

The lodging receipt must be an itemized statement. Business related expenses are reimbursable. If a traveler is accompanied by a family member or other, the lodging bill will be annotated to reflect the single rate. In no case will the County reimburse more than the cost of a single room. All costs incurred by the family member will be the sole responsibility of the traveler.

3. Meals

The meal receipt must be an itemized statement. Tips are permitted. Non-reimbursable expenses shall not be reflected on receipts. If a traveler is accompanied by a family member or other, the meal receipt will be annotated to reflect the single person. In no case will the County reimburse more than the cost of the traveler. Expenses for meals should not exceed \$70 per day. Justification must be provided if meal expenses exceed the daily allotment.

4. Telephone/FAX/Computer Hook-up

Telephone and FAX charges related to County business will be reimbursed. Receipts are required for charges.

6. Non-Reimbursable Expenses

1. Loss of funds or personal belongings while traveling.
2. Alcoholic beverages.
3. Personal expenses and self-entertainment activities such as movies, sporting events, fitness clubs, personal telephone calls, etc.
4. Air travel insurance premiums paid by the traveler.
5. Spouse or companion expenses.
6. Other items not specifically identified, but not considered necessary or reasonable.

7. Audits

The Department of Finance will review all travel invoices for compliance. Expenses that are determined not to be in accordance with the spirit of this policy, or are considered to be excessive, will be forwarded to the County Administrator for follow-up with the Department Head. The County recognizes that a policy cannot be written to address all possible expenses or situations that may arise while traveling. Therefore, anyone traveling on County business must use sound judgment and adhere to high ethical standards.

V. REGULATION UPDATE

The Board of Supervisors shall be responsible for modification to this policy.

APPROVED:


Board of Supervisor, Chair

EMPLOYEE REIMBURSEMENT VOUCHER

Department/Agency <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> Name and Address of Traveler <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/>	Date: _____ <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> Signature of Traveler <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> Title <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> Signature of Director/Agency Head <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> Date
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Date	Location at which expense was incurred, points between which travel was necessary, method of transportation used and mileage rate allowed, each day's expenses must be shown separately	Miles Traveled	Mileage or Fares	Auto Expenses (Itemized)	Meals	Lodging	Other (Itemized in second column)	Totals

**BRUNSWICK COUNTY
REQUEST FOR TRAVEL FORM**

1. NAME _____
2. ADDRESS _____

3. DESTINATION _____
4. DEPARTURE: Date: _____ Time: _____
5. RETURN: Date: _____ Time: _____
6. PURPOSE OF TRIP _____
7. ARE YOU REQUESTING COUNTY VEHICLE? ____ YES ____ NO
(Private cars must be approved in advance)
8. FINANCIAL DATA (Use approximations if unknown)
Please list all projected expenses. Use approximation if exact sum is unknown. If reimbursement is expected, ALL projected expenses must be listed on this form. Upon return, the employee must submit a travel reimbursement request according to the procedures listed in the Travel Policy dated June 17, 2009.

			(Totals)
a. Transportation	(_____ miles x _____ c)	\$ _____	
b. Lodging	(_____ miles x _____ c)	\$ _____	
c. Meals		\$ _____	
d. Registration Fee		\$ _____	
e. Parking		\$ _____	
f. Tolls, tips, etc.		\$ _____	
g. Other: _____		\$ _____	
h. Total cost of trip		\$ _____	
i. Total reimbursement requested		\$ _____	

The above information is the best estimate that I can obtain on the requested trip.

Traveler's Name

Traveler's Signature

Date

(CENTRAL OFFICE ONLY)

County Administrator approval __ Yes __ No

Signature _____

Date _____