



City and County of San Francisco

London N. Breed, Mayor

San Francisco Department of Public Health

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Director of Health

**San Francisco Department of Public Health
Policy & Procedure Detail***

Policy & Procedure Title: Staff Travel/Training Guidelines (F\$C1)	
Category: Fiscal	
Effective Date: October 2008	Last Reissue/Revision Date: October 1, 2019
DPH Unit of Origin: Fiscal Unit	
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Distribution: DPH-wide <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If not DPH-wide, other distribution:

**All sections in table required.*

1. Purpose of Policy

DPH employees may be required to travel to visit clients, attend meetings, conferences, or trainings, and to participate in other work-related events. This Policy & Procedure (P&P) provides instruction to SF Department of Public Health (DPH) employees for prior authorization and reimbursement, as appropriate, for all travel, within and outside of the City and County of San Francisco (CCSF). This P&P is to be referred to in conjunction with the Controller’s Accounting Policy and Procedures.

2. Policy

A. Travel & Training and Local Trips

Employees and their managers must ensure that all travel is for “[official business](#)” and consistent with DPH’s mission and the individual’s scope of work. Employees are reimbursed only for travel expenses that meet these criteria and are approved in advance. Travel to states with anti-LGBT laws is prohibited per San Francisco [Ordinance file number 160425](#).

DPH employees and managers are encouraged to consider the most effective, least expensive ways to conduct business. Conference calls, web-conferencing, and/or other technology can

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We shall ~ Assess and research the health of the community ~ Develop and enforce health policy ~ Prevent disease and injury ~ Educate the public and train health care providers ~ Provide quality, comprehensive, culturally proficient health services ~ Ensure equal access to all ~

save considerable money. Travelling within or near CCSF, using public transportation, car- pooling, and riding a bicycle are all preferable to driving a personal or city vehicle.

B. Union Tuition Reimbursement

Employees should pursue tuition reimbursement through their union's Educational Development Funds (EDF) when possible. The reimbursable amount and eligibility requirements will differ for employees based on each union's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CCSF. The Tuition Reimbursement Program generally allows a yearly maximum reimbursement annually per employee for training and related book/materiel fees, conferences, and other skill-building opportunities. Please refer to Department of Human Resources' [website](#) for instructions.

3. Definitions

- A.** [CONUS GSA rate](#): Continental United States per diem rates. (The Federal government's General Services Administration issues the CONUS rate, and each city has its own maximum.) GSA rates can be found at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>
- B.** *Local Field Expenses*: Includes expenditures for business conducted within the nine Bay Area counties that are not related to Travel and Training. The nine Bay Area counties are Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma. Transportation-related expenses incurred by an employee during trips taken during the routine course of business where there is no overnight stay. Expenditures may include mileage, toll fees, parking, train, and fares for public transportation. (DPH allows travel outside of these Bay Area counties to be treated as field expense if there are no other costs associated with travel).
- C.** [Field Expense Report \(FER\) form](#): This form is used to request reimbursement for local field expenses.
- D.** *Official Business*¹: The activities of an officer or employee of CCSF must clearly demonstrate that there is a valid City and County interest to be served or gained through the travel; and there is:
- i. Relevance to CCSF operations or the individual's role in such operations; and/or
 - ii. The promotion or development of CCSF programs, methods, or administration; and/or
 - iii. Compliance with instructions, mandates or authorizations from the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and State.

¹ Office of the Controller, [Business Travel Guidelines](#), July 1, 2011.

- E. *Per Diem*: A payment made as reimbursement for daily costs incurred while traveling. This may include allowable meals, personal telephone calls, and related incidental expenses.
- F. [Travel Expense Voucher \(TEV\) form](#): This form is used in conjunction with an approved TTA form and allows the employee to claim reimbursement after the travel is completed.
- G. [Travel/Training Authorization \(TTA\) Form](#): This form is used for all travel requiring prior written authorization. It must be completed in advance of the travel, serving the dual purpose of approving the employee's absence from the workplace, and approving any reimbursement that may be requested.
- H. *Travel/Training Authorization Number*: A number assigned by Accounting, that indicates funds are available and certified for payment of travel expenses. A Travel & Training Authorization number must be obtained if an employee chooses to purchase the airline ticket through a CCSF-approved travel agency.
- I. *Travel/Training Expense*: Expenses other than field expenses incurred by an employee while traveling on official business, including air travel, hotel, and conference registration.
- J. *PeopleSoft (aka Financial System Project or FSP)* – is an integrated financial system used by the City and County of San Francisco that can be accessed through this portal <https://sfgov.org/sfc/employee-gateway>. Employees submitting reimbursement requests and cash advances will submit via the appropriate PeopleSoft modules and upload all relevant supporting documents for review. DPH does not use the travel authorization module.

4. Procedures

A. Overview of Requirements

All travel requires supervisorial approval. Employee trips taken during the routine course of business or in the performance of the job (e.g., client visits, business meetings, site inspections, etc.) that incur only field expenses (see definition below) do not require prior written authorization. Travel outside of CCSF, whether the employee incurs an expense, and all travel incurring travel/training expenses (see definition below) requires prior written authorization. If there are no expenses related to the travel or training, the Travel & Training Authorization form should not be submitted to DPH's Accounting unit but kept on file by the employee's supervisor.

All travel that incurs an expense other than a field expense and all travel outside of CCSF require prior written authorization. Prior authorization is obtained through the *Travel/Training Authorization (TTA) form*. There are two forms used for reimbursement, depending upon the type of expense incurred: field expenses are reimbursed using the *Field Expense Report (FER)* and travel/training expenses are reimbursed using the *Travel Expense Voucher (TEV)*. The following table indicate which form is required depending upon the travel circumstance or expense incurred.

Travel Circumstance or Expense Incurred	Examples	Authorization Form	Reimbursement Forms	
		Travel/Training Authorization	Field Expense Report	Travel Expense Voucher
Trips within CCSF incurring no expense	Walk to a meeting; use personal Muni pass/ Clipper card to get to a meeting	n/a	n/a	n/a
Trips within CCSF incurring field expense	Drive to a meeting at Fisherman's Wharf and incur parking expense	n/a	Yes	n/a
Trips outside CCSF incurring no expense	Ride with a colleague driving to Sacramento for a meeting; Use MOU Tuition Reimbursement to attend a conference	Yes (do not need to send to accounting)	n/a	n/a
Trips outside CCSF incurring field expense only	Drive personal car to see a client in Marin County and incur mileage expense	Yes (do not need to send to accounting)	Yes	n/a
Trips related to regular and mandated meetings and events	Attend monthly, quarterly or yearly meetings to Sacramento, etc.	n/a	n/a	Yes
Travel incurring travel/training expense	Attend a conference within San Francisco for which there is a conference registration fee; Attend a meeting out of state and incur air travel and hotel expense	Yes	n/a	Yes

B. Authorization

No prior written authorization is required for travel within CCSF for which no expense is incurred or within CCSF when field expenses are incurred, and those travels as required/mandated by local, regional and State laws/ordinances. Any employee traveling outside CCSF or any employee incurring travel/training expenses must obtain prior written authorization, as follows:

- i. **For Trips Outside CCSF Incurring No Expense or Field Expense**
 - a. Complete a Travel/Training Authorization form (TTA) prior to travel.
 - b. Obtain your supervisor's approval.
 - c. Supervisor retains the original.
- ii. **For Travel Incurring Travel/Training Expense**

- a. Complete a Travel/Training Authorization form (TTA) prior to travel. Retroactive requests are not allowed, except under special circumstances approved by the Director of Health.
- b. Obtain an airline quote from a CCSF-approved travel agency.
- c. If employees choose to purchase air travel on-line directly, they must document and demonstrate this option to be reasonable and cost effective by obtaining a minimum of three quotes from three travel fare aggregator websites (e.g. Expedia, Hotwire, Kayak, etc.).
- d. Include itemized estimated costs, if any, and funding source information (i.e., All Chartfields except account code).
- e. Attach conference information and hotel reservation (if applicable) to the TTA form.
- f. Obtain approval from management.
 - I. If travel expenses will be \$500 or less, the form must be signed by the employee's supervisor and authorized Division/Deputy Director.
 - II. If travel expenses will be over \$500, the employee must also forward the form to the Director of Health or Authorized Designee for approval and signature.
- g. Submit TTA to Accounting for processing. The appropriate Accounting unit, based on the type of funds being used for the travel expenses, will process the TTA form:
 - I. General fund: For San Francisco General Hospital and Laguna Honda Hospital staff, TTAs should be forwarded to Accounting staff at the respective hospital. For all others, TTAs should be sent to Accounts Payable & Procurement staff at 1380howardfiscal@sfdph.org or through DocuSign.
 - II. Grant funds: For San Francisco General Hospital and Laguna Honda Hospital staff, TTAs are forwarded to Accounting staff at the respective hospital. For all others, TTAs should be sent to Grants Unit staff at 1380 Howard, 4th Floor, Room 408; Fax #252-3047 or through DocuSign.
 - III. Special-revenue Projects and Work-order Performing funds: Accounting staff at 101 Grove St.; Fax #554-2550 or through DocuSign.
- h. Accounting will issue a Travel/Training Authorization Number if the airfare ticket is through a City-approved travel agency. Before making travel arrangements, the employee must have a Travel/Training Authorization number from Accounting. This number is used to secure payment to vendors (e.g., the airline company).

C. Making Travel/Training Arrangements**i. Conference/Training Registration Expenses****a. Tuition Reimbursement Program under union MOUs:**

I. If the training or conference may be reimbursed under the employee's union agreement, the employee should apply for tuition reimbursement through their union, rather than through DPH's Accounting Office.

A) The Online Tuition Reimbursement Process is explained and accessed on the SF Department of Human Resources website [here](#). The employee must complete a Tuition Reimbursement Form and follow the procedures set by their Union and the City to encumber the funds in advance of the training.

B) The funds are paid on a reimbursement basis only upon proof of satisfactory completion; advance payment is not allowed.

C) If using DPH funds for the registration fee, it is possible to pay the vendor directly if it is a compliant vendor. The employee may submit a [Direct Payment Request form](#) to Accounting along with a copy of the approved TTA form and an original invoice or copy of completed registration form.

ii. Airline Reservations for DPH Reimbursement

a. Employees make their own airline reservations. Airline tickets cannot be purchased until the employee has received signed approval and a Travel Authorization number. Employees must use the following procedures for purchasing tickets:

I. *City-approved Travel Agencies*: Make a provisional reservation through one of CCSF's three travel agencies. See [list of agencies](#) in Section 5 of this P&P.

A) To finalize the airline reservations with a City-approved travel agency, the employee must provide the approved TTA form, including Travel Authorization number, to the person in his/her section responsible for providing written authorization to the travel agency. This person will fax a written authorization to the travel agency, who will then issue the ticket.

B) The City-approved travel agency bills CCSF directly

for the cost of the ticket.

II. *Non-Approved Travel Agency and Online Purchases*: A non-approved travel agency or a website may be used only if a written quote is first obtained from one of the City-approved travel agencies (for price comparison purposes) demonstrating that the proposed ticket is less expensive than one purchased through a City-approved agency. The maximum reimbursement will be the airfare quoted by the City-approved travel agency.

A) Purchase the ticket with a personal credit card.

B) Retain all paperwork for reimbursement purposes.

III. *Discount Brokers*: Employees may **not** purchase a ticket from a discount broker. Accounting requires that the employee submit a credit card statement describing the item being purchased and from whom, e.g., airline ticket from United Airlines. A discount broker will indicate the name of the broker, not the item purchased.

b. Aggregator websites (e.g. Expedia, Travelocity, Priceline, etc.) – a minimum of 3 quotes from these websites are required to demonstrate lower-cost options.

iii. Hotel Reservations for DPH Reimbursement

- a. Secure hotel reservations with a personal credit card or through a [travel advance](#).
- b. Lodging expenses incurred at a hotel officially designated for the conference, or designated as the overflow hotel, will be reimbursed with documentation of the conference rate if the employee complies with this P&P.
- c. Lodging expenses at unofficial sites will be reimbursed at the lower of the actual cost of a hotel or the [CONUS GSA rate](#).
- d. Keep the pdf version of the itemized hotel receipt for reimbursement.
- e. For other forms of accommodation such as online rental services (e.g. Airbnb), please refer to separate DPH policy on DPH.net.

iv. Rental Car Reservations for DPH Reimbursement

- a. Rental cars are discouraged but may be approved if it can be established as the best option. The pre-approval paperwork must include:
 - I. Estimated rental and other related expenses such as parking and fuel on TTA form;

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- II. Justification explaining why a rental car is the most efficient, practical, and economical option (see “Other Ground Transportation” below); and
 - III. Approval and signature by the dept. head or authorized signatory.
- b. Make reservations directly or through a City-approved travel agent or secure reservations with employee credit card or through a travel advance.
 - c. Keep all original receipts for scanning and reimbursements later.
 - d. Additional rental car insurance is not covered and not reimbursable because CCSF is already liable for an employee conducting official CCSF business. Employees are not covered driving the car for personal use.
- v. Other Ground Transportation for DPH Reimbursement**
- a. If an employee uses a shuttle bus, taxi, public transportation, and/or personal vehicle as business transportation, the allowable cost will be determined by Accounting. It will be based on the most economical mode available, given the transportation required for a particular occasion.
 - b. Employees must keep all original receipts and are encouraged to provide written justification regarding their choice. (Contact Accounting for more details.)
 - c. Use of ridesharing for local and business travels are allowed. Refer to separate DPH ridesharing policy on DPH.net.
- vi. Internet Purchases for Airfare, Lodging and/or Car Rental for DPH Reimbursement**
- a. Reimbursement for lodging or car rental services purchased online is allowed. Accounting will accept written confirmation for airfare, lodging or rental car arrangements from the website, in lieu of an actual hotel or car rental bill, as long as the expenses are itemized.
 - b. Accounting requires a copy of the credit card statement when payment is made online. (The employee is not eligible for reimbursement for cancellation charges imposed by the company.)
- vii. Travel Allowances/Per Diems for DPH Reimbursement**
- a. In general, DPH does not provide per diem allowances. The employee pays the costs of meals, personal telephone calls, and related incidental expenses. This also applies to travel funded by most grant expenditures.

- b. There are exceptions to the per diem reimbursement policy. Employees are encouraged to review the MOU that covers their job class, as changes may occur. This information is accurate as of the effective date of this policy & procedure. (MOUs are posted [online](#) on the SF Department of Human Resources website.) A per diem rate will be provided through Accounting when:
 - I. A DPH employee escorts, or travels to visit, a DPH client/patient;
 - II. Health Educators and Health Program Coordinators, supported by grant and/or Tobacco Control Master Settlement funds, traveling on official City business, will be reimbursed for travel costs. This includes per diem fees, with available travel funds when such travel is required by the grant and the grant funding provides for such reimbursement in accordance with the applicable grant terms and provisions. A memo from the employee's supervisor approving such travel costs is required, and reimbursement may be denied if documentation is incomplete.

viii. Personal Side Trips and Extending Length of Stay

- a. The employee may return from a training or conference on the last day of the event or the following day. If the employee returns the following day after the training/conference commences, hotel accommodations will not be reimbursed for the last night of the event unless written justification is provided.
- b. If the employee stays an additional night(s) to lower the cost of an airline ticket (e.g., a Saturday-night stay over), the employee must submit documentation (a written price quote along with the TTA form) that indicates there is a net savings, or a neutral cost difference, between the cost of the airline ticket and the cost of lodging with the additional nights. If there are no savings or if the cost is not neutral, the cost of lodging for any additional night(s) is the employee's fiscal responsibility.
- c. The employee is required to pay for the difference in cost between a round-trip ticket for City business and an additional stop for personal business/vacation. For example, an employee going to Washington, D.C. on business with a round-trip fare of \$600, who wants to fly to New York and return from there at a cost of \$750, would be required to pay for the difference, \$150, as a personal expenditure. The employee is responsible for all expenses incurred before or after the days scheduled for business. Personal side trips also require pre-approved leave if occurring during the employee's regular work schedule.

ix. Travel Advance

- a. DPH Accounting may issue a travel advance check to employees without a credit card if estimated expenses exceed \$1,000, including conference registration fees, but excluding airfare or City paid expenses approximately 10 business days prior to travel. Travel advances are not issued for airplane tickets.
- b. Employees submit the prescribed Cash Advance Request (CAR) form to DPH Accounting to request a Travel Advance, including the completed and approved TTA form. Once approved, submit a cash advance request in PeopleSoft within 30 days from travel date.
- c. An employee will not be granted a cash advance if he/she has an outstanding Travel Advance that has not been liquidated in PeopleSoft.

D. Reimbursement**i. For Field Expenses from DPH**

- a. Reimbursements funded by grants, work order, project funds and special revenues must be certified by the assigned accountant by signing the prescribed form(s).
- b. Employees may request payment for transportation-related expenses after the expense was incurred using the Field Expense Report form.
- c. Meeting documentation must be attached (e.g., an agenda, email invite, memo, or minutes of the meeting) if the meeting/training is outside CCSF.
- d. Mileage and auto expenses related to regular and mandated meetings of staff can be reimbursed without a pre-approved TTA form.
- e. At the minimum, mileage reimbursement must be documented using the prescribed form and identify the from/to addresses in order to verify the miles using Google map.
- f. If the mileage claim is different from Google map, a leeway of 2 miles per trip or 4 miles roundtrip is permissible.
- g. Work during weekends and holidays must be pre-approved by the supervisor.
- h. For instances where DPH staff will accompany a mental health client to travel back home, submit a separate travel request form issued and approved by CBHS Operations Team indicating allowable expenses such as airfare, hotel stay, ground transportation, etc.

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- i. All DPH employees must submit an approved *Justification for Local Field Expenses* form
 - j. Updated Accounting forms are available at <http://dphnet/node/1318>
 - k. Employees to keep all original documents on file.
- ii. For Travel/Training Expenses from DPH**
- a. Employees are required to submit a packet of documentation to support his/her reimbursement claim within 10 days from his/her return to DPH. The packet must include and be uploaded in PeopleSoft:
 - I. The approved and/or certified Travel/Training Authorization form;
 - II. Travel Expense Voucher form (even if the employee received an advance or paid for the trip out-of-pocket). Supervisor signature not required on form because Supervisor will need to approve in FSP;
 - III. Training/conference documentation (e.g., brochure, agenda, etc.);
 - IV. Any memos related to the travel (e.g., a memo requesting a waiver due to travel ban to states with anti-LGBT laws, memo justifying car rental arrangement, etc.);
 - V. Receipts for all costs that are to be reimbursed, including training/conference registration fees, lodging, and transportation (credit card bills with personal/confidential information blacked out and/or online confirmations are acceptable if necessary, for the type of purchase);
 - VI. Copy of the itinerary;
 - VII. Remaining funds, if a travel advance was granted and some amount remained; and an
 - VIII. Unused airline ticket, if the trip was cancelled.
 - IX. For missing/lost receipts, employees will submit a supervisor approved written explanation and have it sign by the Director of Health or its Designee as “certified original”.
 - X. Employees to keep all original documents on file.
 - b. Failure to meet the 10-day timeline for submission of the packet of information to Accounting provides enough cause for the Controller to deny reimbursement or withhold the amount of any unliquidated travel advance from the employee’s paycheck.
 - c. Reimbursements funded by grants, work order, project funds and special revenues must be certified by the assigned accountant by signing the prescribed form.

iii. Non-Reimbursement/Non-Refund of Expenses

- a. Employees will not be reimbursed for the following expenses while traveling on business:
 - I. Hotel or car rental expenses without the submission of the required documentation, which includes either an original itemized bill or printed confirmation from a website, in addition to a Travel Expense Voucher form;
 - II. Cancellation charges imposed by an online travel provider for a cancelled trip; and
 - III. Excessive gratuities and tips paid for the provision of any service;
 - IV. Cost of parking, if public transportation is available to a local (in San Francisco) training or conference. Parking within city limits may be reimbursed if employee explains why public transportation could not be used.
 - V. Automobile repairs, replacement, or towage to a personal vehicle;
 - VI. Flight or automobile insurance;
 - VII. Cost of traffic violations.
 - VIII. Bottled water
 - IX. Alcoholic and sweetened beverages
 - X. Other expenses as determined by the Controller's Accounting Policies and Procedures.

iv. Union Tuition Reimbursement for Training/Conferences

- a. Submit original receipts, training/conference literature, and the necessary Tuition Reimbursement Forms using the [Online Tuition Reimbursement](#) process. Please note that the Tuition Reimbursement Funds for some unions are exhausted during the fiscal year, so employees must obtain prior approval to ensure the funds are encumbered.
- b. After the employee is approved for reimbursement, and after attending the event, the employee submits all required documentation through PeopleSoft. The employee's reimbursement depends on this final step. Upon final approval, payment shall be issued by the Controller's Office.

5. References and Attachments**A. Travel & Training Authorization & Reimbursement Forms**

Travel and Training Authorization & Reimbursement forms are posted on DPH's intranet and may be obtained from DPH's Accounting division.

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- i. [Travel/Training Authorization form](#)
 - ii. [Travel Expense Voucher form](#)
 - iii. *Union Tuition Reimbursement Request forms* are available at SF Department of Human Resource's online [Tuition Reimbursement section](#). This website includes citywide instructions for tuition reimbursement through employee unions and the associated forms. Some of these Tuition Reimbursement Request forms are also included on DPH's intranet (see [List of Forms](#) section).
- B. Approved CCSF Travel Agencies:**
- i. Airport Travel Agency: 650-877-0422 (phone) or 650-877-0714 (fax)
 - ii. Clement Travel Services: 415-386-2535 (phone) or 415-386-2580 (fax)
 - iii. Orientex Travel, Inc: 415-788-1711 (phone) or 415-398-6022 (fax) or orientex447@sbcglobal.net
- C. Summary of Travel/Training Reimbursement Checklist** (*attached*)
- D. SF Controller's Office – [Business Travel Reimbursement Guidelines](#)**
- E. SF Controller's Office – [Employee Reimbursement Guidelines](#)**
- F. Board of Supervisors Ordinance 160425 – [Ban on travel to states with anti-LGBT laws](#)**