

# 1-2014 Travel and Reimbursement Guidelines

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## I. PURPOSE

- A. Travel on Commission business to support or promote Compact-related programs is a valuable and necessary activity for the Commissioners, Ex-officio members, and staff. Expenses incurred for business and other travel expenses are reimbursable when properly documented, approved, and in compliance with Commission and Council of State Governments' travel policies and requirements.
- B. Only reasonable, necessary, and appropriate travel and business expenses will be funded by the Commission; expenses of a personal nature are unallowable and are the traveler's obligation.
- C. Commissioners, ex-officio, and staff making arrangements for the travel should follow all related requirements as detailed in this document and as required.
- D. In the conduct of Commission business, Commissioners, Ex-officio members, and staff should maintain the highest ethical standards and should keep in mind their responsibilities as responsible stewards of the Commission funds as a quasi-governmental regulatory agency.

## II. EXCEPTIONS TO THE TRAVEL POLICY

- A. The Executive Director has the discretion to make exceptions to the Travel Policy in extreme circumstances. Any determination may be made in consultation with the Council of State Governments; the Commission Chair, Treasurer; Executive or Finance Committees; General Counsel; or individual or consultant as deemed necessary.

## III. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Personnel traveling on authorized MIC3 business:
  - 1. Will adhere to the Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct policies when traveling on authorized MIC3 business.
  - 2. Will adhere to the Council of State Governments Accounting timelines and processes.
  - 3. Within 30 days of completed travel, will submit a completed expense reimbursement form, and provide required documentation and itemized receipts. Itemized receipts must detail each item purchased, gratuity, plus tips (if applicable), and total amount paid.
- B. For Annual Business Meetings (ABM), MIC3 will reimburse the Commissioner, Designee or Proxy for: ground transport or mileage to/from the departure airport; airport parking fees; airfare and standard baggage fees; ground transportation [such as a shuttle, ride- hailing service (such as Uber or Lyft), or taxi] to and from the approved designated airport to the hotel/lodging. For meals, MIC3 will reimburse based on the federal government per diem rate for the specified location and time of year as provided by the U.S. General Services Administration. <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>
  - 1. All travel for ABM will be via air unless prior approval is authorized by the Executive Director.
    - a. Travelers shall arrive into and depart from the approved event designated airport unless prior approval to travel from a secondary location, or a mode other than air, is obtained from the Executive Director. Submittals must be made at minimum 45 days prior to the event. A written justification, cost comparison of airfare vs. standard mileage, and other appropriate documentation must be submitted with the request.

- b. Should the traveler reside in a neighboring state of the host state and wish to travel by personal vehicle instead of air, the traveler shall submit a request to the Executive Director at minimum 45 days prior to the event. A written justification, cost comparison of airfare vs. standard mileage, and other appropriate documentation must be submitted with the request.
- 2. ABM hotel/lodging days (authorized for the meeting) will be billed directly to MIC3.
- 3. The traveler will be charged directly by the hotel for any dates that are outside (prior to or post-meeting) of the authorized meeting dates.
- 4. MIC3 will not reimburse incidental charges such as entertainment, personal phone calls, and in-room snacks or bar purchases.
- C. If traveling on other MIC3 business, the traveler will confirm the logistics and reimbursable expenses with the Executive Director prior to travel.

#### IV. RECEIPTS

- A. **All receipts submitted for reimbursement must be itemized and notated with the item(s) being claimed. A credit card receipt with just an amount is not reimbursable.**
- B. **Meals:** MIC3 will reimburse based on the federal government per diem rate for the specified location and time of year as provided by the U.S. General Services Administration. <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>
- C. **Alcohol:** is not reimbursable and should be deleted from any receipt and the amount adjusted accordingly. If possible, separate any alcohol expense from your meal expense.
- D. **Hotel/lodging:** the invoice must include the name/location of hotel, guest name(s), date(s) of stay, and an itemized breakdown of charges for lodging, meals, telephone, and any incidentals. For example, if a hotel statement specifies "room service," the traveler is required to provide a separate itemized receipt of the meal items purchased, plus tax and gratuity. It's understood that tips (hotel housekeeping, etc.) are discretionary and a receipt may not be available. These expenses may be claimed on the expense reimbursement form under "Other" with the specific type of tip (baggage, housekeeping, etc.).

#### V. AIR TRAVEL

- A. The traveler is required to book air travel a minimum of **30 days prior** to the date of travel.
- B. MIC3 will only reimburse for coach/economy-class air fares. A first or business class air fare is allowed only when the fare is no higher than the coach/economy-class air fare. The traveler shall use frequent flyer points or pay the difference between the coach/economy/main-class and upgraded air fare cost. The traveler must provide documentation of the itinerary and cost comparison between coach/economy class in comparison to the first-class ticket. This documentation must be submitted by the traveler to the Executive Director prior to purchase for approval at minimum 45 days prior to the trip.
- C. The traveler shall use best efforts to ensure the airfare booking is the lowest available with a confirmed seat. Flights costs are authorized up to \$700. The traveler must obtain approval from the Executive Director prior to travel should the traveler's ticket exceed this amount.
- D. A traveler who is requesting an exception due to a medical issue must submit supporting medical documentation to the Executive Director for final determination.
- E. Fees not authorized include:
  - 1. Ticket change fees - Extenuating circumstances may be considered.
  - 2. Excess baggage fees - Standard fees are authorized for one bag.
  - 3. Seat upgrade charges. (e.g., upgrades to a higher-class fare such as Delta Comfort)
  - 4. Additional legroom upgrades. (e.g., upgrades to a higher-class fare such as Delta Comfort)

## VI. USE OF A PRIVATELY-OWNED VEHICLE (POV)

- A. Rate. The current reimbursement rate for a privately-owned vehicle is based on the IRS standard business mileage rates at the time of travel.
- B. When using a personal vehicle, the maximum reimbursement for all travel expenses will be calculated as follows:
  - 1. The maximum, including mileage, tolls and lodging, is limited to no more than the normal expenses that would have been incurred if commercial air had been used.
  - 2. A valid airfare cost comparison must be submitted with the travel voucher. The cost comparison must be obtained at least THREE weeks prior to the departure date of the trip. If the traveler must take a last-minute trip (inside three weeks of the departure date), then the cost comparison must be run on the day it is learned the trip must be made, and this explanation must be given on the travel voucher.
  - 3. The national office reserves the right to conduct their own cost comparison should it be required.
- C. Documentation (map)
  - 1. 0 to 100 miles — Odometer reading and/or a map showing miles coinciding with the dates of travel.
  - 2. Greater than 100 miles — A map showing miles coinciding with the dates of travel is **required**.
  - 3. Greater than 500 miles — A map showing miles and documentation of the public carrier rate coinciding with the dates of travel is **required**.
- D. Gas is not reimbursable when using a POV.
- E. Note: The traveler is responsible for any traffic tickets/citations issued while traveling in a POV or a rental car on MIC3 business. MIC3 is not liable for any accidents or damage resulting from travel associated with MIC3 business.

## VII. CAR RENTAL

- A. Is **not** an approved method of transport unless prior authority has been granted and it can be shown that it is a cheaper or comparable method of transport than air,
  - 1. Rental charges should be net of any discounts and will be limited to the rental cost of compact or standard size cars.
  - 2. Valet parking — the traveler shall attempt to utilize self-parking if available. Valet may be allowable if there is no other option available or it has been discounted to the rate of regular parking for the purpose of the meeting in question.

## VIII. GROUND TRANSPORTATION

- A. If travel is by air, traveler shall attempt to utilize the most cost-effective form of transportation [a shuttle, ride-hailing service (such as Uber or Lyft), or taxi] to and from the hotel/lodging.

## IX. TRANSPORTATION TO/FROM HOME/WORK AND AIRPORT

- A. If the traveler plans to take public transportation (subway, bus, or tram), taxi or shuttle to/from the airport – the round-trip travel fare may be claimed.
- B. If the traveler is dropped off/picked up at the airport by a friend or family member, only one-way travel mileage may be claimed for each trip. Airport parking fees incurred while a family member waits for the traveler upon his/her return are not eligible for reimbursement.
- C. If the traveler utilizes airport parking for their personal vehicle, the round-trip mileage travel and airport parking fees may be claimed.

## X. HOTEL/LODGING (APPLIES TO TRAVEL OTHER THAN THE ABM)

- A. If an overnight stay is necessary, hotel/motel accommodations should be based on a preferred rate plus applicable taxes. Inquire with MIC3 on the rate for your travel area.
- B. MIC3 will not reimburse incidental charges such as entertainment, personal phone calls, and in-room snacks or bar purchases.
- C. The hotel/lodging invoice must include the name/location of hotel, guest name(s), date(s) of stay, and a breakdown of charges for lodging, meals, telephone and any incidentals.

## XI. EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

(Expenses are reimbursed after conclusion of the event, in accordance with the Council of State Governments' Accounting timelines and processes.)

- A. All travelers must complete and submit claims using the **Non-CSG Expense Reimbursement** form. A downloadable, fillable form can be found at: <http://mic3.net/pages/resources/resources.aspx>

## XII. DEADLINES

Forms must be submitted no later than **30** days following the trip/event, in accordance with the *Council of State Governments' Accounting* timelines and processes.

- A. If submittals are received beyond this window, the traveler may be asked to provide a written justification. Note: Expense claims are normally processed each Friday, and reimbursements are usually mailed the following Friday.
- B. Expense Reimbursement forms with the required receipt documentation must be scanned/emailed to [mic3info@csg.org](mailto:mic3info@csg.org). (Photos of forms and documents are acceptable) If email is not available, mail forms to: MIC3, c/o Council of State Governments, 1776 Avenue of the States, Lexington, KY, 40511.
- C. A guide to the completion of the reimbursement form can be found at: [www.mic3.net](http://www.mic3.net) under Commissioner, Forms, *Expense Reimbursement Form*.
- D. Should you have any questions, please contact MIC3.

## XIII. REIMBURSEMENT SUBMITTALS THAT DO NOT MEET THE TRAVEL POLICY

- A. Submittals that do not meet the travel policy requirements and are not able to be processed by the National Office will be either:
  1. Returned to the traveler with an explanation why the reimbursement or line items could not be processed.
  2. Forwarded to the Finance Committee for review for review and determination.
  3. Appeals: Should the reimbursement be declined by the Finance Committee; the traveler may submit an appeal to the Executive Committee for review. Appeals may be submitted to the Executive Director no later than seven (7) days prior to the next scheduled Executive Committee meeting. The traveler will provide a formal letter providing the reason for the appeal and the appropriate supportive documentation. The decision made by the Executive Committee is final.