

The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau dba Visit The Woodlands Travel and Business Development Guidelines and Procedures

A TRAVEL APPROVAL, ADVANCE, RECONCILIATION AND REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST form must be reviewed by the Visit The Woodlands Assistant Director and approved by the Visit The Woodlands President and Board Chairman prior to incurring any expenses related to travel and training or business development function. Expenses that require advanced approval include registration, airfare or other transportation, and lodging. Expenses must be included in the Visit The Woodlands adopted annual operating budget.

The form to be submitted to the Visit The Woodlands President for approval is located at the following SharePoint link: TBD

Expenditures Related to Travel and Attendance at Business Development functions

Expenditures incurred by staff while conducting official duties, responsibilities, or assignments while satisfying strategic mission of Visit The Woodlands operations and business activities, including attendance at approved conventions, conferences, hosted site visits, media/PR missions, and meetings, are subject to the following approval and reimbursement guidelines.

All requests for out-of-country, out-of-state, out-of-town, or overnight travel shall be approved by the Visit The Woodlands President or Board Chairman in advance of incurring related expenses. Travel Authorization should be submitted to and reviewed by Visit The Woodlands Assistant Director before submission to Visit The Woodlands President.

Any out-of-area or overnight travel should be included and approved in the annual budget process and included in the annual Travel and Tradeshow Plan presented to and approved by the Visit The Woodlands Board of Directors. Special consideration will be allowed for travel and business development opportunities not included in the annual Travel and Tradeshow Plan if reviewed by Assistant Director and approved by the Visit The Woodlands President or Board Chairman. Additions, substitutions or changes to staff travel should not exceed funds approved in the annual adopted Visit The Woodlands budget.

Necessary and reasonable business expenses incurred by employees are reimbursable via Visit The Woodlands issued procurement card only if prior approval was obtained and upon submission of the *Travel Approval, Advance, Reconciliation and Reimbursement Request* form with proper documentation itemizing expenses attached. Travel and reimbursement receipts should be submitted within 30 days of the expenditure.

Reimbursable travel expenditures include meals, lodging, transportation, registration costs, material fees, normal gratuities, parking, tolls, mileage, and other reasonable incidentals. Non-reimbursable expenditures include loss of funds or personal property, personal expenses such as medicine and newspapers, alcoholic beverages, excessive meal costs, in-room movies, tours, entertainment, personal phone calls, and tipping which exceeds 20%. Generally, lodging rates should not exceed budgeted amount in the annual Travel and Tradeshow Plan; exceptions may include conference sponsored lodging and other travel safety considerations. Meals, tips, and other incidentals will be reimbursed without receipts at a per diem rate of \$50.00 or, if higher, at the current domestic maximum per diem rates for the city of travel as published by the General Services Administration of the United States. Meals which are included in a registration fee are not eligible for reimbursement.

Whenever possible, travel time should occur during the regular workday. Approved travel dates should not include extended stays which increase the cost of travel to Visit The Woodlands. Unless attendance at a business activity by a spouse, family member, or guest of the employee is, under the circumstances, essential to the business purpose and objectives of Visit The Woodlands, the employee is responsible for all travel expenditures fairly allocable to his/her spouse, family member, or guest.

Business Meals and Hosted Events

Employees may not host one another or themselves at Visit The Woodlands expense when not on authorization travel without a clear approved business purpose. The employee who is planning the meal or hosted event should employ sound judgement to ensure that the incurred expense satisfies the mission and strategic plan of Visit The Woodlands. The business purpose with names of hosted guests and company/organization/affiliation should always be stated on the receipt, expense report and where practical, an agenda should be attached.

Reimbursement may be granted for the use of personal vehicles for required business travel at the established IRS mileage rate. Car allowances granted to certain employees may reduce any eligible mileage reimbursement. Carpooling is encouraged to reduce travel costs. Mileage reimbursements should not exceed the cost of the lowest airfare plus reasonable ground transportation.