

ORDINANCE NO. 17-__

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, that Section 22.14 of Ordinance No. 04-315 (Personnel Policies and Procedures manual), as adopted and approved December 16, 2004, is hereby further amended as follows:

22.14 CONFERENCE AND TRAVEL (ORD. 09-292) (ORD. 14-525)(ORD. 15-531)

(A) Purpose

This policy establishes a standard procedure for reimbursing officials and employees of the City of Huntsville for travel expenses incurred while attending conferences, conventions, or training programs, or while undertaking other travel deemed to have a municipal purpose. This policy does not apply to local travel within Madison County.

(B) Number of Participants

The following should be considered in making a determination as to how many or who should travel on behalf of the city:

- (1) Direct operational benefit to the Department and/or the City;
- (2) Employees holding office in the professional organization;
- (3) Cost and proximity of convention site to Huntsville; and,
- (4) The overall participation level that best serves the City's interest.

Multiple representation at a single event should normally be discouraged.

(C) Travel and/or Training Request

(1) **Administrative Approval.** Prior approval for travel and/or training involving City business is required, as follows: for employees, by their Department Head; for Department Heads, by their immediate supervisor; and for the Mayor, by the City Administrator.

(2) **Finance Department Approval.** The following travel and/or training requires advance approval for the Finance Department:

- (a) A travel and/or training event occurring on a single day if prepayment of any expenses by City check is required.

Payment of single-day event expenses by City credit card in advance of the event does not require advance approval.

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- (b) Any travel and/or training event that occurs over more than a single day.

The request shall be on the prescribed form, and should be submitted to the Finance Department, allowing at least five (5) workdays for processing, with accompanying evidence of expense and a copy of the event agenda.

- (3) City Council Approval: Prepayment of any travel and/or training will require advance approval of the City Council if payment by City check is required.

Advance approval by the City Council is not required for the prepayment of non-travel expenses by City check or for the prepayment of any expenses by City credit card.

- (4) Failure to obtain prior approval of a request before expenses are incurred is cause for disallowing reimbursement.

- (5) A single travel request may authorize more than one employee and prepaid items may cover more than one employee. However, a separate expenses report must be submitted for each employee for reimbursement.

The Finance Department will administer the prepayment of travel and/or training expenses subject to the approvals required in this policy, and will prescribe the request forms consistent with this policy.

(D) Expense Report and Reimbursement

- (1) Expense

Within seven (7) workdays after returning from a trip, a travel expense report must be completed, signed by the employee and Department Head, and submitted to the Finance Department. Department Heads' expense reports must be approved by their immediate supervisor, and the City Administrator will approve Mayor's expense reports.

No one is to approve expense reports for their own reimbursement.

Exceptions to this seven (7) day policy will be made if an employee's approved leave is in conjunction with the travel. In this case, the expense report must be submitted within five (5) workdays of the return to work.

Expense report reimbursements are to be submitted for final approval by way of the City Council's approval of disbursements, preferably at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the City Council, but in no event later than thirty (30) days after submission to the Finance Department.

- (2) Reimbursement criteria

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The following criteria are the basis for determining whether a specified travel expense is eligible for reimbursement:

(a) Transportation. The best interest of the City is the consideration when selecting the method of travel; however, the employee is expected to arrange comfortable and convenient transportation commensurate with the length of travel. **If more than one employee attends the same event, transportation expenses are limited to the amount necessary to transport employees in groups, as determined by the Mayor's Office or the Finance Department.** Employees must explain required changes made after approval in the comment section of the expense report.

(i) Air-coach fare by the route best suited for the interests of the City, including but not necessarily limited to cost and time considerations, is allowed for reimbursement. Should employees select a different route for their own benefit, reimbursement is limited to coach fare by the route best suited for the interests of the City. Reimbursement of first class airfare is made only under unusual conditions or when coach accommodations are not available. The City will reimburse the cost of one checked bag only. Excess baggage charges shall not be reimbursed.

(ii) For groups attending the same event, one vehicle per group of four (4) travelers is authorized. If additional vehicles are required for City related reasons, advance approval from the Finance Department or Mayor's office must be obtained.

(iii) City-owned vehicles. Employees may use a department assigned vehicle or another City-owned vehicle, if available. Receipts for gasoline and parking are required.

(iv) Private vehicles. Use of a private vehicle for travel on City business is reimbursed at a rate established by the Mayor, which cannot exceed the IRS mileage rate. In no way should this exceed the cost of round-trip coach airfare or rental vehicle plus fuel costs, as determined by the Mayor's Office or the Finance Department.

If more than one (1) employee shares a personal vehicle on a trip, only one person will receive reimbursement for mileage.

(v) Rental vehicles. If a city-owned vehicle is not available for use, rental vehicles may be procured if less costly to the City than the use of a private vehicle. Practically, this may limit the amount of reimbursement for use of private vehicles on longer trips.

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(vi) Taxi, shuttle, airport limo, etc. For each non-driving trip, no receipts are required for taxi, shuttle, airport limo, etc., up to and including \$25.00. Requests for reimbursement over \$25.00 will require receipts.

(b) Lodging. Reimbursement is authorized for lodging for single occupancy or occupancy shared with another City employee when practical. Lodging is reimbursed on an actual cost basis and detailed receipts are required for reimbursement. The reimbursement amount is generally limited to the federal per diem lodging rate, or as otherwise limited by the Mayor or City Administrator. The goal shall be to limit lodging rates to less than \$125 before taxes (national average).

No reimbursement will be made for lodging when travel is to a City that is less than 100 miles from Huntsville (one-way), without prior approval from the Mayor's Office.

(c) Telephone & fax. Costs are subject to the approval of the Finance Department.

(d) Registration fees. Conference, seminar, or meeting fees are reimbursable, with receipts.

(e) Meals & tips. Reimbursement for all food and related expenses, not including the cost of alcoholic beverages, on trips that require an overnight stay will be reimbursed at actual cost, but in no event will exceed the "City Limit" as defined herein for a particular day. The City Limit, for purpose of this section, is defined as the rate of reimbursement established in the budget ordinance for each fiscal year. Receipts are generally not required, but are requested to assist with compliance regarding alcoholic beverages, covering meals for employees only, etc. The City Limit will be established in the budget ordinance for each fiscal year and will be adjusted as required such that it does not exceed the IRS-permitted amount. The City Limit on a daily basis is reduced by 33% of the City Limit for each meal that is (1) provided at events paid for by the City, (2) included in the hotel accommodations, or (3) reasonably expected to occur outside the employee's time away from home. This amount shall be reduced to 75% for the first and last day of travel.

Reimbursement for one meal, up to \$13.50, with receipt, is allowed for trips over eight (8) hours which do not require an overnight stay.

Notwithstanding subsection D(2)(e) above, where elected or appointed officials attend work related meetings or events and incur expenses for meals during the

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meeting or event, such officials shall be reimbursed at the official's actual costs for the food and related expenses, not including the cost of alcoholic beverages; provided however, such reimbursement shall not exceed more than 75% of the City Limit, as defined in subsection (e) above, per day. A detailed receipt must be provided along with a list of attendees and the work related topics discussed.

ADOPTED this the 28th day of September, 2017.

President of the City Council of
the City of Huntsville, Alabama

APPROVED this the 28th day of September, 2017.

Mayor of the City of
Huntsville, Alabama