

FLORIDA CLERKS OF COURT OPERATIONS CORPORATION (CCOC)

Title: **Travel Policy and Procedures**

I. PURPOSE:

To establish regulations and procedures for the Clerks of Court Operations Corporation (CCOC), employees and authorized persons where authorized travel is necessary and reimbursement is requested.

II. DEFINITIONS

Employees - All employees of the CCOC.

Authorized Person - A person, other than an employee, who is authorized to incur travel expenses in the performance of the CCOC's official duties, such as a consultant.

III. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

Travel expenses shall be limited to those expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of a public purpose authorized by law to be performed by the CCOC and must be within limitations described herein. This policy has been drafted using the State of Florida rules as a guideline.

This policy applies to all travel as defined herein for any purpose and for which reimbursement will be claimed by employees and authorized persons of the CCOC as follows:

1. All such persons are eligible to travel in the conduct of CCOC business or to attend meetings, conferences, conventions, and training sessions for the benefit of the CCOC, at CCOC expense, pursuant to proper authorization prescribed herein.
2. Employees who travel for the purpose of obtaining certifications required for continued employment with CCOC is an allowable expense.
3. Consultant travel which is not covered within the scope of the consultant's contract and which is billed separately to the CCOC on a cost reimbursement basis must receive prior approval and will be reimbursed in accordance with this policy.

4. Under no circumstances will an employee be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred for the purpose of taking job placement examinations for the purpose of applying for jobs, whether written or oral.

IV. EXCEPTIONS

Any exceptions or unusual circumstances not provided for in this policy should be documented and approved by the Budget Director or Executive Director prior to travel.

V. TYPES OF TRAVEL

- A. Class "A" Travel: continuous travel for a period of 24 hours or more out of town. The travel day for Class "A" travel shall be a calendar day (midnight to midnight).
- B. Class "B" Travel: continuous travel of less than 24 hours which involves overnight absences out of town. The travel day for Class "B" travel shall begin at the same time as the travel period. Class A and Class B Travel shall include any assignment of official business outside of regular office hours and away from regular places of employment when it is considered necessary to stay overnight and for which travel expenses are approved.
- C. Class "C" Travel: travel for short or day trips where the traveler is not away from his or her official headquarters overnight.
- D. Local Mileage: travel of less than 24 hours in which the traveler is not away from official headquarters overnight and which involves the use of a privately owned vehicle for official business within Leon and the surrounding counties and for which no meal reimbursements are claimed.

VI. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

All travel will be conducted pursuant to authorized annual budget allocations. Prior to incurring any Class A, Class B, or Class C travel expense for which reimbursement or cash advance is requested, a travel request should be approved and authorized by the appropriate authority. Local mileage which is included in the annual budget allocation for travel does not need prior authorization and should be reimbursed in accordance with this policy. Authority for approval of Class A, Class B, and Class C travel is designated as follows:

Employees:

Employees travel is to be approved by the Executive Director or Budget Director.

Other Authorized Persons:

1. Consultants, Trainers/Presenters, and contractors, traveling on a cost reimbursement basis, must have their travel authorized by the Executive Director or Budget Director.
2. The following guidelines may be used when approving requests for travel:
 - a. Funds are available in the budget.
 - b. A determination is made that a public purpose is achieved in taking the trip.
 - c. The number of persons traveling is the minimum number required to accomplish the purpose of the trip.
 - d. The method of travel (e.g., air, vehicle) is specified and the routing and other arrangements are the most economical available and result in the shortest time away or the lowest overall cost consistent with the distance to be traveled and the purpose of the trip.

VII. TRAVEL PAYMENT

An authorized CCOC Purchasing Card should be used as payment for all travel associated expenses (except for meals and gas) incurred by employees conducting CCOC business, unless authorization is given by the Executive Director or Budget Director for alternative method of payment to be utilized.

Purchasing Card

Certain items, such as airline tickets, lodging, car rental or registration fees (if allowed), should be prepaid with a Purchasing Card upon approval of the travel request.

Meals

The CCOC Purchasing Cards are not to be used for the payment of meals. Payment for meals can, at the traveler's request, be advanced to the traveler at the applicable allowance rate after approval of the travel request memorandum.

Travel Advance

If not using an authorized CCOC Purchasing Card, employees may obtain travel advances upon approval of the travel request.

VIII. REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

Upon completion of the travel, all travel advances should be settled within ten (10) working days of return from traveling. No advances for additional trips shall be given until all prior advances have been settled. Chapter 112.061 F.S. provides that any person who willfully makes or contributes to a fraudulent claim shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree and shall be civilly liable in the amount of overpayment. Such employee shall also be subject to disciplinary action by the employer, up to and including termination.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Director or Budget Director to ensure that the traveler complies with this section of the policy. Exceptions to this section of the policy may be made upon written justification of circumstances which necessitate multiple advances.

Within ten (10) days of completing authorized travel, travelers should file a Travel Expense Report form. The Travel Expense Report should reflect the entire cost of the trip, including all advances and direct payments made. The traveler must sign and date the Travel Expense Report form for completeness and correctness as to the actual travel performed. The completed Travel Expense Report form must then be signed by the Executive Director or Budget Director. The form is then forwarded for final review and processing. If the CCOC is due a return of funds from the advance, a check payable to the CCOC should be attached to the Travel Expense.

The following describes allowable expenses and the documentation required. In general, where receipts are required, original receipts should be submitted. If an original receipt is not available, an affidavit of the expense explanation must be prepared and included with the Travel Expense Report. Further, a copy of the meeting/conference/convention/training agenda, when one is provided, must be attached to the Travel Expense Report. When one is not provided, this should be indicated on the form.

Any changes or additions to the cost of the travel made after the travel request memorandum was approved must be explained on the Travel Expense Report form.

IX. ALLOWABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

A. Meals and Lodging: Class "A" and Class "B" Travel

1. Travel outside the County/State in order to conduct CCOC business shall be reimbursed by the following methods for each day of such travel, at the option of the traveler, provided that the same method of reimbursement is used to calculate each day of the travel (i.e., the entire trip will be either based on the per diem rate or based on actual expenses plus meal allowances):
 - a. Daily Per Diems: the most current standard State of Florida government per diem rate to include both lodging and meals, or
 - b. The actual expenses for lodging at a single occupancy rate, to be substantiated by paid bills. However, if the traveler chooses a form of lodging where a paid bill is not applicable, the standard State of Florida government per diem rate will apply. The State of Florida government per diem rate is not applicable unless the traveler chooses lodging in which costs are incurred, and can be substantiated by a paid bill or receipt.
 - c. Meal expenditures will be reimbursed according to the most current State of Florida government per diem meal rates.

- d. The following times shall be used to determine when meal reimbursements may be claimed:
- Breakfast: when travel begins prior to 6:00 a.m. and extends beyond 8:00 a.m.
 - Lunch: when travel begins prior to noon and extends beyond 2:00 p.m.
 - Dinner: when travel begins prior to 6:00 p.m. and extends beyond 8:00 p.m.
2. When claiming the standard State of Florida government per diem rate for Class "A" or "B" travel including meal reimbursements, the traveler shall be reimbursed one-fourth of the standard State of Florida government rate of per diem and meal allowances for each quarter, or fraction thereof, of the travel day included within this travel period. No receipts are required. The travel day is divided into the following quarters:
- 12:01 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.
 - 6:01 a.m. to 12:00 noon
 - 12:01 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
 - 6:01 p.m. to 12:00 midnight
3. An employee should not be reimbursed for any meal or lodging included in convention or conference registration fees paid by the CCOC. A continental breakfast provided as part of the conference/convention registration fee is considered breakfast and should not be claimed for reimbursement. An evening reception or other function that serves only hors d'oeuvres are not considered dinner and may be claimed for reimbursement. However, should the conference/convention registration fee include the provision of any lunches or dinners, these meals should not be claimed for reimbursement.
4. When a meal is provided by a hotel, airline, other common carrier, or as a part of a program/event, the traveler should not be allowed to claim the meal for reimbursement.
5. Reimbursement for lodging expense is limited to single occupancy or occupancy shared with another CCOC traveler. Cost of lodging shared with a non-official or non-employee (e.g., family members) is limited to the single room rate.
6. When traveling within Florida the authorized CCOC Purchasing Card should be used for the payment of lodging expenses. The traveler must also present a copy of the CCOC's tax exempt certificate. No sales tax will be reimbursed for Florida accommodations that should have been tax exempt.

When lodging, transportation and/or meals are paid or provided by any federal, state or other local governmental agency, no further expenses will be reimbursed.

B. Class "C" Travel

A traveler shall not be reimbursed on a per diem basis for Class "C" travel, but shall receive subsistence as follows:

1. Breakfast: At the State of Florida rate when travel begins before 6:00 a.m. and extends beyond 8:00 a.m.
2. Lunch: At the State of Florida rate when travel begins before 12:00 noon and extends beyond 2:00 p.m.
3. Dinner: At the State of Florida rate when travel begins before 6:00 p.m. and extends beyond 8:00 p.m., or when travel occurs during night time hours due to special assignment.

C. Transportation

All travel should be by a usually traveled route. If a person travels by an indirect route for his/her own convenience, any extra costs should be borne by the traveler and reimbursement for expenses should be based only on such charges as would have been incurred by a usually traveled route. No person shall be reimbursed for transportation from home to office, office to home, or to or from the point of travel departure.

Air - Coach fare by the route and/or rate best suited for the interest of the CCOC, is allowed and must be documented by a paid receipt. Should a traveler select a different route and/or rate, for their own benefit, reimbursement will be limited to the coach fare, by the route and/or rate, determined by what is in the best interest of the CCOC. Reimbursement of first class air fare is specifically limited to trips under emergency conditions when coach accommodations are not available. In those instances where an electronic airline ticket was purchased, documentation should include a copy of the traveler's itinerary, identifying the purchase of the airline ticket, or a separate paid receipt for the airline ticket.

Private Vehicle - Use of a private car for travel is authorized when approved by the Executive Director or Budget Director. A traveler using his/her privately owned vehicle will be reimbursed at the State of Florida rate in effect on the date(s) of travel. All mileage shall be shown from point of origin to point of destination, and included with the travel request memo. When possible, mileage should be computed and reimbursed on the basis of the current map of the Florida Department of Transportation for in-state travel. Alternate methods of computing mileage, such as the use of an Internet website, may be authorized on the travel request memo if supported by appropriate documentation. Road and bridge tolls may be claimed in addition to mileage upon presentation of receipts. Vicinity mileage necessary for the conduct of official business is allowable but must be listed separately on the reimbursement

request and the purpose explained. Reimbursement for local mileage or Class "C" travel mileage involving the use of the employee's vehicle should be submitted and shall specify:

date of the travel,
origin,
destination,
number of miles traveled,
purpose of the travel, and
amount requested for reimbursement.

Taxi, Limousine, Public Transportation, Parking and Car Rental - The actual costs incurred for normal use of taxi, limousine, public transportation and parking are reimbursable. Receipts are not required for reimbursement of parking, taxi, limousine and public transportation costs that are less than \$20.00 per traveler per trip. "Per trip" shall be the trip authorized in the travel request memorandum - not each ride in public transportation. When these items cumulatively exceed \$20.00 during the duration of the travel, receipts are required to document the full amount. In those cases where receipts are not available (i.e., mass transit tokens) reimbursement may still be sought with an explanation of the circumstances via a memorandum attached to the Travel Expense Report.

Car rental expense is reimbursable but only when prior approval is obtained on the travel request memorandum and a receipt is attached. However, a CCOC - approved traveler should not purchase collision-damage waivers when renting a car. The purchase of "Personal Accident Insurance" by a traveler is also non-reimbursable as employees on authorized business are covered under Workman's Compensation. Expenses incurred for collision-damage waivers or personal accident insurance will not be reimbursed unless prior approval of an exception is granted.

D. Registration Fees

Fees for registration, including meals and other programmed events sponsored by the conference or convention organization, should be prepaid wherever possible. Optional fees for recreation and/or entertainment activities associated with a conference or convention are not reimbursable unless required as part of the conference rate. Fees for non-CCOC employees (e.g., family members) to participate in activities are not reimbursable.

E. Miscellaneous

Any other necessary expense, not otherwise provided for but incurred for the benefit of the CCOC, must appear together and be identified on the Travel Expense Report form. Other miscellaneous gratuities for the hotel, taxis, the airport, porters, etc. should be identified here. The amount should be reasonable and, whenever possible, the traveler should obtain and attach receipts to the expense report to substantiate miscellaneous expenditures. The allowance for gratuity will be no more than 15% of the cost and the portage tip allowed will be no more than \$1.00 per bag with a maximum of 4 bags.