



# HAYWARD AREA RECREATION & PARK DISTRICT

Proposed for Adoption on September 25, 2017

Supersedes Directive 477.3

January 24, 2000

## DISTRICT TRAVEL AND EXPENSE POLICY

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish parameters relative to expenses incurred by Members of the Board of Directors and Staff, for business related travel, such as authorization for such travel, reimbursable expenses, and reporting and reimbursing after travel.

### 1. General

- a. It is in the best interest of the District for employees to remain informed and trained in activities, developments, and professional trends affecting their ability to perform well and to provide high-quality customer service to external and internal customers. As such, attendance at training sessions, conferences, and meetings is of value to the District and its residents.
- b. Travelers are responsible for exercising good judgement when requesting, arranging, and making a trip. Good judgement includes being fiscally responsible when spending District funds on travel and related activities. Travel should be thoroughly planned, well in advance. Personal business should not be mixed with official business if it cost the District in dollars or lost time, or if it will harm the District's interest in any way.

Airlines, hotels, and rental car companies often make special rates available to government agencies. These rates are presumed to be the most economical and reasonable rates for the purposes of this Policy and should be obtained whenever feasible.

Travelers shall not be influenced in their travel plans or seek to benefit personally from loyalty rewards offered by hotels and airlines such as frequent flyers miles.

- c. The IRS imposes rules for employee travel and expenses so that such expenses do not become a taxable benefit/compensation to the employee. The District shall follow these rules where applicable. A basic rule is, the expense must be ordinary and necessary for the conduct of the District's business.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to Members of the Board of Directors and Staff.

### 3. Authorization for Travel and Conference Attendance

Prior to registering for a conference or the performance of travel outside a 50-mile radius, appropriate approval will be obtained. For Board Members, travel and conference attendance requires approval by a majority of the Board at a Regular Board Meeting. For employees, Department Heads will authorize travel and or conference attendance. However, overnight travel also requires prior General Manager approval. The authorization and the conference flyer/agenda should be attached to the expense receipts.

Out of state travel for employees requires prior Board approval.

#### 4. **Travel**

- a. Travel by air is authorized except that travel by such shall be economy class. Use of a District vehicle must have prior approval of the General Manager.
- b. If a person wishes to travel by private vehicle they may do so; the driver must have insurance and a valid California driver's license. Reimbursement will be based on the IRS mileage rate and will not exceed rate of commercial transportation otherwise available. A google map or similar should be attached showing the distance, to the reimbursement claim. Mileage shall be the lesser of distance from the employee's residence or from regular place of work.
- c. In case of an accident, it must be reported to the supervisor/District as soon as reasonably possible.
- d. Travel less than 50 miles is considered local and does not qualify for hotel or meal reimbursement.

#### 5. **Expense Allowable**

- a. Costs of lodging - the costs shall not exceed the rate established by the conference or event. "Lodging" includes actual room rental and taxes/fees but not any room service or other personal charges on the bill. Hotel bills must be secured and attached to Travel and Expense Reimbursement Request.
- b. Meals – the District will reimburse an employee for meals when travelling in conjunction with District's business that involves overnight stay or travelling more than 50 miles away from work. Alcohol and entertainment expenses are not reimbursable. Cost of meals, including tax, tips, and incidentals, must not exceed the following limits and must be supported by receipts to be reimbursable:
  - Breakfast                 \$13
  - Lunch                        \$21
  - Dinner                       \$35

It is sometimes necessary to conduct District business with non-employees, such as staff and officials from other public agencies, consultants, oral board participants, etc. where expenses will be incurred for food, beverage, taxes, tips, etc. Actual amounts will be reimbursed with approval from the General Manager. Such costs should fall within meal limits as described above. The names of the individuals attending the function and business purpose must be documented and submitted with the original receipts.

- c. Other expenses such as car rental, bridge tolls, parking, telephone and fax for official business, and registration fees, will be allowed. Such expenses must be reasonable considering the circumstances. Receipts shall be secured whenever possible and attached to the reimbursement request. Personal expenses will not be allowed.
- d. Costs of meals, lodging, travel and other expenses paid for by others besides the District may be subject to the reporting and gift limitations of the Fair Political Practices Act. Any payment for such costs that total \$50 or more, may need to be reported on the employee's annual Statement of Economic Interests. An employee (who must file a Statement of Economic Interest) cannot receive payment for such costs of more than \$470 (for 2017-18) from any one source of payment in a calendar year. The gift limit adjusts every other year.

**6. Method of Reimbursement**

Submit Travel and Expense Reimbursement Request in detail as soon as possible but no later than 15 days of completion of the travel. Receipts for tolls and parking, and other incidental expenses, shall be attached and submitted to the Accounting after approval by the employee's supervisor. Where receipts are unobtainable, an explanation shall be added. Travel expenses must show destination and purpose of the trip.

**7. Use of District Credit Cards**

Use of District credit cards (CalCard) is permitted only after authorization for travel has been obtained. All invoices and receipt must be submitted with the monthly credit card statement, in compliance with the Districts procedures for the use of credit cards.

**8. Cash Advances**

Where funds are required in advance a "Request for Cash Advance" shall be submitted through the Department Head, to Accounting at least seven (7) days but not more than thirty (30) days in advance of date funds are required. Cash advances do not constitute approval of expenses. A Travel and Expense Reimbursement Request shall be submitted.

**9. AB 1234- Specific Requirements for Board Members**

The District shall comply with the requirements of AB 1234, enacted into law in 2005. This law addresses compensation and ethics for members of local government legislative bodies.

The law requires that if a local agency provides any type of compensation, salary, or stipend to, or reimburses the expenses of, a member of the legislative body, all local agency officials receive training in ethics, as specified.

The law also requires a local agency that provides reimbursement for expenses to members of its legislative body to adopt a written policy on the duties for which legislative body members may receive compensation, other than meetings of the legislative body or an advisory body or attendance at a conference or organized educational activity. The law requires such a governing body to adopt a written policy concerning what "Occurrences" qualify a member to receive reimbursement of expenses for travel, meals, and lodging and would impose related requirements, including the filing of expense reports, which would be public records.

Types of "Occurrences" that Qualify for Reimbursement Under this Policy- Members of the Board may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official duties as provided in the Government Code section 53232.2 et seq., including:

- a. Regular and special Board Meetings, Closed Sessions of the Board, Board Field Trips, Board Committee meetings (including, but not limited to, Board standing, ad hoc, joint agency and liaison committees, collectively "Board Meetings"). Expenses are Covered by Board of Directors' Benefits.
- b. Participating, with Board approval, in regional, state, and national organizations whose activities affect the District's interests. All actual and necessary expenses will be reimbursed.
- c. Attending conferences, organized educational activities, professional or vocational meetings of concern to the District, with Board approval. All actual and necessary expenses will be reimbursed.

- d. Attending meetings with interested members of the public, community groups and District staff or officials of surrounding communities or agencies regarding matters of mutual concern. No expenses will be reimbursed.
- e. Attending District events including, but not limited to, park openings, dedications, and special events. No expenses will be reimbursed.

#### **10. False Expense Reports**

Government Code Section 53232.4 sets forth the sanctions for submitting a false expense report which could include (i) a loss of reimbursement privileges, (ii) restitution, (iii) civil penalties, and (iv) prosecution for misuse of public resources.