

# **STANDARDIZED TRAVEL REGULATIONS**

**State of Michigan**



**Issued by the  
Civil Service Commission  
and  
Department of Technology, Management & Budget**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SECTION 1 – RESPONSIBILITY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>SECTION 2 – TAXATION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>SECTION 3 – AUTHORIZED TRAVEL .....</b>	<b>1</b>
3.1 State Employee Travel .....	1
3.2 Non-State Employee Travel .....	2
3.3 Out-of-State Travel .....	2
3.4 Non-Work Days and Leave Status During Travel .....	2
<b>SECTION 4 – OFFICIAL WORK STATION .....</b>	<b>2</b>
4.1 Designation of Official Work Station .....	2
4.2 Changes in Official Work Station .....	3
<b>SECTION 5 – TRANSPORTATION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
5.1 Air Transportation .....	4
5.2 Rail Transportation .....	4
5.3 Air, Auto or Passenger Ferry Service .....	4
5.4 Ground Transportation .....	4
5.5 Vehicle Travel.....	4
5.6 Insurance and Claims.....	6
<b>SECTION 6 – MEALS and LODGING .....</b>	<b>6</b>
6.1 Meals and Lodging Reimbursement.....	6
6.2 International Travel.....	7
6.3 Groups (Conferences, Conventions and Pre-Arranged Group Meetings) .....	8
<b>SECTION 7– MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES .....</b>	<b>8</b>
7.1 Business Equipment.....	8
7.2 Delivery Services.....	8
7.3 Miscellaneous Business Expenses.....	8
7.4 Registration Fees .....	8
7.5 Room Rental .....	8
<b>SECTION 8 – PAYMENT FOR TRAVEL .....</b>	<b>8</b>
8.1 Travel Advances.....	8
8.2 Payment for Travel .....	9
<b>SECTION 9 – EXCEPTIONS and CHANGES .....</b>	<b>9</b>
9.1 Exceptions to Rates.....	9
9.2 Changes to Rules and Regulations .....	9
9.3 Pilot Programs.....	9

## FOREWORD

The Michigan Civil Service Commission (MCSC) is authorized to adopt travel regulations and rate schedules for reimbursement of expenses incurred by classified state employees in connection with official state business.

The Department of Technology, Management & Budget (DTMB) performs this function for unclassified employees.

Direct questions on these regulations to:

- The travel coordinator in your agency's finance office.
- Vehicle and Travel Services (VTS)  
Department of Technology, Management & Budget  
517-636-6000
- Office of Financial Management (OFM)  
Department of Technology, Management & Budget  
517-241-4010

# STANDARDIZED TRAVEL REGULATIONS

## SECTION 1 – RESPONSIBILITY

All persons authorized to travel at state expense on official business are expected to incur expenses prudently in accordance with these regulations. Each traveler is responsible for seeking reimbursement for only individual expenses unless acting in a custodial capacity. Compliance with these regulations is the responsibility of the agency head and their designees.

Supervisors and other designated representatives authorized to approve travel reimbursement requests must ensure that:

- All travel is in the state's best economic interest and
- All travel expenses have been incurred in compliance with these regulations

## SECTION 2 – TAXATION

Determining which travel expense reimbursements are taxable is outside the scope of the Standardized Travel Regulations. These regulations do not increase, lessen, or eliminate any tax liability imposed by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Employee reimbursements are subject to tax reporting and withholding based on applicable tax regulations. For guidance on the appropriate tax treatment of expense reimbursements, refer to the Financial Management Guide, Part IV, Chapter 6, Employee Expense Reimbursements.

## SECTION 3 – AUTHORIZED TRAVEL

All travel must be authorized and approved. Agencies are responsible for defining the authorization and approval process for all travel.

### 3.1 *State Employee Travel*

#### ***Classified State Civil Service***

These regulations govern all employees in the classified state civil service, regardless of funding source. These regulations do not affect conditions of employment of employees under collective bargaining agreements and do not in all instances apply to these employees.

#### ***Unclassified Service***

All unclassified employees are subject to these regulations, regardless of funding source, with these exceptions:

- A. Elected officials of the executive branch and their appointees who are not members of the classified state civil service are exempt from these regulations for monetary limits only and are allowed actual and necessary expenses as certified by the traveler and approved by their authorized agent. All other requirements of the regulations apply.

- B. Elected officials and employees of the legislative and judicial branches are exempt from these regulations.

### **3.2 Non-State Employee Travel**

Persons who are not state employees may be authorized to travel at state expense with prior authorization by an agency.

### **3.3 Out-of-State Travel**

Out-of-state and international travel must be authorized and approved under the agency's applicable travel authorization process.

### **3.4 Non-Work Days and Leave Status During Travel**

- A. An employee may be required to return to their official work station, remote work location or home for non-work days or paid holidays at the agency's discretion. An employee required to return is reimbursed actual travel costs up to the applicable maximum published state rates. Travel expense is not allowed while in annual leave status.
- B. During travel, an employee may voluntarily return to their official work station, remote work location or home for non-work days. Expense reimbursement for a voluntary return cannot exceed allowable meal and lodging costs that would have been incurred if the employee had remained at the travel assignment.
- C. An employee traveling on official business remains in authorized travel on non-work days at the agency's discretion unless:
  - 1. The employee returns to their official work station, remote work location or home,
  - 2. The employee travels to a non-work location, or
  - 3. The non-work day is preceded or followed by agency approved leave in compliance with the MCSC compensation plan.
- D. An employee traveling on official business who becomes incapacitated due to illness or injury for which sick leave use is allowed under Civil Service rules and regulations may remain in authorized travel for up to seven calendar days at rates up to the applicable maximum published state rates.

## **SECTION 4 – OFFICIAL WORK STATION**

### **4.1 Designation of Official Work Station**

Agencies are authorized to designate official work stations (OWS) as follows:

- 1. Office Employees. The official work station of an employee assigned to an office or specific location is either the area within a 50-mile radius of the employee's work address as designated by the Human Resources Management Network (HRMN) location code or a specific agency-defined area.

2. Remote Work Employees. The official work station of an employee with an approved Remote Work Agreement is the area as defined by the agency in which the employee would normally work, but for the agreement.
3. Field Employees. The official work station of a field employee is the city or town of the employee's office, the city or town nearest to the area where the majority of the employee's work is performed, or such other area as designated by the agency provided that such designation is in the best interest of the state.

#### **4.2 Changes in Official Work Station**

- A. An employee whose official work station changes for the state's convenience and benefit may be eligible for reimbursement of relocation and household moving expenses. Reimbursements are subject to income tax withholding under IRS Regulations. To qualify for relocation or household moving expenses, an employee must document their intent to change residence and move their residence within one year as a direct result of the relocation.
  1. The employee has one year after the official work station changes to submit their intent and relocate their residence. An employee documenting intent to relocate their residence may be reimbursed for expenses for up to 60 calendar days, including weekends and holidays, until the employee changes residence.
  2. With the agency's prior approval, an employee may be reimbursed for up to 3 round trips with one additional family member, for up to 9 cumulative calendar days, to a new official work station to secure housing.
  3. In cases of hardship in occupying a new residence, an agency may grant an extension, but the total reimbursement period cannot exceed 180 calendar days.
  4. Household moving expenses may be paid if the distance from the employee's present residence to the new official work station is 50 miles farther than to the old official work station. Reimbursement of household moving expenses is outlined in Administrative Guide Procedure 0430.01, *Payment of Household Moving Expenses*.
- B. An employee in any of the following situations is not eligible for reimbursement of relocation and household moving expenses:
  1. An employee displaced by a reduction in force who exercises employment preference.
  2. An employee whose official work station changes for the employee's convenience and benefit.
  3. An employee who does not document intent to relocate their residence within one year from the change in official work station.
  4. An employee who does not change their residence.

## **SECTION 5 – TRANSPORTATION**

All travel must be planned to use the most practical cost-effective means. Travelers incurring expenses based on personal preference are responsible for paying any additional costs.

### **5.1 Air Transportation**

- A. Commercial Airlines: Travelers must book all commercial air travel through the state's contracted travel agency. Air travel must be at the lowest available airfare indicated by the travel agent considering total cost and time. Round-trip tickets shall be secured if practical and economical.
- B. Baggage Fees: Reimbursement of the baggage fee for one piece of personal luggage is allowed; reimbursing overweight or additional bag fees is not. Reimbursing baggage fees for business-related materials is allowed with a receipt and detailed explanation.
- C. State-Owned or Chartered Aircraft: Using state-owned or chartered aircraft is permitted if in the state's best interest.
- D. Privately Owned Aircraft: Reimbursement for using privately owned aircraft is prohibited.

### **5.2 Rail Transportation**

Travelers can book commercial rail travel through the state's contracted travel agency. Travelers must book the lowest available fare.

### **5.3 Air, Auto or Passenger Ferry Service**

Reimbursement for the cost of travel by ferry is allowed if in the state's best interest.

### **5.4 Ground Transportation**

The cost of transportation from the traveler's home, remote work location or official work station, whichever is closer, to and from a station or terminal is reimbursable. Travelers must use the most cost-effective option considering total costs including employee time, mileage, parking, and tolls. Receipts are required when obtainable for all cash fares claimed as reimbursable items such as taxis, shuttles, ferries, buses, and other public transportation.

- A. Hotel Shuttle: Travelers should contact the hotel before travel to determine if this service is offered and make necessary arrangements.
- B. Taxi or Airport Shuttle: If a hotel shuttle is not an option, the traveler should consider using a taxi or airport-operated shuttle service in the Ground Transportation area at the airport.
- C. Rental Vehicle: Reimbursement for using a rental vehicle may be authorized by the agency. Reservations should be made through the state's contracted travel agency.

### **5.5 Vehicle Travel**

- A. State-Provided Vehicles: Vehicle and Travel Services issues policies on requisition and use of its state-provided vehicles. Agency-owned vehicles are covered by the respective agency's rules.
- B. Privately-Owned Vehicles: Using privately-owned vehicles for official travel must be authorized and approved by the traveler's agency.
  - 1. Mileage Reimbursement for Private-Owned Vehicle Use:

- a. Mileage reimbursement is never allowed for travel between employees' homes, remote work locations, and official work stations.
  - b. Reimbursement for using a privately-owned vehicle for official state business is based on actual miles traveled. An employee cannot receive a combination of standard and premium mileage reimbursement during an assignment or trip. Mileage must be reported from point to point and is allowed based on an agency-specified mapping tool or method. Reimbursement for travel between locations within the official work station is allowed.
  - c. Reimbursement for vicinity mileage incidental to conducting official business is allowed. Documentation must provide sufficient detail to justify mileage claimed.
  - d. An employee may start or end travel at their home, remote work location or the official work station at the agency's discretion. When travel starts or ends at the employee's home or remote work location, mileage reimbursement is based on round-trip mileage to the field assignment but cannot exceed the reimbursement available if the travel had started and ended at the official work station.
- C. Miscellaneous Vehicle Expenses: The following table identifies eligibility for reimbursement of miscellaneous expenses associated with using a vehicle for business travel.

<b>Expense</b>	<b>State-Provided Vehicle</b>	<b>Privately-Owned Vehicle</b>	<b>Rental Vehicles</b>
<b>Parking charges,* metered parking,</b>	Yes. Receipts must be submitted when obtainable.	Yes. Receipts must be submitted when obtainable.	Yes. Receipts must be submitted when obtainable.
<b>Daily State Park Permits</b>	Yes. Receipts must be submitted when obtainable.	Yes. Receipts must be submitted when obtainable.	Yes. Receipts must be submitted when obtainable.
<b>Out of State Bridge and road tolls**</b>	Yes. Receipts must be submitted when obtainable.	Yes. Receipts must be submitted when obtainable.	Yes. Receipts must be submitted when obtainable.
<b>Fuel, repairs, antifreeze, towing, etc.</b>	Yes, through the state-designated fuel card, VTS, Maintenance Assistance Program, or agency-defined process.	Included in the mileage reimbursement rate.	Fuel expenses are reimbursable with a receipt.
<b>Parking tickets, moving violations, late fees, and other fines.</b>	No	No	No

\*No reimbursement for parking costs normally incurred by an employee when not traveling.

\*\*No receipt is required for Mackinac Bridge tolls.

## **5.6 Insurance and Claims**

When a state-provided vehicle is damaged in an accident or collision, the driver must contact the Maintenance Assistance Program provided by VTS to report the incident.

When a driver incurs damages to a privately owned vehicle used for official state business, a claim may be submitted to the State Administrative Board for consideration; the state may reimburse the lesser of the private auto insurance deductible or actual damages up to \$999.99. Agencies must reimburse the employee according to the State Administrative Board's determination of the claim.

## **SECTION 6 – MEALS and LODGING**

The MCSC adopts reimbursement rates for meals and lodging based on the joint recommendation of the State Personnel Director and the DTMB. The applicable published state rate schedule represents the maximum approved reimbursement rates for authorized travel. Personal expenses, including alcoholic beverages, are not reimbursable.

An employee is not eligible for reimbursement of meal or lodging costs that are:

- Purchased within the official work station.
- Purchased within a 50-mile radius or other agency defined area of the employee's remote work location.
- Purchased within the employee's official city of residence.
- Furnished without charge.
- Purchased for guests, unless incurred when acting in a custodial capacity, which must be fully explained for reimbursement.

### **6.1 Meals and Lodging Reimbursement**

An employee is eligible for reimbursement of actual meal and lodging costs up to the applicable maximum published state rates in effect.

The per diem allowance may be authorized by an agency when an employee is on an extended assignment or in conjunction with relocation as defined in Section 4.2. The per diem allowance will be held to include all charges for meals, lodging and incidental expenses. It may be established when it is to the mutual benefit of the employee and state.

All receipts supporting travel expenses must have the following elements clearly printed to be acceptable:

- Date expense incurred
- Amounts
- Vendor name and city
- Itemized purchases
- General description of the items

#### **A. Meals**

1. Reimbursement for the actual cost of meals cannot exceed the applicable maximum published state rate, including tax and gratuities, except for:

- a. Conference attendance when supported by program literature and a receipt.
  - b. Other pre-arranged meals occurring as part of a group function identified in official program literature with a receipt.
2. When the duration of travel includes a partial day, the following schedule determines eligibility for meal reimbursements

Reimbursable Meal	Travel begins before	And travel extends past
Breakfast	6:00 a.m.	8:30 a.m.
Lunch	11:30 a.m.	2:00 p.m.
Dinner	5:30 p.m.	8:00 p.m.

Overnight travel examples with partial days:

Departure	Return	Eligible Meals
June 1, 9:00 a.m.	June 4, 8:00 p.m.	June 1 – Lunch & Dinner June 2 – Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner June 3 – Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner June 4 – Breakfast & Lunch
June 1, 3:00 p.m.	June 2, 10:30 a.m.	June 1 – Dinner June 2 – Breakfast
June 1, 11:30 a.m.	June 2, 2:30 p.m.	June 1 – Dinner June 2 – Breakfast & Lunch

3. If an employee is eligible for reimbursement of more than one meal in a day, the amount expended for particular meals in the day is left to the employee's discretion. Reimbursement is limited to the combined total of the applicable published meal rates of the eligible meals.

**B. Lodging**

1. Employees choosing lodging based on personal preference are responsible for paying any additional costs incurred.
2. Reimbursement for the actual cost of lodging cannot exceed the applicable maximum published state rate plus taxes, fees, and surcharges except when:
  - a. Booking conference lodging supported by program literature and a receipt.
  - b. Lodging at the published state rate is unavailable and is booked through the contracted travel agency. Reimbursement requests must be supported by confirmation from the travel agency with a receipt.

**6.2 International Travel**

An employee may be reimbursed for meal and lodging with receipts during travel outside the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico up to the U.S. Department of State Foreign meal and lodging per diem rate schedule based on the US dollar rate in effect when traveling.

### **6.3 Groups (Conferences, Conventions and Pre-Arranged Group Meetings)**

All meetings of state agencies must be held in a facility owned, leased, being purchased, or operated by this state, the federal government, a unit of local government, or a state-supported institution, unless the agency authorizes a different location.

Agencies must obtain prior approval from Vehicle and Travel Services before entering into an agreement with a venue for group meals or lodging above the published state rates, regardless of funding source. Group rates do not include reasonable service fees, room fees, or gratuities.

## **SECTION 7– MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES**

Employees may be reimbursed for expenses incidental to official state business travel, including the following, if approved by the agency:

### **7.1 Business Equipment**

The cost of handling, rental, setup, or shipping of equipment, displays, or other business-related items may be allowed if supported by a receipt and detailed explanation.

### **7.2 Delivery Services**

The cost of delivery services may be allowed if supported by a receipt and detailed explanation.

### **7.3 Miscellaneous Business Expenses**

Charges may be reimbursed for fax, scanning, phone, postage, internet, or other business services, if supported by a receipt or documentation. A detailed explanation may be required for reimbursement.

### **7.4 Registration Fees**

Registration fees for conventions or meetings of associations or organizations are reimbursable with a receipt and copy of the agenda. The documentation must indicate whether a meal was included.

### **7.5 Room Rental**

Rental of special hotel or meeting rooms for business use must be pre-approved by the department in compliance with PA 431 of 1984. The rental expense is reimbursable if supported by a receipt.

## **SECTION 8 – PAYMENT FOR TRAVEL**

### **8.1 Travel Advances**

State agencies may provide travel advances to employees traveling on state business, subject to each agency's administrative decision.

## **8.2 Payment for Travel**

- A. Air and rail reservations booked through the state's contracted travel agency are direct billed to the traveler's agency.
- B. The traveler must pay all other travel expenses and seek reimbursement through the state's travel and expense reimbursement system, unless the agency authorizes other means of payment.

## **SECTION 9 – EXCEPTIONS and CHANGES**

### **9.1 Exceptions to Rates**

The DTMB and MCSC may approve exceptions to the travel reimbursement rates submitted by agencies if in the state's best economic interest. All exceptions must be requested through Vehicle and Travel Services, DTMB. Exceptions generally reviewed for approval include the following:

1. Hotel charges above the applicable maximum published rates that were not made through the contracted travel agency or part of a conference.
2. Group meeting meal or lodging rates that will be direct billed to the state above the applicable maximum published rates.
3. Any extraordinary issue that might need an exception, such as special accommodations based on security, health, or disability.

### **9.2 Changes to Rules and Regulations**

Requests for changes in the rules or regulations on classified and unclassified employees must be submitted to the Director of Vehicle and Travel Services, DTMB, for evaluation.

### **9.3 Pilot Programs**

The director of the Department of Technology, Management and Budget and the state personnel director may jointly authorize pilot programs in writing to allow reimbursements under conditions different from those provided in these standardized travel regulations and the normal procedures and policies of DTMB Vehicle and Travel Services when in the best economic interest of the state.