

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
OF NORTHWEST GEORGIA
Travel Policy**

Purpose: To align the Travel Policy of the Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Northwest Georgia, Inc. with that of the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission. Since such expenses involve the use of public funds and, consequently, the public trust, business expenses must always meet tests of legality, accountability, prudence and reasonableness.

It shall be the policy of the (WDB) to provide adequate and appropriate education and training for its Board Members/Standing Committee Members and to insure that reasonable, related expenses associated with such activities are adequately reimbursed. Further, it shall be the policy of the WDB to provide for reimbursement of authorized and approved expenses of Board Members/Standing Committee Members when they conduct official business on behalf of the WDB. The WDB is committed to cost-efficient and environmentally friendly means of operation. Board Members/Standing Committee Members should use sound judgment while traveling on official business.

The following standards shall govern the expenditure of public funds while engaging in travel on official business and reimbursable expenses shall include the following major categories:

Transportation: Includes mileage expenses incurred while traveling to and from assignments while on official business for the WDB. Board Members/Standing Committee Members shall be reimbursed at the current ground mileage reimbursement rate as duly established by the most current, amended, regulations promulgated by the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Consequently, the rate of reimbursement typically will increase or decrease, depending upon IRS actions.

Whenever travel is authorized, a Board Member/Standing Committee Member may choose to travel by air, rail, bus, rental car or other conveyance, provided that the total reimbursement of transportation expenses shall not exceed the amount he/she would receive if reimbursed at the IRS ground mileage rate for use of his/her personal vehicle. *The most cost effective mode of travel shall be utilized.* Total transportation costs shall include taxi fares, shuttles, airport parking, rental vehicle and related expenses (such as gasoline), etc.

For purposes of calculating total ground mileage to and from the destination, the WDB shall use Map Quest software as a means of verification. Mileage reimbursement shall be calculated to and from the Board Member's/Standing Committee Member's residence or employment. For purposes of travel reimbursement, whenever a round-trip exceeds 1,000 miles and, in the event that air travel is less costly than the ground reimbursement rate, the WDB shall limit the Board Member's/Standing Committee Member's reimbursement to the cost of air fare and related transportation expenses.

The Executive Director shall approve any travel reimbursement request exceeding \$500. **Lodging:** It is recognized that certain conferences, educational facilities, and/or other business activities may require/compel lodging at a specific lodging site or site(s). In those cases the WDB shall pay for the lodging in advance or reimburse the Board Member/Standing Committee Member for the total cost of such lodging.

Board Members/Standing Committee Members are required to obtain appropriate tax-exempt forms and to use those forms at any and/or all lodging facilities that recognize Georgia exemptions from such taxes.

In the case of other approved business activities that require overnight travel, the Board Member/Standing Committee Member is expected to utilize reasonableness in securing adequate lodging and to utilize lodging that is reasonably priced.

Meals: (Per Diem –No Receipt Required)

Whenever a Board Member/Standing Committee Member is on business for a period of 24 hours or more, then the Board Member/Standing Committee Member shall be reimbursed for meals at the per diem rate established by the IRS. *Any meals provided by the workshop/conference or another party, shall not be eligible for reimbursement.* In the event a particular jurisdiction is not specifically listed on the IRS per diem reimbursement chart, the WDB shall use the closest geographic location that is representative of the jurisdiction involved.

Meal eligibility for travel outside the NWGRC region for a day trip

A Board Member/Standing Committee Member is eligible for 75% of the IRS meal per diem rate as assigned to breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner for the city of travel (outside the Northwest Georgia region) and only for the specific meal(s) relative to the duration of the day trip's purpose (meeting, visit, etc.). No meal receipt is required; however, a meeting notice (email, letter, agenda, etc.) is required and must be attached to the mileage reimbursement form. If overnight stay is necessary to attend a day trip meeting, Board Members/Standing Committee Members will be eligible for 75% of the incidental expense. (Please note: The term "day trip" may constitute a 24 hour period which may crossover two (2) business days.)

Gratuities for baggage handling, *room cleaning, etc. are included with Per Diem under "incidentals."*

Receipts Required: Original receipts shall be required for all expenditures, *except meals and mileage reimbursement*, (example: parking or other eligible misc.) incurred for which reimbursement is desired. Receipts shall include the name of the facility/service provider/vendor, the location of the vendor, the date the receipt is issued, and a clear identification of the amount expended. Failure to provide the receipt in the form required could void any claim for reimbursement. All such receipts shall be attached to the appropriate Mileage and Expense Reimbursement Report. These expenses shall be reviewed and approved, modified or rejected, by the Director of Finance prior to payment of the reimbursement. The Executive

Director shall approve any travel reimbursement request exceeding \$500.

Alcohol: Under no circumstances shall reimbursement be made for alcoholic beverages of any kind.

Entertainment and Recreation: Under no circumstances shall reimbursement be made for entertainment or recreation expenses. Examples include, but are not limited to, movies and theaters, golf, tennis, health club membership fees, etc

Expenses for Family and Friends: Under no circumstances shall reimbursement be made for any additional expenses incurred for family and/or friends. Provided, however, that whenever the cost of lodging is not affected by the number of individuals occupying a room, family or friends may utilize the lodging facility provided to the Board Member/Standing Committee Member.

NOTE: EVERY ATTEMPT IS MADE TO ADDRESS MOST WDB TRAVEL CIRCUMSTANCES. IF A SPECIFIC SITUATION ARISES WHICH IS NOT CLEARLY DEFINED IN THIS POLICY, THEN MANAGEMENT SHALL DEFER TO FEDERAL AND/OR STATE TRAVEL REGULATIONS FOR CLARIFICATION.