

Travel Reimbursement and Documentation Guide for Coastal Program grantees

Updated July 2023

Travel costs are the expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items incurred by employees or volunteers of the Grantee who are in travel status on official grant project business.

Travel and meal reimbursements using state funds shall follow the policy of the Minnesota Department of Administration known as the "[Commissioners Plan](#)." Travel expenses must also be eligible under the Code of Federal Regulations, [2 CFR Part 200](#) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

This guide will help grantees follow state policy so that the travel expenses related to their grant funded project are reimbursable.

Travel Expenses 101

- Travel must be in the state of Minnesota, unless permission has been given by the State and must be approved in the work plan.
- Travel must be direct and necessary to the project. Meals are only reimbursed for individuals working on the project and 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 commissioners plan, even if the organization is another government or entity with their own reimbursement rates.

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.

Travel Expenses Categories

Mileage

- The state will reimburse based on the current Internal Revenue Service ([IRS](#)) [mileage rate](#).
 - If vehicles with special access equipment is required, a higher reimbursement rate is available.

- The grantee must document all mileage for reimbursement, including names of individual(s) traveling, date(s), and total miles.
- The grantee should calculate mileage from ones starting location (home or office) to the destination (and back); as well as all project stops in between.
- The state will not reimburse mileage for commuting from a person’s home to their office or work site.
- The state will reimburse for parking fees and toll charges as incurred.

Lodging

- The state will reimburse for hotel, motel, or other accommodations provided that grantees exercise good judgment in incurring lodging costs and that charges are reasonable and consistent with the facilities available.
- The Grantee must provide documentation that includes the name of the individual(s) and dates of stay, such as a lodging receipt or invoice.
- Reimbursement requests should not include any ineligible expenses listed on the lodging receipts (e.g., mini bar charges).

Meals

The State will only reimburse meals for those individuals who are direct and necessary to the project and are in travel status. Taxes and reasonable gratuity are eligible for reimbursement, less any additional taxes for ineligible items (like a liquor tax.) You do not need to submit meal receipts with your reimbursement request unless the State requests them.

The current meal reimbursement allowable amount is:

- Breakfast \$10.00
 - Breakfast reimbursements may be claimed if the employee leaves their temporary or permanent work location before 6:00 a.m. or is away from home overnight.
- Lunch \$13.00
 - Lunch reimbursements may be claimed if the employee is in travel status more than thirty-five (35) miles away from their temporary or permanent work location with the work assignment extending over the normal lunch period.
- Dinner \$19.00
 - Dinner reimbursements may be claimed only if the employee is away from their temporary or permanent work location until after 7:00 p.m. or is away from home overnight.
- The IRS has identified high-cost localities, eligible for higher reimbursement rates.

If the meal receipt is over the maximum meal reimbursement rate, the State will only reimburse up to the maximum amount.

- Grantees who are in travel status for two (2) or more consecutive meals shall be reimbursed for the actual costs of the meals including tax and a reasonable gratuity, up to the combined maximum amount for the reimbursable meals.

- The Grantee may submit the overage as match or leveraged funds.

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.

Travel Expenses, Other

- Grant related travel expenses by contractors should be included in the contract line of the budget. Contractors must also follow state policy for Travel.
 - 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.
- Travel and meals for conferences and trainings may be considered ‘Other’ costs.
 - A conference is defined as a meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, workshop or event whose primary purpose is the dissemination of technical information and is necessary and reasonable for successful performance under the award. Allowable conference costs paid by the Grantee as a sponsor or host of the conference may include rental of facilities, speakers' fees, costs of meals and refreshments, local transportation, and other items incidental to such conferences unless further restricted by the terms and conditions of the contract agreement. As needed, the costs of identifying, but not providing, locally available dependent-care resources are allowable.
- 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.

Grant Manager/accounts receivable information

- The Coastal Program and NOAA approve project budgets and amendments. The DNR approves the request for reimbursement from the approved budgets, following the policies from the Department of Administration.
- Once the budget is approved, changes to the budget, including out of state travel or increases to the Travel line, must be approved by the State’s Authorized Representative or their designee.