
**CITY OF MARTINSVILLE
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION**

Regulation Title: Training and Travel Policy

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To: Department Directors/Managing Supervisors

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Approved: Robert Fincher

Robert Fincher, Acting City Manager

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1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes standardized procedures for City employees, officials, and authorized individuals participating in job-related training, conferences, and official travel. It ensures that such activities align with the City's operational goals, support professional development, and are conducted in a fiscally responsible, transparent, and accountable manner consistent with applicable laws and ethical standards.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all City of Martinsville employees, officials, and representatives who engage in work-related travel, training, or professional development activities on behalf of the City. It governs pre-approval requirements, eligible expenses, reimbursement procedures, documentation standards, and compliance expectations.

The Training and Travel Policy does not apply to travel for prisoner transport, temporary detention orders, or facility change orders. Moreover, international travel is not covered by this policy and must receive explicit prior written approval from the City Manager.

The City Manager may approve exceptions to this policy's regulation on a case-by-case basis.

3. DEFINITIONS

Traveler: For the purpose of this policy, "Traveler" is used to describe any person who is authorized to travel for City business or with City funds, including City employees, elected officials, volunteers, Board and Commission members, and candidates for City positions, subject to the approval of the City Manager.

Official Travel: Pre-approved travel conducted on behalf of the City for business-related conferences, meetings, trainings, educational sessions, or other official purposes.

Mandatory Training: Training required by federal, state, or local law, regulation, or directive.

Job-Related Training: Training that improves an employee's ability to perform their current job, including technical skills, safety practices, compliance, and use of tools or systems.

Local Travel: Travel within fifty (50) miles of the employee's primary work location that does not require overnight lodging or qualify for reimbursement; includes in-house training.

Non-Local Travel: Travel beyond fifty (50) miles of the employee's primary work location that may require overnight lodging and/or extended time away.

Per Diem: A fixed daily allowance, based on federal rates set by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), that covers certain expenses during travel, including meals, beverages, tips for waitstaff, and minor incidentals like bellhop or concierge services.

Companion Expenses: Expenses associated with a spouse, guest, or non-authorized individual accompanying a Traveler; not reimbursable.

Request for Authorization to Travel and Reimbursement Form: Two-part form for Travelers to complete and submit to their department director. The first part (i.e., *Request for Authorization to Travel*) must be completed in advance of all training and travel. The form notes basic travel information, purpose of travel, and anticipated costs. It should be sent to Finance at least fifteen (15) business days before planned departure.

Travelers must complete the second half of the form (i.e., *Request for Reimbursement of Expenses*) and submit it to Finance within five (5) business days upon completion of travel. Forms should include all associated costs and provide explanations for expenses if necessary.

Training and Travel Summary Report: Requested of all Travelers return to describe the purpose and benefit of their Official Travel. Summaries must be provided to the Deputy City Clerk within five (5) business days upon completion of training and travel.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Traveler

- i. Represent the City professionally.
- ii. Comply with all policy requirements.
- iii. Submit accurate documentation in a timely manner.
- iv. Exercise prudent fiscal judgment.

B. Department Director

- i. Review and approve all Request for Authorization to Travel Forms submitted within their department before forwarding them to the Office of Budget and Procurement and Finance.
- ii. Ensure the availability of funds.
- iii. Confirm adherence to policy and escalate non-compliance as needed.
- iv. Evaluate and include training costs in their annual budget requests.

C. Office of Budget and Procurement

- i. Review all Request for Authorization to Travel Forms for budget compliance and cost-effectiveness.
- ii. Coordinate the procurement of travel-related services such as rental vehicles, airfare, and lodging when required.

D. Finance Department

- i. Provide final approval for the Request for Authorization to Travel and Reimbursement Forms.
- ii. Administer and ensure compliance with the Training and Travel Policy.
- iii. Process travel advances, per diems, and reimbursement claims.
- iv. Perform audits and enforce internal controls.

E. Human Resources Department

- i. Ensure policy awareness among staff.
- ii. Support enforcement of policy compliance and coordinate disciplinary action in consultation with Department Directors and City leadership.
- iii. Assist with resolving policy interpretation questions and ensuring alignment with the City's Employee Handbook.

5. MANDATORY, CERTIFIED, AND JOB-RELATED TRAINING

A. Mandatory Certification and Training

The City will pay for any training that is legally required or necessary for certification. Employees are responsible for keeping track of their certification requirements and sharing related costs with their department.

B. Non-Mandatory Certification and Training

Other training must relate to the employee's job or help improve their performance. Employees can request payment or reimbursement of training through their supervisor via the Request for Authorization to Travel Form.

Upon initial approval, the director will forward the form to the Office of Budget and Procurement to ensure budget compliance and cost-effectiveness. The Finance Department is responsible for final review and approval. A response should be provided within ten (10) business days, and any denial must be documented with justification.

Reimbursement for college or vocational courses follows the policy outlined in the Human Resources Employee Handbook, Section 9.15.

C. Reporting

For tracking purposes, all training, whether Local or Non-Local, must be reported through the Request for Authorization to Travel Form.

6. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

A. General Requirements

Before making travel plans, Travelers should first consider virtual options or local alternatives. Virtual options must be documented in the Request for Authorization to Travel Form if considered and ruled out.

When Travel is necessary, employees must choose the most cost-effective arrangements. All travel expenses must be approved in advance by the Finance Department via the Request for Authorization to Travel Form. The form must be provided to the Finance Department at least fifteen (15) business days before planned departure. If proper approval is not obtained, the City will not reimburse the expenses,

and disciplinary action may follow. In rare cases, the City Manager can approve exceptions in writing, which must be included with the expense report.

B. Budgeted Travel

Requests for training and travel already included in the approved budget for the current and/or subsequent fiscal year do not require additional pre-authorization unless otherwise required by departmental procedure.

C. Unbudgeted Travel

All travel not proposed and approved during the appropriate budget cycle must be approved in writing by the Department Director, the Director of Budget and Procurement, and the Chief Finance Officer. Out-of-state travel also requires approval from the City Manager.

Training and Travel Requests must include:

- i. Purpose and destination
- ii. Travel dates
- iii. Registration materials or itinerary
- iv. Estimated expenses (e.g., lodging, transportation)
- v. Funding source

7. METHODS OF FUNDING TRAVEL

A. Travel Advance

Travelers can request an advance for eligible expenses at the City's flat rate of sixty-eight dollars (\$68) a day for meals and incidentals, effective as of August 1, 2025. However, the request must be submitted at least fifteen (15) business days before the planned departure. The maximum travel advance that may be allocated to a Traveler encompasses the estimated number of days for meals and incidentals on the flat rate.

Advances cannot be used for airfare, registration fees, tips, or expenses paid by another party. Travelers are personally responsible for securing any City-issued advances until reconciled.

To obtain a travel advance, the Traveler must:

- i. Submit a detailed cost estimate.
- ii. Reconcile expenses within five (5) business days of return.
- iii. Return any unused funds (overages may be deducted from payroll).

B. Per Diem

If the U.S. General Services Administration ([GSA](#)) per diem rates for the travel location are higher than the City's flat fee, the Traveler may request the appropriate per diem rate. If the destination is not listed on the GSA website, the rate for the nearest listed city may apply. Travelers must include the reflective per diem rates for the destination city on their Request for Authorization to Travel Form.

The City will not provide a per diem if another organization pays for meals. Meals included in a conference or event are also not reimbursable. However, if a Traveler cannot eat a provided meal due to allergies or dietary restrictions, they may be reimbursed for a replacement meal if a receipt is submitted upon return. Justification must be included in the Request for Reimbursement of Expenses Form.

The per diem rate may not be provided in lieu of submitting receipts. Until further notice, all expenses will require receipt.

C. Reimbursement

Travelers may use personal funds (e.g., cash or credit/debit card) to pay for meals, tolls, fuel, and other expenses incurred during travel. To be reimbursed, Travelers must submit itemized receipts after returning. All meal expenses incurred using this method must fall within the flat daily fee threshold of sixty-eight dollars (\$68) for meals and incidentals or the GSA's per diem rate for the travel location.

D. External Funding

If travel is funded in-whole or part by external grants or other third-party sources, the Traveler must comply with all applicable rules, policies, and documentation requirements of those funding entities. The Department Director, Office of Budget and Procurement, and the Finance Department must be notified in advance.

8. TRANSPORTATION

A. Considerations

Travel should follow the most direct, cost-effective route. When feasible, group travel options (e.g., carpooling, rail) should be considered.

If using a personal or rental vehicle for out-of-state travel, the total cost must not exceed the cost of commercial transportation.

B. City Vehicles

A shared-use City vehicle is available and should be used when not already reserved. Preference is given to multi-day or long-distance travel.

If a City vehicle is used, fuel expenses will be reimbursed upon submission of receipts, provided they were not charged directly to the City. While tolls and parking are reimbursable with receipts, they should be avoided when practical.

Employees who use City owned vehicles or equipment are accountable for their proper use and maintenance. Any defects noted must be reported to the employee's supervisor as soon as possible. City owned vehicles and/or equipment shall not be used for personal use. Travelers utilizing a City vehicle should read the City Vehicles and Equipment Policy to ensure full understanding and compliance with its safety procedures and accident provisions.

C. Personal Vehicles

If a City vehicle is unavailable, Travelers may use their personal vehicle and be reimbursed at the IRS rate. Commuting miles from home or a remote worksite to the regular workplace are not reimbursable.

To receive reimbursement, Travelers must document mileage in the Request for Reimbursement of Expenses Form. Miles must reflect actual travel and be captured using an online map service (e.g., Google Maps), showing travel between specific addresses. All mileage requests must use the Municipal Building (55 W Church Street, Martinsville, VA 24112) as the initial point of origin unless otherwise authorized by the Department Director.

D. Rental Vehicle

Rental cars may be used when they are more economical than other transportation modes. Reservations must be made through the Office of Budget and Procurement to obtain the best available rate. Itemized fuel receipts must be retained and submitted to receive reimbursement. Personal use of the rental vehicle is prohibited.

E. Insurance Coverage

All Travelers must ensure that they are appropriately licensed and that any private vehicle used for City business is properly registered and insured. If a Traveler is involved in a vehicle accident while driving or traveling in their private vehicle and conducting City business within the scope of their employment, the insurance policy for that private vehicle will provide insurance protection for the Traveler.

The City assumes no liability for responsibility in the event of vehicle damage, motor vehicle code violations, citations, or towing fees.

F. Air Travel

Air travel should be considered for trips over four (4) hours by car. Exceptions may be made during off-peak times or airfare sales, where flying to closer destinations could be approved if cheaper.

Airfare will be reimbursed only at the coach class rate. If no coach seats are available, the Office of Budget and Procurement may approve higher classes. Baggage reimbursement is limited to one checked or carry-on bag per Traveler. Upgrades, seat selections, and other extras that are personal expenses will not be paid by the City.

If a Traveler must change flights for work reasons before a conference, change fees can be reimbursed with prior approval from the Department Director. Fees due to personal reasons are not reimbursable (see Section 11A). If the reason for Official Travel is canceled or rescheduled, any travel penalties should be handled through the event's sponsor and/or by the Traveler.

G. Other Forms of Transportation

Other forms of travel not mentioned, including ridesharing (e.g., Uber, Lyft, and Taxi), are reimbursable when they are the most economical and practical option. However, when possible, Travelers should use public transportation or hotel/airport shuttles.

9. LODGING

A. Hotel and Inn Lodging

Lodging expenses will be reimbursed for Non-Local Travel (i.e., when an overnight stay is required). For conferences, the published room rate at the conference hotel is acceptable. The City will only reimburse the single-room rate. If two Travelers share a double room, the double-room rate may be purchased or reimbursed to the individual who paid. The Traveler is responsible for any additional costs for a spouse or companion (see Section 11B).

Travelers should identify themselves as City employees or elected officials during registration to determine if a government rate is available. Itemized lodging receipts must be kept and submitted with the Request for Reimbursement of Expenses Form, whether the City pays the hotel directly or the Traveler is reimbursed.

B. Alternative Lodging

Use of vacation rentals (e.g., Airbnb and Vrbo), bed and breakfasts, and other non-commercial lodging is discouraged. If used, reimbursement will be limited to the state-approved lodging rate. Service and cleaning fees are the Traveler's responsibility and will not be reimbursed unless authorized via per diem. Lodging at homes or properties owned by relatives or friends is not eligible for reimbursement.

10. OTHER REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

A. Registration and Banquet Fees

Registration and banquet fees outlined in the conference registration program may be reimbursed, and Travelers should make every effort to take advantage of early registration discounts when available.

To receive reimbursement, documentation must include complete details of the training or conference, such as dates, times, location, and itinerary.

Any voluntary, supplemental, recreational, or excursion costs may not be reimbursed unless directly related to the conference's purpose and approved by the Office of Budget and Procurement. Moreover, Travelers are personally responsible for purchasing banquet tickets for their spouses or guests (see Section 11B).

B. Authorized Role in a Professional Organization

If a Traveler holds a leadership role or represents the City in a professional organization, the City may cover any dues or expenses not paid by the organization, provided the participation benefits the City of Martinsville's operations and objectives. This applies to formal organizations requiring membership dues and informal groups of peers or officials (e.g., mayors, finance officers, elected officials).

C. Internet Access

Internet access fees that are necessary for conducting City business may be reimbursed.

D. Telephone Calls

Business-related telephone calls are allowable reimbursements when receipts of such calls are submitted to the City. Reimbursement for one long-distance telephone call to the Traveler's home (not exceeding ten minutes) will be allowed when the Traveler is on an overnight trip. However, Travelers should use calling cards whenever possible.

E. Incidentals

The IRS defines incidental expenses as fees or tips given to porters, baggage carriers, and hotel staff. An explanation for the incidental expense must be listed on the Request for Reimbursement of Expenses Form to be reimbursed. Incidentals can be reimbursed for no greater than five dollars (\$5) a day, limited to one claim per day.

F. Dry-Cleaning Expenses

Laundry and dry-cleaning expenses are generally not reimbursable but may be reimbursed if the travel time exceeds seven (7) days.

G. Extenuating Circumstances

If, at any point during travel on City business, an unforeseen event such as a weather emergency, natural disaster, security threat, or other uncontrollable circumstance occurs, causing deviations from the planned itinerary, Travelers are expected to exercise sound judgment to ensure their personal safety. Any additional expenses incurred beyond the originally authorized or policy-covered amounts may be reviewed individually to determine if they qualify for reimbursement or are the Traveler's responsibility. Travelers must promptly notify their supervisor or the Department Director of any such emergency situations.

11. NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

A. Personal Expenses and Incentives

Personal expenses, including entertainment, recreation, alcoholic beverages, hotel mini-bar charges, personal phone calls, gifts, personal grooming items, most laundry services (see Section 10F), travel upgrades, and loss of personal belongings during air travel, are not reimbursable.

Travelers may use personal loyalty accounts when booking. However, they must not make travel decisions based on personal incentive benefits that increase costs to the City. Travelers are prohibited from using any travel incentives earned through City-paid or City-reimbursed travel arrangements for personal purposes. Such incentives include frequent flyer miles, bonus points from hotels or rental car loyalty programs, and compensation for being bumped from an overbooked flight. Lodging or meal vouchers received and used due to travel delays are exempt from this restriction.

B. Companion Expenses

The City will only reimburse authorized charges paid by and for the authorized City Traveler. The Traveler must incur all private costs without reimbursement for their spouses, guests, or family members.

C. Expenses Without Proper Documentation

The City reserves the right to deny reimbursement for expenditures that cannot be verified by a receipt.

12. REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE

A. Request for Reimbursement of Expenses

Travelers must reconcile expenses and submit a Request for Reimbursement of Expenses Form to the Finance Department within five (5) business days of completion of travel (see Appendix B). All expenses must be supported by sufficient documentation, including receipts, proof of attendance, and any required approvals or

explanations. Illegible receipts will not be accepted, and previously submitted documentation cannot be reused to justify new expenses.

B. Reimbursement

All expense reports are reviewed by the Finance Department to ensure compliance with City policies, state regulations, and responsible use of taxpayer funds. Reviews will verify documentation and the appropriateness of expenses under this policy.

Reimbursements will be processed following IRS guidelines and the City's standard financial procedures. If any reimbursed item is deemed taxable income, the City will include it on the Traveler's pay stub for proper tax withholding and reporting. Reimbursements will be paid through vendor payment systems, and tax-related amounts will be handled through payroll. The City reserves the right to recover any excess reimbursements or outstanding advances through payroll deductions.

Any travel-related matters not covered by this policy will be reviewed individually and may require approval from the appropriate Department Director before reimbursement is authorized. This policy does not supersede any grant requirements, which may impose stricter rules or additional documentation.

C. Appeals

If a reimbursement request is denied, the Traveler may send a written appeal to the Finance Department within ten (10) business days of receipt of the decision. The appeal must include justification and any supporting documentation. A final decision will be made in consultation with the Human Resources Department, the Office of Budget and Procurement, the Finance Department, and/or the City Manager.

13. TRAINING AND TRAVEL SUMMARY REPORT

City employees who travel or attend training on behalf of the City must submit a written report to the Deputy City Clerk within ten (10) business days of return. The report should summarize the event and explain its benefits to Martinsville (see Appendix C).

The Deputy City Clerk may compile training reports monthly or annually to assist Department Directors and City Administration in evaluating the impact of various training programs for future planning. Reports may further be shared with City Council and the public to encourage interdepartmental communication, transparency, and accountability.

14. ENFORCEMENT AND NON-COMPLIANCE

The Office of Budget and Procurement and the Finance Department have the authority to make decisions in the City's best interest regarding situations not explicitly addressed in this policy.

Department Directors are responsible for ensuring their staff understand this policy before travelling.

Noncompliance may result in denial of reimbursement and/or disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or termination. Repeated non-compliance, including late report submissions or missing documentation, may result in restricted approval for future travel or referral to Human Resources for further review. Ignorance of these guidelines will not be accepted as an excuse for violations.

Appendix A
Policy Highlights

Step	Task	Deadline
Prior to Travel		
1	Departments should track mandatory, certified, and job-related training and ensure all related expenses are captured in the budget.	Ongoing
2	Travelers should consider their method of travel funding (e.g., per diem, reimbursement, or external), exercising prudent fiscal judgment to the best of their ability. If external funding is utilized, the Traveler must comply with all applicable rules, policies, and documentation requirements of the providing entity.	Varies
3	Travelers should submit a Request for Authorization to Travel Form with all required details, including purpose, dates, itinerary, estimated expenses, and funding source (including Per Diem rates if applicable). Forms must be received by Finance at least 15 business days before any planned departure. The process for approving the Request for Authorization to Travel Form is as follows: Department Director → Budget and Procurement → Finance	≥ 15 business days prior to departure
Completion of Travel		
6	Travelers must submit the Request for Reimbursement of Expenses Form . All expenses must be supported by sufficient documentation, including receipts, proof of attendance, and any required approvals or explanations.	Within 5 business days upon return
7	Travelers submit the Training and Travel Summary Report to the Deputy City Clerk (for all Local/in-house and Non-Local Official Travel).	Within 10 business days upon return
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>ELIGIBLE EXPENSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and certification (Sections 5A-B) • Transportation (Section 8) • Lodging (Section 9) • Registration and banquet fees (Section 10A) • Authorized role in a professional organization • Internet access (Section 10C) • Telephone calls (Section 10D) • Incidentals (Section 10E) • Dry-cleaning expenses (Section 10F) • Extenuating circumstances (Section 10G) </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>NON-ELIGIBLE EXPENSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal expenditures (Section 11A) • Companion expenses (Section 11B) • Expenses without proper documentation (Section 11C) </div> </div>		

Appendix B

Request for Authorization to Travel and Reimbursement Form

[NEXT PAGE]

CITY OF MARTINSVILLE
REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO TRAVEL

Name:		Date:		
I request permission to depart Martinsville on or about _____ travel to _____ returning on or about _____ . The purpose of this travel is:				
Check mode of travel:	A. Public Transportation		B. Private Transportation	
Check meal option:	A. Actual Cost – Receipts must be attached		B. Per Diem rate, based on GSA city	
Advance Travel Pay ____ Yes ____ No	Organizational Code	Object Code	Advance Amount	Date Desired
Employee's Signature and Date	Title		Department	
Authorized Approval(s):	Department Director/Date			City Manager/Date (where appropriate)

REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

Date of Request:		Dates Expenses Incurred: From _____ To _____							
EXPENSES		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	
Attach receipts except for Per Diem		Day	Day	Day	Day	Day	Day	Day	TOTAL
Mileage () X <u>\$0.67 IRS Rate</u>									
Air Travel									
Registration Fees									
Lodging									
*Meals: Breakfast (prior to 6:00 AM)									
Lunch (prior to Noon)									
Dinner (after 6:00 PM)									
Gratuities									
TOTAL MEAL COST PER DAY:									
Parking									
Auto Rental, Taxi, etc.									
Phone									
Other									
*Define any unusual meal expenses:							Total Expenses	\$	
AUTHORIZATIONS							Less Travel Advance	\$	
Department Dir/Date	City Manager/Date		Finance Director/Date			Due To/From City	\$		
						Organizational Code Object Code			

Appendix C

Training and Travel Summary Report

[NEXT PAGE]

**CITY OF MARTINSVILLE
TRAINING AND TRAVEL SUMMARY REPORT**

As gathered from the Request for Authorization to Travel Form:

Name:	Date:
Title:	Department:
Training:	
Location of Training:	
Cost of Training/Travel:	
Purpose of Training/Travel:	

Upon completion of official training and travel:

Summary of Training and Key Takeaways: <i>Briefly describe the training, sessions attended, site visits, or meetings participated in. What were the most valuable insights, concepts, or skills learned?</i>
Relevance and Benefit to the City: <i>How can this experience improve your department or the City's operations, services, or goals?</i>
Next Steps and Recommendations: <i>Would you recommend this opportunity for others? Are there improvements or follow-up actions that the City should consider?</i>