

## Travel Reimbursement and Documentation Guide for OHF and LCCMR projects

Travel and meal reimbursements using state funds shall follow the policy of the Minnesota Department of Administration known as the “Commissioners Plan.” The full policy can be found here [https://mn.gov/admin/assets/PAY0021-Employee-Business-Travel-Expenses\\_tcm36-208026.pdf](https://mn.gov/admin/assets/PAY0021-Employee-Business-Travel-Expenses_tcm36-208026.pdf)

*This guide will help grantees follow state policy so that the travel expenses related to their OHF and LCCMR projects are reimbursable:*

### Travel Expenses 101:

- Travel must be in the state of Minnesota, unless permission has been given by the appropriate state entity the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) or Legislative Citizen Commission Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) and must be approved in the work plan.
- Travel must be direct and necessary to the project and meals are only reimbursed for individuals working on the project, and are currently in travel status.
- To be in travel status an individual(s) must be 35 miles or more from their permanent office or work site. See the meals section for exact times eligible for reimbursement.
- Expenses on the travel line of the project budget must follow the commissioner’s plan, even if the organization is another government or quasi government entity with their own reimbursement rates.

### Travel Expenses Categories:

#### Mileage:

- The mileage rate for 2024 is \$.67 cents per mile. The 2023 rate for reimbursement is \$.65.5.
- Mileage is calculated from ones starting destination (home) or office to their final destination, whichever is shorter.
- Mileage cannot be claimed for commuting from a person’s home to their office or work site.
- Please log all mileage for reimbursement on a spreadsheet including names of individual(s) traveling, date(s), and total miles.

### Lodging:

- Hotel, motel, or other accommodations will be reimbursed provided that grantees exercise good judgment in incurring lodging costs and that charges are reasonable and consistent with the facilities available.
- When seeking lodging reimbursement please make sure the name of the individual(s) are on either the lodging receipt or a separate spreadsheet with complete names and dates.
- Reimbursement requests should not include any ineligible expenses listed on the lodging receipts, for example, mini bar charges.

### Meals:

- The current meal reimbursement allowable amount:
  - a. Breakfast \$11
    - i. Breakfast reimbursements may be claimed if the employee leaves his/her temporary or permanent work location before 6:00 a.m. or is away from home overnight.
  - b. Lunch \$13
    - i. Lunch reimbursements may be claimed if the employee is in travel status more than thirty-five (35) miles away from his/her temporary or permanent work location or is away from home overnight.
  - c. Dinner \$19
    - i. Dinner reimbursements may be claimed only if the employee is away from his/her temporary or permanent work location until after 7:00 p.m. or is away from home overnight.
- Only those individuals who are direct and necessary to the project and are in travel status can have meals reimbursed.
- Meal reimbursement receipts must be itemized by item, receipts showing only the total amount, such as a credit card receipt, are not acceptable.
- Photocopies of receipts are acceptable, as long as all the date(s), individual items, and totals are clear and easy to read.
- If a single receipt for multiple people is submitted, please include the names of the individuals either on the receipt or on a separate spreadsheet relating to the meal receipts.
- If you are in travel status and you choose to buy groceries at a store, please document who is eating the food and what subsequent meals is the food to cover, as to not go over the limit on a per meal basis.
- If your meal receipt is over the maximum meal reimbursement rate, we will only reimburse up to the maximum amount, (but a full receipt is still required.)
- Taxes and reasonable gratuity are eligible for reimbursement, less any additional taxes for ineligible items (like a liquor tax.)
- If you are in travel status for sequential meals, you are allowed to bundle your meal receipts, and be reimbursed for the total amount not to exceed the total amount of the rate for meals combined.

- a. For example, if you only spend \$5 on lunch and \$20 on dinner, you can be reimbursed because the total is less than the rate of lunch and dinner combined. If you plan on bundling, please document what meals are being combined and what the complete totals on a separate sheet are so your grants specialist can reconcile the correct receipts.

#### Alcohol:

- The state cannot reimburse for alcohol purchased.
- Alcohol can be on the same receipt as an eligible meal receipt, but the reimbursement request must be reduced to include only eligible expenses.

#### Grant Manager/accounts receivable information:

- The LCCMR and OHF approve project budgets and amendments. The DNR approves the request for reimbursement from the approved budgets while following the policies from the Department of Administration
- Once the budget is approved, money is separated into separate line items and reimbursements reduce the individual lines as well as the budget as a whole.
- Approved Travel budget line versus Contract line:
  - a. Generally, the travel line on a grant budget should be used for the grantees own staff and grant related travel expenses by contractors should be included in the contract line of the budget.
  - b. Expenses on the travel line of the project budget must follow the state policy, even if the organization is another government or quasi government entity with their own reimbursement rates.
  - c. Travel expenses that are included in a professional contract and bundled with the other contractor expenses are not required to submit food/lodging receipts to the DNR. The grantee should follow their own local policy for approving contractor expenses. This funding must come out of the “Contracts” line and not the “Travel” line of the project budget.

If you have questions about this guide, or you want to ask additional questions relating to a particular travel issue, please contact your DNR grants specialist.