

Starting with the 2010 round of projects, the travel and per diem will be based on the Iowa DOT policy for "Personal Expense Reimbursement and Travel" Policy No. 120.02.

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## **Definitions:**

**Meal** - A meal is defined as food and/or drink consumed at one sitting. All food items such as appetizers, entrees, desserts, and non-alcoholic drinks consumed at the meal are allowable. Alcohol and non-food items such as gum, breath mints, anti-acids, and aspirins are not allowable.

### **A. Miscellaneous Rules**

Taxes - If a personal expense is reimbursable, the sales, local option or excise tax on the expense is also reimbursable.

Necessary Items - Claims shall not include the purchase of items that are not needed in the performance of official duties.

Personal Funds - All employees shall provide themselves with sufficient funds for all personal expenses. Employees shall not charge personal expenses to the Department of Transportation.

Travel - All travel reimbursements shall be made based on the most economical or advantageous mode and the usually traveled route.

Benefits Derived from Travel - Benefits earned as a consequence of official travel belong to the State of Iowa and shall not be put to personal use by the employee. These benefits include, but are not limited to, free lodging or rental car credits, and cash payments, discount coupons, free tickets, etc. provided by airlines as compensation for delays or as a reward for frequent trips. If it is determined that any such benefit has been used for other than official business, the employee shall reimburse the State for the value of the benefit.

Actual Expenses - Reimbursement shall be made only for actual expenses incurred by the employee, not to exceed the maximum limits. If the employee did not incur an expense, it shall not be claimed for reimbursement (e.g., employee is eligible for overnight lodging but stayed with friends, incurring no lodging expense).

### Receipts.

Receipts are required for reimbursement of all meal expenses.

Official receipts must identify the date, time, city, state, itemization of what was purchased and the cost. If you receive a generic receipt from the supplier, write the date, time, city, state, itemization of what was purchased, and the cost on the receipt. Do not cut, mutilate, or alter receipts in any fashion. Credit card receipts are not acceptable when only the total is recorded on the receipt. Employees must submit receipts with itemized purchases or costs listed.

A receipt from a convenience store instead of a restaurant is allowable for the dates of travel. Items not being reimbursed must be crossed out.

Receipts are required for all travel and other work related allowable costs except for reimbursements of personal car mileage.

## **B. Meals**

Actual expenses up to a maximum of \$28.00 per day may be reimbursed for meals as described below. Maximum reimbursement meal rates are as follows: Breakfast \$5.00; Lunch \$8.00; Dinner \$15.00.

Meal reimbursement shall be allowed only in conjunction with an overnight stay.

Meals shall be reimbursed in accordance with in-state limits

Following are the time frames used to determine whether an employee may be reimbursed for an in-state meal, with the corresponding reimbursement rates while traveling on state business.

<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Daily Reimbursement Limit</b>
Leave before 6 a.m. – with an overnight stay	\$28.00 for breakfast, lunch & dinner
Leave after 6 a.m. & prior to lunch – with an overnight stay	\$23.00 for lunch & dinner
Leave after lunch – with an overnight stay	\$15.00 for dinner

The employee shall be in work status at the time the expense is incurred. The 6 a.m. departure and 7 pm return time listed above is based on a standard work schedule starting at 8 a.m. and ending at 4:30 p.m.

A departure time must be recorded when an employee claims breakfast and has not claimed lodging on the previous day. A return time must be recorded when an employee claims dinner and has not claimed lodging on that day.

If an employee has a work schedule other than the standard work schedule, the departure and return times above must be adjusted accordingly:

- (1) In order to be eligible for breakfast, the departure time must be 2 hours prior to the start of the adjusted work schedule.
- (2) In order to be eligible for dinner, the return time must be 2 ½ hours after the end of the adjusted work schedule.

Only actual incurred meal expenses are reimbursable. If an employee chooses to make their own meal(s) in lieu of eating at a restaurant, a grocery store receipt may be eligible for reimbursement for the dates of travel surrounding the trip dates. If the receipt covers multiple meals or dates, the dates must be written on the receipt. Items not being reimbursed must be crossed out.

When the employee is eligible for reimbursement for more than one daily meal, the per-meal limits may be combined. Example: An employee who is eligible for in-state breakfast and lunch is entitled to actual meal expenses not to exceed \$13.00, the combined limit for the two eligible meals. The limits for each individual meal do not apply.

Tips are allowable at appropriate locations for no more than 15% of the allowable meal expense, before taxes, up to the maximum meal expense allowed for reimbursement. To document tips that are not shown on the receipt, the employee shall write the allowable amount at the bottom of the applicable meal receipt. Fast food restaurants, self-service locations, gas stations, grocery stores and convenience stores are not facilities where tips are allowable.

Examples:

Cost of in-state lunch: \$7.00; Tip given: \$1.05; Reimbursed: \$8.00

Cost of in-state lunch: \$5.00; Tip given: \$0.80; Reimbursed: \$5.75

Charges for room service are reimbursable if the total of meals, including the room service charge, is within the maximum allowable limits.

Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

### C. Lodging

1. In-state reimbursement limits: The maximum rate for in-state lodging is **\$65.00**, plus applicable taxes, per day. Lodging reimbursement shall not exceed this maximum rate. Employees are to seek lodging facilities whose rates are within the maximum rate. Prior approval by the Iowa DOT is required to exceed the maximum rate **except** in the following instances:
  - There is only one lodging facility in the city.
  - The employee is attending an in-state conference that is being held at a lodging facility whose rates exceed the maximum rate, and the employee stays at that facility.
  - The employee is staying in a city where there is a major event that limits available rooms in that city (e.g., state or county fairs, state tournaments, festivals).

In these three instances, to be considered for reimbursement over the prescribed maximum allowed, a reasonable explanation for the additional lodging reimbursement must be attached to the personal expense sheet. The Department of Transportation reserves the right to reduce lodging reimbursement to the established maximum rate.

**All other requests** for lodging reimbursement above the prescribed maximum rate must have the prior approval of the Iowa DOT.

It is up to the employee to request the maximum state rate of **\$65** per night when making a reservation or at check in and to verify that the lodging facility posts this rate to the bill at checkout.

2. Receipts for lodging shall be submitted for reimbursement, shall be reasonable, and shall contain:
  - Dates (check-in date shall be noted)
  - Room number
  - Occupants (number in room)
  - Single rate per night
  - Name and location of hotel or motel
3. A credit card receipt is an acceptable receipt if it contains the information required in the paragraph above. Likewise, an express/rapid checkout receipt is acceptable if it contains the required information; the receipt need not show a zero balance, but must show the method of payment used (e.g., credit card, cash).
4. Cash register tapes are not acceptable receipts for lodging because they do not contain the detailed information required.
5. Expenses for lodging shall be reported beginning on the day in which you check into the hotel or motel. The receipt must bear the date.

6. Reimbursement is limited to the single rate. However, employees may choose to share a room. In this situation, the cost should be split between the employees equally.
7. An employee who works at one place for one week or more shall use the lodging facility's weekly or monthly rate, if it is available and less expensive than the daily rate. Enter day-by-day on the personal expense sheet.
8. Any separate charge made by a lodging facility for a telephone, radio, television or safe in the employee's room is reimbursable and is not considered a part of the basic room charge.
9. Employees who make confirmed reservations at a hotel or motel are responsible for canceling the reservations if they are unable to fulfill the commitment. Expenses of a confirmed reservation canceled for employee convenience are to be borne by the employee.
10. Employees are responsible for making their own hotel and motel reservations.
11. A list of Iowa hotels and motels offering state rates is available on the Internet at the following address: <https://das.iowa.gov/procurement/agencies/hotel-motel-and-bb-listing>.

#### **D. Personal Vehicle**

1. The employee must have liability insurance equal to or in excess of the amounts specified in Iowa Code Chapter 321A.
2. Personal Car Mileage Expense Types:  
Personal Car Mileage - The reimbursement rate is **\$0.39** per mile.
3. The mileage reimbursement covers all costs incurred that are related to the operation of the personal car. In addition, necessary parking fees and toll fees incurred while on official business are reimbursable. The expense must be adequately explained on the personal expense sheet as follows:
  - Note that the expense is for a personal car.
  - Identify the city and the type of parking; e.g., meter, ramp, lot, airport.
  - Identify the toll bridge or toll road.

Overtime parking tickets and fines are not reimbursable.

4. Claims for mileage must reflect the date, miles driven, origin and destination, and are audited according to the usually traveled route. Mileage as published by the American Automobile Association is used, when available. Therefore, any variations from the published mileage shall be documented on the personal expense sheet. A receipt is not required for reimbursements of personal car mileage.

#### **E. Miscellaneous Expenses**

A receipt for and a sufficient explanation of all reimbursable miscellaneous expenses claimed on the expense sheet are required, as outlined below.

Purchase of Ice - Purchase of ice for official business (e.g., to keep drinking water cold on construction sites) is reimbursable. A receipt is required.

Safety Shoes - Safety shoes are a reimbursable item for employees required to wear them. A receipt is required.

An expense not otherwise addressed may be reimbursable. An explanation of the expense and a receipt are required.