

1. PURPOSE

To advance training and professionalism, El Toro Water District (District) encourages and, with prior approval by the Board or Board President, authorizes attendance at conferences (i.e. ACWA, CSDA, WaterReuse, CASA) by its Board members (Directors). Directors may be required to travel both in and outside the state to conduct official District business. The Directors' Travel & Reimbursement Policy furnishes guidelines for reimbursement for travel expenses and establishes certain procedures concerning travel authorization and documentation.

Members of the Board of Directors are encouraged to attend, with prior approval by the Board or the Board President, educational conferences and professional meetings when the purposes of such activities are to benefit the El Toro Water District. In addition, subject to prior approval of the Board or the Board President, the District encourages Directors' development and excellence of performance by reimbursing expenses incurred for tuition, travel, lodging and meals as a result of training, educational courses and participation with professional organizations, associated with the interests of the District.

The Director's Travel & Reimbursement Policy will be reviewed annually by the entire Board of Directors at a regular monthly meeting of the Board.

2. GOVERNANCE

The District shall adhere to Government Code Sections 53232 through 53232.4 when dealing with issues of Director remuneration and reimbursement.

3. AUTHORIZED EXPENSES

- A. Reimbursement rates shall coincide with rates set by Internal Revenue Service Publication 463 or its successor publication(s).
- B. If lodging is in connection with the above or other prior approved event, such lodging costs shall not exceed the maximum group rate published by the conference or activity sponsor. If there is no published group rate available, Directors shall be reimbursed for comparable lodging not to exceed \$600 per day.
- C. Reimbursement for lodging shall be limited to the minimum number of nights required for the Director's attendance at the event. Lodging will be reimbursed for the day before a conference, only if it is necessary to be present early the next morning or if early travel is necessary due to limited travel alternatives. Lodging on the day after a conference will only be reimbursed if attendance beyond noon of

the last day of the conference is required or if travel the next day is necessary due to limited travel alternatives.

- D. Charges for local and long distance telephone calls and computer access will be reimbursed when such calls are made in conducting official District business or essential personal calls such as a "safe arrival call". There will be no reimbursement for personal telephone calls or other hotel charges not related to District business needs.
- E. A Director's spouse or other family member(s) may accompany the Director on trips authorized under this policy provided that their presence does not detract from the Director's performance of duty. However, no expenses attributable to any companion will be reimbursed by the District.
- F. If travel and lodging is in connection with the above or other prior approved event, Directors shall use government or group rates offered by the provider of transportation when available.
- G. If transportation is by commercial airline, reimbursement shall generally not exceed the standard round-trip airline economy airfare in effect at the time.
- H. Travel shall be by the most direct route. If an indirect route is used, the additional costs shall be at the Director's personal expense. Whenever air travel is used, an advance travel request shall be submitted to the Board Executive Assistant in order to obtain the lowest possible fare.
- I. If the use of the Director's personal automobile is required, the owner will be compensated for the mileage driven at the rate established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Parking charges at the destination will be reimbursed with a receipt.
- J. Maximum reimbursement for car rental will be for a full-size car.
- K. Reimbursement for meals (including tips) during travel to, from and during the event, not included in the registration fee shall be limited to the minimum number of days required for attending the event. Meals will be reimbursed for the day before a conference, only if it is necessary to be present early the next morning or if early travel is necessary due to limited travel alternatives. Meals on the day after a conference will only be reimbursed if attendance beyond noon of the last day of the conference is required or if travel the next day is necessary due to limited travel alternatives.
- L. Any and all expenses that do not fall within the adopted travel reimbursement policy or the IRS reimbursable rates are required to be approved by the District's Board of Directors in a public meeting prior to the expenses being incurred.

- M. Expenses that do not adhere to the adopted travel reimbursement policy or the IRS reimbursable rates, and that do not receive prior approval from the District's Board of Directors in a public meeting prior to the expense being incurred, shall not be eligible for reimbursement.
- N. *Expenses in General and Registration* - Authorized expenses may include registration, lodging, communication (telephone, computers, fax), business meals, common carrier fares, automobile rentals, parking fees, and use of personal automobiles at the standard mileage rate permitted at the time by the Internal Revenue Service.

4. REIMBURSEMENT

- A. The District shall provide expense reimbursement report forms to Directors who attend the above functions on behalf of the District, which shall document that expenses adhere to this policy.
- B. Except when customarily no receipts are provided or available (i.e. baggage handling), receipts are required to be submitted in conjunction with the expense report form. Failure to submit necessary receipts will result in denial of the reimbursement claim.
- C. Directors attending functions consistent with the above or other prior approved events shall submit written or oral reports to the District on the meeting(s) that were attended.
- D. It is against the law to falsify expense reports. Penalties for misuse of public resources or violating this policy may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 1 The loss of reimbursement privileges;
 - 2 Restitution to the District;
 - 3 Civil penalties for misuse of public resources pursuant to Government Code Section 8314; and
 - 4 Prosecution for misuse of public resources, pursuant to Section 424 of the Penal Code, penalties for which include 2, 3 or 4 years in prison

5. TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

- A. To ensure the accuracy of travel arrangements, Directors are to complete and sign the appropriate travel forms and submit them to the Board Executive Assistant or designee for processing.
- B. Travel arrangements and registrations are to be made through the Board Executive Assistant. All payment and registration requests must be submitted in a timely manner to allow sufficient time for normal processing.

6. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. All costs, including those pre-paid by the District prior to the Director's attendance at an approved meeting, will be listed on the Director's expense report at the end of the month in which the expenses were incurred, and wherever possible, must be substantiated with a receipt attached to the expense report.
- B. Travel related expenses for each Director are limited to \$7,000 per fiscal year. Unused portions of the Director's annual budget for this purpose cannot be carried over to a subsequent budget period. No further reimbursements will be made to any Director if their travel related expenses reach the \$7,000 limit in any fiscal year.
- C. In any situation where extraordinary travel expenses are expected to be incurred, or where this Policy does not adequately cover the situation, or would work an undue hardship, exceptions may be made with prior approval of the Board President and General Manager.
- D. Directors will submit their Travel Expense Claim Form for reimbursement to the District office within the first week, if possible, of each month for the prior month's expenses. The Board President, General Manager or designated representative will approve and sign the Claim Form before request for payment can be processed. The Board President's Claim Form shall be approved by the General Manager or Assistant General Manager.
- E. When a Director is obtaining authorization for travel and is aware that the circumstances are such that the charges should not be made against their annual budget, they may request authorization from the Board of Directors or President of the Board that the charges for this activity not be charged against their annual budget.

R 97-07-2 07/31/97; R 99-07-1 07/15/99; R 03-04-2 04/24/03; R 06-02-1 2/23/06; R 11-3-1 03/24/11;
R 15-4-2 04/23/15; R 16-3-1 03/24/16; R 17-3-1 03/28/17; R 18-9-1 09/27/18; R 19-9-1 09/26/19
R 23-4-3 04/27/23; R 24-2-1 02/20/24; R 25-2-2 02/27/25;