

## **CITY OF BROKEN ARROW CITY COUNCIL TRAVEL EXPENSE POLICY**

**(a) Policy Statement.** The Broken Arrow Code of Ordinances provides that the "members of the Council" shall serve without pay or compensation. However, council members are entitled to reimbursement for expenses in the performance of their specific duties. Organizations at the state, federal, and local levels provide beneficial meetings, training and educational seminars for elected officials throughout the year. These meetings and seminars are invaluable to elected officials and assist in the fulfillment of their responsibilities to the citizens and are important in fostering legislation favorable to the city. It is the policy of the City Council to encourage attendance at these meetings and seminars in order to more effectively perform their official duties.

**(b) Purpose.** The purpose of the City Council Travel Expense Policy is to provide for reimbursement of certain expenses, requiring additional City Council approval for other expenses, and to provide for the administration of city council member reimbursements for approved expenses incurred while performing their duties.

**(c) Meetings, seminars, and other travel.**

**(1) Events approved for City Council Members travel.** When funds have been budgeted, reimbursement for travel expenses of all City Council members for attendance at the following:

- (A) Oklahoma Municipal League meeting(s);
- (B) Two national meetings each fiscal year among the following:
  - (i) National League of Cities;
  - (ii) Annual Congress of Cities and Exposition;
  - (iii) U.S. Conference of Mayors;
  - (iv) Other meetings as designated by a majority vote of the city council.
- (C) Two national meeting each fiscal year related to Chamber of Commerce meetings/events
- (C) Local events held in the State of Oklahoma. In addition to local events sponsored by the above-identified organizations, the City Council members may attend the following events at the City's expense;
  - (i) Monthly Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce luncheons;
  - (ii) Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce Banquets and events;
- (D) All required meetings while serving as an officer or committee member to a national or state organization directly related to municipal government.

(d) **Reimbursable travel expenses.** The following expenses may be reimbursed when a council member travels to a meeting or seminar or for a purpose authorized pursuant to Subsection (c). Expenses for other purposes must be approved for reimbursement by a majority vote of the city council.

(1) **Transportation.**

(A) **Personal vehicles.** A City Council Member may be reimbursed for mileage and parking expenses in the use of a personal vehicle for travel beyond the cities contiguous to the City of Broken Arrow if the round trip does not exceed 250 miles. For longer distance trips, reimbursement is limited to the lower of the vehicle mileage reimbursement or the air fare. The mileage reimbursement is at the rate established for reimbursement of city employees.

(B) **Air travel.** Reimbursement for air travel is limited to coach fare and the most direct route available.

(C) **Airport transportation.** Airport shuttle service should be used whenever feasible in preference to taxicabs.

(D) **Car rentals.** Rental of a car is authorized only at the destination reached by air travel when:

(i) There is a necessity for ground travel other than to and from the airport; and

(ii) Another form of reasonable transportation is not available or the use of other forms of transportation is more costly than rental of a car and the parking expense that may be incurred.

(2) **Meals.** Reimbursement for meals and meal tips is limited to the per diem as established by the IRS.

(3) **Lodging.** Hotel accommodations should be reserved at the hotel hosting the event or when that is not possible another hotel that is similarly priced.

(4) **Tips.** Reimbursement for reasonable meal and baggage tips is authorized.

(5) **Travel time.** Reimbursement for travel expenses will be made only for the duration of the travel necessary to conduct the city business.

(e) **Other reimbursable expenses.** In order to improve the effectiveness of Council Members in the performance of their duties and to assure necessary communications between Council Members, citizens and city staff, the city shall provide:

- (1) Either a mobile telephone or if the City Council Member chooses to use a personal mobile phone a monthly reimbursement in the amount of \$50.00 for use in the performance of the Council Member's duties;
- (2) A charge card for use while conducting city business. It is anticipated that it may be necessary for the City Council Member to buy meals during meetings at which city business is conducted; and
- (3) Upon reasonable request by a City Council Member.
  - (A) equipment or supplies necessary for the performance of the City Council Member's duties; and
  - (B) Government related publications.

**(f) Administration of City Council expenses.** The City Manager is responsible for administering the City Council expense reimbursement process. Upon receiving notice of an event or meeting that is authorized for reimbursement by this policy, the City Manager shall provide information to the City Council Members. City Council Members wishing to attend a meeting or seminar authorized under this policy, shall notify the City Manager who shall ensure necessary arrangements for registration and travel.

**(g) Travel advances.** The City Manager may issue a travel advance upon the request of a City Council Member for expenses related to travel for a meeting or seminar in an amount sufficient to cover the costs for transportation, meals, lodging, tips, and registration. In determining this amount, the City Manager's designee shall use the seminar or meeting information available.

**(h) Travel expense report.** Accounting for travel expenses is the responsibility of each City Council Member. Upon completion of travel, City Council Members shall submit to the city secretary a complete travel expense report on a form provided by the City Manager's designee. All expenses, except for meals covered by per diem, must be supported by documentation. Receipts for all expenses must be attached to the travel expense report. If a travel advance was issued, the City Council Member must submit the travel expense report to the City Manager's designee within ten (10) business days of returning from travel and reimburse the City or be reimbursed the difference between the advance and the actual travel expenses. The City Manager's designee shall forward the travel expense reports to the Director of Finance.