



# **TRAVEL EXPENSE & REIMBURSEMENT POLICY**

## **NATIONAL DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION**

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2020

REVISED AND ADOPTED MAY 2023

### **A. OVERVIEW**

NDAA appreciates the efforts to keep costs within reasonable limits and to follow consistent policy and procedures with respect to the reimbursement of these expenses. It is the Association's policy to reimburse employees for ordinary, necessary, and reasonable expenses when directly related to the transaction of Association business. The Association has established the use of U.S. General Service Administration (GSA) per diem rates as approved rates for lodging, meals and incidental expenses as reimbursement maximum rates. Directly related means the employee is actively engaged in a business meeting or activity necessary to the performance of the employee's job duties.

Employees are expected to exercise prudent business judgment regarding expenses covered by this policy. Reimbursement for expenses that are outside the scope of this policy requires the prior written approval of management.

This policy is designed to:

- Establish the reimbursement procedures for travel.
- Provide a clear understanding of NDAA's travel expense and reimbursement policy.
- Ensure compliance with applicable federal regulations and funder terms.

### **B. REIMBURSEABLE EXPENSES**

The following expenses may be reimbursable under this policy:

- Lodging
- Travel expenses including airfare, reasonable airline luggage fees, train fare, bus, taxi, airport luggage carts
- Meals (and appropriate tips)

- Personal owned vehicle mileage\*
- Tolls
- Conference and convention fees
- Parking, with proper documentation (see below)
- Other reasonable and necessary business expenses not specifically excluded by this policy, and with prior approval

\*Employees who utilize personal cars for business travel will be reimbursed at the per mile rate established annually by GSA.

### **C. NON-REIMBURSEABLE EXPENSES**

The following expenses are not reimbursable under this policy:

- Child care costs
- Airline Club Dues
- Personal grooming services, such as barbers, hairdressers and shoe shines
- Travel Insurance
- Toiletries
- Parking tickets or traffic violations
- Tips in excess of 20%
- In-flight movies or refreshments
- Hotel room movies and other forms of personal entertainment
- Alcohol
- Upgrades (air, hotel, car, etc.)
- First class airfare/Business class airfare/Preferred seating in economy/coach fares
- Priority boarding fees
- Gym and recreational fees, including massages and saunas
- Laundry or valet service
- Loss or theft of cash advance money, airline tickets, personal funds or property.
- Personal automobile repairs
- Personal credit card annual fees

The Executive Director has the authority to approve exceptions to provisions of this policy. Approved exceptions must be justified as an authorized NDAA business expense.

### **D. TRAVELER RESPONSIBILITIES**

NDAA funds should be spent prudently. Business travel expenses will be paid by NDAA only if they are in compliance with this policy and they are reasonable and necessary.

Reimbursement forms related to travel must be submitted for reimbursement within 30 days of returning. Travelers should ensure correct cost allocation of all receipts to ensure compliance with NDAA requirements.

All business travel expenses require dated receipts. If there is no receipt available, a memo itemizing the details of the expense and bank transaction details must be attached.

## **E. AUTHORIZATION**

All expenses must be approved by the Employee's Supervisor in advance of the expense being incurred. The supervisor is responsible for verifying the following:

- Business purpose is valid and directly related to NDAA business.
- Expenses are within the approved budget.
- Expenses are charged to the proper cost centers.

## **F. TRAVEL RELATED COSTS**

### **1. Travel Advances**

NDAA will pay for cash advances to staff when necessary at the rate of 75 percent of the anticipated expenses to the employee requesting a cash advance. Cash advance requests will be considered for expenses such as per diem and lodging. Employees must complete the appropriate form and receive approval of their supervisor. Advance requests, accompanied by written justification, should be submitted at least 20 days in advance of expected departure dates to ensure adequate processing time for payment. Detailed expense reports, including a copy of the cash advance and expenses covered by it, with receipts should be submitted within 30 days of return from travel.

### **2. Air Travel**

Air travel costs for staff must be booked in advance through Concur which is the NDAA designated vendor and has a designated NDAA corporate card on file. Travel fares booked must be economy and up to \$500.00. Fares that exceed the approved \$500.00 limit, must be reviewed and approved on a case by case basis. Those flying on behalf of NDAA may use Concur or book their own travel using the criteria provided by NDAA. Passenger copies of transportation itinerary with ticket costs, dates, and name of passenger are required to be submitted with the expense reports. NDAA will not pay for any air travel benefits (perks) including upgrades, airline club memberships and travel miles programs.

### **3. Driving in lieu of flying**

There are certain cases where driving is more economical than flying. Permission to drive must be requested in advance. Travelers are required to submit a price comparison between mileage reimbursement and the most economical flight for the same itinerary. The comparison must be properly documented (screen shots, email approvals etc. must be included) and attached to the travel reimbursement form. NDAA will reimburse only the most economical cost to get to the NDAA event site.

### **4. Combining Official and Personal Travel**

Should a traveler choose to combine personal and official travel, all costs in excess of those incurred for official travel must be covered by the traveler. Permission to combine personal and official travel must be requested in advance. Travelers are required to submit a price comparison between costs when traveling for official reasons only and the preferred flight. Evidence of requesting the lowest transportation cost to be reimbursed by NDAA and the approval must be provided with the reimbursement request.

## **5. Per Diem Meals/Incidentals**

NDAA will reimburse a traveler for allowable meal and incidental expenses incurred during NDAA related travel. NDAA will reimburse up to the per diem rate published through GSA.gov for each event's location. Per diem reimbursed for travel days is equivalent to 75% of the full per diem rate.

When attending a conference, including NDAA sponsored events and meals such as breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner are provided, the traveler should reduce their per diem reimbursement claim to reflect this. If the hotel room rate includes breakfast, this should also be deducted from the traveler's per diem (except in the case where the traveler's air schedule requires departure from the hotel too early to get breakfast). Continental breakfast is still considered breakfast and should be deducted. Should the traveler have dietary restrictions they are asked to work with the venue to make appropriate accommodations prior to their arrival at the venue.

Incidental expenses include fees and tips for persons providing services, such as food servers, hotel housekeeping and luggage handlers. Incidental expenses do not include ground transportation, telephone calls or laundry.

## **6. Meals Paid for Others**

It is sometimes necessary for staff travelers to pay for meals for others. These expenses are allowable when dealing with matters concerning the Association. The name(s) of the meal attendees and the business purpose of the meal must be documented. The amount paid for the meal including gratuities should not exceed the per diem amount for that meal. Staff should not pay for the meal of a traveler who has received a meal per diem allowance.

**This policy on "Meals Paid for Others" does not apply to travel under federal awards. It is related to NDAA business partnerships only and it requires prior approval from the Executive Director. Employees traveling under federal grants shall not use federal funds to pay for non-staff member meals.**

## **7. Meal receipts**

Original restaurant receipts, when required, must include all of the following information:

- The name and location of the restaurant.
- The number of people served.
- The date and amount of expense.

- An itemized list of what was served. Unauthorized alcohol charges will not be reimbursed. Authorized alcohol charges must be charged to the appropriate expense account.

Gratuities should be shown on the credit card receipt or restaurant receipt. When using the per diem method of reimbursement, gratuities count toward the overall per diem allocation per attendee. NDAA will not reimburse for gratuities that are greater than the accepted standards. (Currently, the domestic standard is 15-20% of the total bill)

## **8. Per Diem Lodging**

NDAA will reimburse up to the per diem rate published through GSA.gov for each event's location. NDAA may reimburse for lodging above the per diem rate as stated in the budget and in accordance with the terms of the donor/funding agency.

When participating in any NDAA event in which a master account has been established for lodging, use of personal credit cards to pay for lodging is not allowed.

After a deposit for a hotel room is submitted or a guarantee has been made, the traveler is responsible for notifying the hotel of cancellation. The traveler will not be reimbursed for the penalty if he/she fails to make a cancellation notification unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the traveler (for example, a canceled flight). Such circumstances must be documented on the expense report. If the deposit is prepaid with a NDAA corporate card, the traveler will be responsible for reimbursing NDAA for that charge unless, as mentioned above, there are extenuating circumstances.

Business travelers will not be reimbursed for free accommodations awarded in connection with hotel frequent guest programs.

## **9. Ground Transportation**

### **a. Rental Cars**

With prior approval, NDAA will reimburse the traveler for the costs of renting (including insurance) a compact or standard-size car and for the automobile-related expenses only if the use of a rental vehicle is the most economical mode of transportation. Upgrades to full-size cars can be approved by the Executive Director if a detailed explanation (for example, number of persons, luggage accommodations, length of commute between airport and destination) accompanies the receipt.

Before renting a car, the traveler should consider shuttle services and taxis, particularly for transportation between airport and hotels. Mileage is not reimbursable for rental cars. In these cases, the direct cost of gasoline may be reimbursed. Car rental agreements for employees renting cars for NDAA business should, for insurance reasons, include "NDAA" with the name of an individual. If a rented vehicle is involved in an accident, the Executive Director should be notified as soon as possible.

## **b. Personal Automobile**

NDAAs will reimburse the lesser of:

1. Two one-way UberX fares (or equivalent ride-sharing company, least expensive solo ride option) based on travelers departing address to the closest departure airport *or*
2. NDAAs will pay a standard rate per mile for official NDAAs travel by personal automobile based on the actual driving distance by the most direct route. The standard mileage allowance, defined by the IRS, is in lieu of all actual automobile expenses such as fuel, towing charges, physical damage to the vehicle, repairs, replacements, tires, depreciation, insurance, etc. A Google Maps or other comparable mileage log must accompany the expense report.

In addition to the standard mileage allowance, necessary and reasonable charges for the following automobile-related expenses are allowed: tolls, ferries, parking, and tunnels. Traffic ticket and parking ticket expenses will not be reimbursed.

At the business location city, NDAAs will reimburse a maximum of two one-way UberX fares (or equivalent ride-sharing company, least expensive solo ride option) from the arrival airport to the NDAAs business location.

## **c. Taxis and other Ground Transportation**

Travelers should select a cost-effective means of ground transportation, whether train, shuttle, taxi, Uber/Lyft or local bus, as needed to travel between business locations. For travelers using trains, non-local buses or other commercial vessels, NDAAs will pay the cost of the lowest first-class accommodations available for the trip up to the value of the commercial airfare cost for the same trip. Detailed itemized receipts must be submitted along with expense reports. While on business travel, taxis to/from meals for non-business purposes will not be reimbursed.

If 3 or more employees are traveling together, NDAAs will pay up to twice the most cost-effective method for a single traveler. Detailed cost for single traveler must be included in reimbursement request.

## **10. Miscellaneous Travel**

### **a. Airport Parking**

For travelers wishing to drive and park at the airport, the cost should not exceed the round-trip fare from home to the airport using a rideshare transportation

option. If parking at the airport, a cost comparison as described above should be provided.

**b. Telephone, Fax, Internet**

Travelers will be reimbursed for telephone, fax and computer connection costs that are reasonable and necessary for conducting NDAA business.

**G. OTHER TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS**

**1. Local Travel**

Business trips to meeting/conferences less than 50 miles one way from your office/residence location do not qualify for reimbursement for overnight stay or meal per diem expenses. Exceptions apply when travel conditions are so severe that returning to your residence would endanger your health and safety.

**2. Non-Business Days**

Weekends, holidays and other necessary layover days may be counted as business days only if they fall between business travel days. If they are at the end of a traveler's business activity and the traveler remains at the business destination for non-business reasons, reimbursement is not allowed for the additional days. The only exception is when travel is at a lower total cost if the traveler stays over a weekend or holiday. Pre-approval from the appropriate funding agency is required in order to get reimbursed.

**3. Travel Expenses of Spouses and Others**

The expenses of a spouse, family or others accompanying the business traveler are not reimbursable.