
	MESQUITE POLICE DEPARTMENT
	130.00 TRAVEL POLICY
	Effective Date: November, 2014
	Approved:  <div style="text-align: center;">Chief of Police</div>

I. Policy Statement

The Mesquite Police Department adheres to the State of Texas per diem policy regarding limits for food and lodging. This policy will define allowable and non-allowable travel expenses and set forth policy and procedures for the payment and reimbursement of employee travel expenses.

II. Procedure

The Mesquite Police Department will reimburse or provide payment for employees travel to attend training classes and meetings, as well as travel required to conduct activities on behalf of the Department. All payments must conform to applicable City of Mesquite administrative directives, IRS rulings and this policy.

A. Definition of Allowable and Non-Allowable Expenses

1. The Mesquite Police Department will pay all reasonable expenses for employee travel, food, lodging, conference registration, tips, parking, taxis and other associated necessities according to this policy, provided the employee submits the appropriate documentation.
2. Travel time for non-local events should not exceed one-half day prior to and one-half day following the event unless approved by the Assistant Chief over the Division. Members who must remain at their travel destination to qualify for reduced airfares may be reimbursed for their additional meals, lodging, rental cars, parking, etc., if the combined cost of the additional expense is less than the cost of a non-discounted airfare and it is in the Department's interest to allow the member to be absent for the additional time.
3. Expenses excluded from Department reimbursement are health club dues, pay television, dry cleaning or laundry, bar bills and entertainment expenses not directly related to Police Department or City business and any expense that is deemed unreasonable by the Chief of Police.
4. When accompanied by a family member, the employee shall pay all incremental costs related to having the family member along on the trip. Examples of incremental costs include the difference in lodging cost between single and double occupancy, and all meal and incidental costs of the family member.

B. Non-Local Travel

Travel that requires an overnight stay is considered non-local. Non-local travel expenses are not authorized within Dallas, Kaufman, Rockwall, Collin, Denton, Tarrant, Ellis, Henderson, Van Zandt, or Hunt County (any county that Mesquite occupies or any county that touches a county that Mesquite occupies). Documentation of all non-local travel will be through a properly completed City of Mesquite Travel Request and Expenses Refund Form (Travel Voucher).

1. Meals

- a. The Department will pay the GSA approved per diem food allowance applicable for the school or conference location. All food receipts must be submitted with the Expenses Refund Form (Travel Voucher) and all money in excess of the receipts will be returned with the form. The current allowances for a location can be viewed at:
<http://gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>

- b. On the first day of travel, if the employee leaves their home or the City of Mesquite (whichever time is earliest) before 7:00 am, the per diem rate for that day will be the full GSA amount. If the employee leaves after 7:00 am, the first day per diem is 75% of the GSA rate.
 - c. On the last day of travel, if the employee returns to their home or the City of Mesquite (whichever is later) before 6:00 pm, they will receive 75% of the GSA food rate for that day. If the employee returns after 6:00 pm, they will receive the full GSA rate for that day.
 - d. When employees attend an event in which a meal or meals are provided the amount for that meal will be deducted from the per diem and that amount returned with the travel voucher. Breakfast will count for 20%, lunch will count for 30% and dinner will count for 50% of the daily GSA per diem.
- 2. Transportation
 - a. Members are expected to use the mode of transportation that will be the most economical to the Department considering cost and time consumed. City vehicles will be utilized whenever possible.
 - b. When public carrier transportation is necessary, the Department will pay for round trip airfare (coach class), train fare, bus fare, taxi fare, tips, tolls, auto rental (when required) and parking. Receipts for airport parking should be submitted. Long-term parking should be used whenever possible.
 - c. If a private vehicle is used (instead of a public carrier or City vehicle), expenses shall not exceed the cost of the round trip public carrier fare. This cost comparison may include parking, rental car and/or taxi costs as well as an evaluation of the lost employee productive work time and replacement expense due to driving versus flying. Members must receive prior approval for the use of a private vehicle before the event from the Assistant Chief of the Division. If approved, the Police Department will pay the current standard mileage rate approved by the City Manager for the use of a private vehicle.
- 3. Lodging
 - a. The Department will pay the GSA approved per diem lodging allowance applicable for the school or conference location. The current allowances for a location can be viewed at: <http://gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>
- 4. Travel Arrangements
 - a. The Staff Support Bureau will be responsible for booking all travel arrangements. This includes, but is not limited to, calculating the food allowance, making flight reservations, hotel reservations, course enrollment and vehicle rentals.
 - b. Funds will be advanced to members prior to departing on a non-local trip if desired. To obtain an advance, contact the Staff Support Bureau at least eight business days prior to departure. A check will be prepared for the employee to pick-up.
 - c. Within five business days after completion of a non-local trip, the employee must close out the worksheet by returning all receipts to the Staff Support Bureau. If the final accounting for travel expenses indicates that the amount advanced exceeded the cost of the trip, the balance refundable to the City shall be deposited with the City Cashier and a receipt showing that deposit shall be provided to Staff Support. In cases where approved expenditures exceed the advance, a reimbursement check will be processed with the next accounts payable.

C. Local Travel

Job related travel outside the City of Mesquite that does not require an overnight stay is considered local travel.

1. Meals

a. Meal reimbursements will not be provided for local travel.

2. Transportation

a. Members are expected to select the mode of transportation that will be the most economical to the Department considering cost and time consumed. City vehicles will be utilized whenever possible.

b. The Department will reimburse members for expenses incurred during local travel including parking and tolls while on Department business. Members shall submit a properly completed Petty Cash voucher for these types of expenses associated with local travel.

EFFECTIVE: July, 2014; REVISED: November, 2014

