

NORTH CENTRAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

No. 4350 P-1

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE

North Central ESD (NCESD) employees will be reimbursed for travel expenses in the performance of official duties and while in attendance at meetings and conferences. Employees are expected to exercise prudent judgment in incurring travel expenses on official business, and to minimize expenses to NCESD. All travel is subject to limitations that may be imposed by the NCESD Superintendent.

A. Travel Requests

1. **Travel Outside of NCESD, but Within Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and British Columbia**
Travel must be approved by the Superintendent. This responsibility may be delegated to the employee's Department Director in the absence of the Superintendent.
2. **Travel Outside of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and British Columbia**
 - a. Travel must be approved by the NCESD Superintendent and the Board of Directors.
 - b. An Out of State Travel Form, approved by the employee's immediate supervisor, must be submitted to the NCESD Superintendent and receive his/her approval in sufficient time to allow the NCESD Board of Directors to take action on the request prior to commencement of travel. The NCESD Superintendent may approve travel in an emergency situation or under extraordinary circumstances.
3. Employees who have received approval to travel outside of Washington, Idaho, Oregon and British Columbia may be required to present a brief report on the value of the travel to the Board. This report may be either oral or written and should be presented at the next Board meeting if requested by the superintendent or the employee's immediate supervisor.

B. Travel Reimbursements

1. **Mileage**
Employees will receive reimbursement at the current rate authorized for state employees by the Office of Fiscal Management (OFM) for use of their vehicles while traveling in performance of their duties. Mileage will be calculated from the employee's official worksite, or their home, whichever is less. Any person not employed by NCESD, who travels on behalf of an NCESD-sponsored project, may be reimbursed for project-related travel. The reimbursement rate shall be determined by the project director within the limits of the project budget, and shall not exceed the OFM rate.
2. **Lodging and Meals**
 - a. Allowance for meals will be paid on a set per-meal amount. Lodging and set per-meal amounts are provided by the Office of Financial Management. To qualify, an employee must be in a travel status at least three (3) hours outside of the regularly scheduled 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. work day and be in a travel status during the entire NCESD established meal periods of: Breakfast - 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m.; Lunch - 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.; and Dinner - 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. As an example, if an employee is in a travel status from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., the employee is entitled to the set meal amount for lunch and dinner, provided the employee actually incurred out-of-pocket cost for the meals.

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- b. Without regard to the three-hour travel requirement to qualify for meal allowances, the NCESD Superintendent or designee may authorize reimbursement for the actual cost of meals up to the per-meal limits where the meals are scheduled as an integral part of an official proceeding or program.
- c. Per IRS regulations, all meals reimbursed to an employee who was not in travel status will be considered as a taxable fringe benefit to the employee. The IRS defines travel status as being away from one's tax home overnight.
- d. Actual expenses for lodging at the government rate for a standard room where such rates are offered, up to the maximum amount allowed, will be reimbursed as evidenced by a receipt.
- e. When it is determined that lodging cost will be greater than the Maximum Lodging Amount due to one of the six conditions listed below, the employee must submit a requisition for prior approval from their program supervisor:
 - (1) When an employee is assigned to accompany an elected official, a foreign dignitary, or others as authorized by law, and is required to stay in the same lodging facility.
 - (2) When costs in the area have escalated for a brief period of time either during special events or disasters.
 - (3) When lodging accommodations in the area of the temporary duty station are not available at or below the maximum lodging amount, and the savings achieved from occupying less expensive lodging at a more distant site are consumed by an increase in transportation and other costs.
 - (4) The employee attends a meeting, conference, convention or training session where the employee is expected to have business interaction with other participants in addition to scheduled events, and maximum benefit will be achieved by authorizing the employee to stay at the lodging facility where the meeting conference, convention or training session is held.
 - (5) To comply with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act or when the health and safety of the traveler is at risk.
 - (6) When meeting room facilities are necessary, and it is more economical for the employee to acquire special lodging accommodations such as a suite rather than to acquire a meeting room and a room for lodging.

Procurement cards are issued for the room rate and parking only. All incidental expenses must be paid to hotel by employee. If these expenses are for official business, they may be claimed for reimbursement on a Travel Expense Voucher.

C. Submission of Travel Expense Vouchers

Travel Expense Vouchers, either paper or electronic must be received in the Fiscal Services department by the published cut-off dates. The Travel Planning Worksheet, if used, should be attached

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to the Travel Expense Voucher. The voucher and worksheet must be completed in detail, and in compliance with OFM regulations. To be reimbursed for incidental and/or emergency purchases related to the trip, the employee must attach itemized receipts.

Meals and lodging expenses that are directly billed to the NCESD should not be claimed on the Travel Expense Voucher.

Travel claims are paid mid-month and on the last working day of each month as determined by the published cut-off dates and delivery of completed claims to the Fiscal Services department.

D. Report of Traffic Accidents

Whenever an employee is involved in a traffic accident while representing the NCESD, the employee must file a written report of the accident with the NCESD Superintendent or designee within 24 hours and report the accident with the appropriate law enforcement agency.

E. Advance Travel Expense

Employees traveling on official business may receive a travel expense advance to defray the employee's anticipated reimbursable expense except for gas mileage and hotel costs, unless specifically approved for extenuating circumstance by the Superintendent or designee. The employee must submit a requisition. A Travel Worksheet must be attached to the requisition specifying times and dates of travel. After approval by the supervisor, the Fiscal Services department will issue a check in the approved amount. Checks will be issued not more than one working day prior to the travel date.

F. Advance Travel Regulations

1. Requests for advance travel expense shall be reasonable estimates of the applicant's requirements.
2. Advance travel requests will be made through the on-line requisition system.
3. Advance travel requests must be received by the Fiscal Services Department five (5) days prior to travel date. Requests received less than 5 days prior to travel may be approved by the Superintendent or designee under extenuating circumstances.
4. The applicant must file a Travel Expense Voucher on or before the tenth day following the close of the advance travel period. Persons submitting vouchers containing expenses in excess of the amount advanced will be reimbursed for the difference by warrant. When the actual expense is less than the amount advanced, the employee shall remit the unexpended portion of the advance with the voucher.
5. Any default in accounting for or repaying an advance shall render the full amount which is unpaid immediately due and payable with interest at the rate of ten percent per annum on the total amount advanced from the date of default until repaid.
6. NCESD has a prior lien against and the right to withhold all funds payable to or to become payable to any officer or employee to whom an advance has been given.

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7. No advance will be made to any officer or employer who is delinquent in accounting or repaying a prior advance.

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