Walton County Board of County Commissioners
Travel Policy

Part I – Definitions.

(a) *Board of County Commissioners includes all County Commissioners* and its divisions and departments.
(b) *Approving authority means:*
  (1) As to travel by directors, the County Administrator.
  (2) As to travel by all other employees, the appropriate department/division director, their designee, or elected official.
(c) *Common carrier* means any train, bus, or commercial airline operating scheduled flights and rental vehicles of an established rental firm.
(d) *Conference* includes any conference, convention, seminar, course or similar assemblage of people to accomplish intensive research, study, and discussion or work on governmental issues. Conference does not mean the coming together of county or inter-county personnel.
(e) *Invoice* means a written document submitted to a purchaser showing the quantity, price, terms and other items for goods or services sold or rendered.
(f) *Traveler* means a person in one of the following categories:
  (1) An elected official or a full-time employee of the Board of County Commissioners.
  (2) A person other than an elected official or full-time employee who is authorized by the approving authority to incur travel expenses in the performance of their official duties.
  (3) A person who is called upon by the Board of County Commissioners to contribute time and services as a consultant or advisor.
(g) *Class A travel* is continuous travel of 24 hours or more away from official headquarters.
(h) *Class B travel* is continuous travel of less than 24 hours which involves an overnight absence from official headquarters.
(i) *Class C travel* is travel for short or day trips where the traveler is not away from his or her official headquarters overnight.
(j) *Local Mileage* is travel of less than 24 hours in which the traveler is not away from official headquarters overnight, and which involves the use of a privately owned vehicle or a County vehicle for official business within Walton and surrounding counties and for which no meal reimbursement is claimed.

Part II – Scope.

The provisions of Part II shall apply to and authorize reimbursement for expenses incurred in connection with travel performed to and from destinations outside the County on official business. This part shall be the exclusive authority for reimbursement for such travel expenses.

Part III – Authorization for reimbursement of travel expenses.

Prior to incurring any Class A, Class B, or Class C travel expense for which reimbursement is requested, a Travel Request Form (See attachment B) must be approved and authorized by the appropriate authority. Local mileage, which is included in the annual budget allocation for travel, does not need prior authorization and should be reimbursed in accordance with Part VI(C)(1) of this policy. Authority for approval of Class A, Class B, and Class C travel is designated as follows:

Elected Officials:
Travel of individual County Commissioners and their aides shall be approved in advance, whenever possible, by the Board of County Commissioners, via an agenda item at a regularly scheduled Board meeting. In cases where travel cannot be set on the agenda for approval prior to the trip, it shall be presented for approval on an agenda within two meetings following conclusion of the travel.

Appointed Officials:
Travel of the County Administrator, County Attorney, and CFO shall be approved by the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners or the Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair.

Employees:
Employee travel must be approved by the applicable department head, division director, Deputy County Administrator, or the County Administrator. Travel by employees of the County Attorney's office must be approved by the County Attorney or his/her designee. Travel by employees of the CFO must be approved by the CFO or his/her designee.

Candidates for Employment in an Executive or Professional Position:
Travel for candidates for employment in an executive or professional position must be approved by the County Administrator.

Reimbursement shall be made only for those expenses necessarily incurred by them in the performance of a public purpose authorized by law.

Part IV – Point of origin.

For purposes of reimbursement of travel expenses, all travel shall be deemed to have commenced at the geographical location of a traveler's official headquarters or the geographic location where travel begins, whichever is the lesser distance to the destination.

Part V – Travel time.

For purposes of reimbursement of travel expenses, all travel shall be deemed to have commenced at the time the traveler actually commenced travel or at the latest time the traveler could have reasonably departed in order to arrive at their destination in a sufficient time required to accomplish the purpose of the travel, whichever is later.

Part VI – Transportation expenses.

(a) Reimbursement shall be made only for travel performed over a usually travelled route to the destination. When travel is by indirect route for the traveler's own convenience, reimbursement for expenses shall be based only on such charges as would have been incurred by travel over a usually travelled route.

(b) Reimbursement may be made for travel performed by county vehicle, common carrier, chartered vehicle or privately-owned vehicle, as approved by the approving authority in advance of the travel. The approving authority shall designate the most economical mode of travel, taking into consideration the following factors:
   (1) The nature of the business.
   (2) The time of the traveler, cost of transportation and meals, lodging and incidental expenses required.
   (3) The number of persons traveling and the equipment and material to be transported.
(c) With respect to travel by motor vehicle:
   (1) Travel by private motor vehicle shall be authorized if a county vehicle is not available. The applicable Division Director is the deciding authority on whether or not a county vehicle is available for employee use. Reimbursement shall be authorized at the rate per mile authorized and recognized by the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules and regulations. All mileage shall be computed from the point of origin to the point of destination. Vicinity mileage necessary for the conduct of official business may also be reimbursed, when separately stated. No other reimbursement for expenses related to the operation, maintenance and ownership of a privately owned vehicle shall be allowed when used for public business.
   (2) Only those individuals authorized to travel on public business are allowed to travel in a county vehicle. If the authorized traveler chooses to travel on public business in a private motor vehicle with a non-authorized traveler, when a county vehicle is available, then reimbursement will not be authorized. However, fuel is authorized to be charged on a Walton County BCC P-Card or reimbursed to the traveler.
(d) Transportation by a chartered vehicle when traveling on official business may be authorized if it is determined to be the most economical means of travel available.
(e) All travel by common carrier shall be reimbursed only at the most economical fare available. Reimbursement of airfare above the coach fare rate is specifically limited to trips when coach accommodations are not available. A reimbursement request for common carrier fare shall be accompanied by the traveler's copy of the ticket or actual receipt. Care should be taken to ensure that the lowest cost fare includes the most economical option for necessary baggage. Low cost carriers may have baggage fees that make an upgraded initial purchase the lowest cost option overall.
(f) No traveler shall be reimbursed for transportation expenses, either mileage or actual, when they are transported by another traveler who is entitled to reimbursement for transportation expenses.
(g) The following expenses incidental to transportation of the traveler may be reimbursed:
   (1) Taxi fare. Receipts required.
   (2) Bridge, road and tunnel tolls. Receipts required.
   (3) Storage and parking fees. Receipts required.
   (4) Communication expenses. Receipts required along with a statement that the communication expense was business related. This includes fax or internet charges. Please note: personal telephone calls made to a traveler's family are not a reimbursable communication expense.
   (5) Reasonable tips for transportation of baggage or valet parking.
   (6) Per Walton County Resolution 2022-54, County Commissioners shall be entitled to elect to receive the fixed monthly mileage allowance as provided for and consistent with Florida Statute 112.061(7)(f) or receive reimbursement for miles driven on county business in

accordance Florida Statue 112.061(7)(d). The fixed monthly mileage allowance for a County Commissioner is calculated as 1852 miles per month multiplied by the current IRS rate.

Part VII – Lodging.

(a) Reimbursement is authorized for lodging expense whenever the traveler is reasonably required to be away from the County overnight or, in the case of a traveler who is not employed by the County, away from their residence overnight. Lodging shall be reimbursed at the reasonable, actual and necessary expense, not to exceed the single-room rate. The traveler shall select lodging which is the most economical available consistent with the duties being performed. Upon completion of travel, itemized receipts for hotel expenses must be included as supporting documentation to the Reimbursement of Travel Expenses when reimbursement is being claimed. In the event that a hotel receipt is lost and the hotel cannot provide a duplicate receipt, the traveler shall provide a certification that the receipt was lost. The certification must include detailed hotel charges, the dates and location of travel, the name of the hotel and the city in which the traveler stayed.

(b) If staying in Florida, the traveler must bring a copy of the tax exempt certificate to give to the hotel so that Florida sales tax will not be charged. In the event that hotel does charge sales tax in error, the traveler may either contact the hotel to receive credit for the tax amount or reimburse the County for any sales taxes charged if using a County credit card. If the traveler originally paid the lodging expense, any sales tax will be deducted from the amount reimbursed to the traveler.

Part VIII – Meals.

(a) Reimbursement is authorized for meals for all travelers while in a travel status at the following fixed rates, or at the traveler's option, at the actual amount paid, not to exceed the following fixed meal reimbursement rates, but in any case only when travel begins before and extends beyond the times specified:
Breakfast: $11.00, when travel begins before 6:00 a.m. and extends beyond 8:00 a.m.
Lunch: $19.00, when travel begins before 12:00 p.m. and extends beyond 2:00 p.m.
Dinner: $39.00, when travel begins before 6:00 p.m. and extends beyond 8:00 p.m.

(b) No reimbursement will be authorized for any meal provided as a part of the conference registration. A deduction for meals provided by the conference will be calculated using the amounts specified above. Continental breakfasts, boxed lunches, and appetizers/snacks served at a reception are not considered meals and are not deducted from the total meal allowance. For travel that does not require an overnight stay (Class C travel), meal reimbursements will be made through payroll and are considered taxable income.

Part IX – Advances.

An approving authority may authorize an advance to cover anticipated costs of travel. The amount of advance may include estimated costs of transportation, lodging and event registration. Payment for common carrier fare shall be made directly to the carrier. Payment for lodging shall be made directly to the place furnishing the lodging. Payment for a registration fee shall be made as directed by the sponsor of the conference.

Part X – Request for reimbursement.

The Walton County travel reimbursement form (See attachment A) shall be used by all travelers when requesting reimbursement for travel expenses. No travel expenses shall be reimbursed unless it is requested on the established form and is accompanied by an approved authorization to travel as previously stated in Part III. The Walton County travel reimbursement form will show the entire cost of the trip and will aid the Board of County Commissioners in budgeting for future conferences.

Part XI – Fraudulent claims.

Every claim submitted shall be substantiated by receipts and shall contain a statement that the expenses were actually incurred by the traveler as necessary expenses in the performance of their official duties and shall be accompanied by a written declaration that it is true and correct as to every material matter. Any person who willfully makes any such claim which they do not believe to be true and correct, or who aids or assists in, or procures, or advises the preparation of a false claim shall be personally liable in the amount of the fraudulent payment to the public fund from where the payment was made. Additionally, following an investigation, any individual found to have filed a fraudulent claim for travel reimbursement will be immediately terminated and law enforcement may be contacted to file a criminal report.

Part XII – Cancellation of Travel.

In the event that a traveler must cancel plans to attend an approved trip, the following guidelines will apply:

(a.) It is solely the responsibility of the traveler to cancel any reservations made for the trip and document the reason for the cancellation with the approving authority.

(b.) If the cancellation is not at the discretion of the traveler (weather conditions do not permit travel, travel authorization is rescinded due to office workload requirements, etc.), travel expenses/reservations not refunded to the County will not be due to the County by the traveler. If the cancellation is at the discretion of the traveler, any expenses/reservations not refunded to the County will be due to be repaid to the County by the traveler. The County Administrator will be the deciding authority in determining whether reimbursement of funds is due from the traveler.

ATTACHMENT A – TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT FORM

STATE OF FLORIDA
VOUCHER FOR REIMBURSEMENT
OF TRAVELING EXPENSES

Payee _____ SSN _____
Address _____ Headquarters _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ City of Residence _____
Mark One: Regular Employee___ OPS Employee___ Nonemployee/Independent Contractor___ Special Shift Hours _____

2013	Travel Performed From Point of Origin to Destination	Purpose or Reason (Name of conference)	Purpose Code	Hour of Departure and Hour of Return	Class A and B Meals	Per Diem or Actual Lodging Expenses	Class C Meals	Map Mileage Claimed	Vicinity Mileage Claimed	Incidental Amount	Expenses Type

Benefit to State:	This voucher must be dated stamped at each location received to comply with F.S.215.422.	Column Total	Column Total	Column Total	0 @ 0.565	Miles ¢/mile	Column Total	SUMMARY TOTAL
		$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00		$0.00	$0.00
							Less Credit Card Charges	$0.00

I hereby certify or affirm that the above expenses were actually incurred by me as necessary traveling expenses in the performance of my official duties; attendance at a conference or convention was directly related to official duties of the agency; any meals or lodging included in a conference or convention registration fee have been deducted from this travel claim, and that this claim is true and correct in every material matter and same conforms in every respect with the requirements of Section 112.061, Florida Statutes.

Net Amount DueNet Amount Due **$0.00**

Preparer's Name: _____
Preparer's Phone No.: _____

PAYEE'S SIGNATURE: _____ TITLE: _____ DATE PREPARED: _____

Pursuant to Section 112.061(3)(s), Florida Statutes, I hereby certify or affirm that to the best of my knowledge the above travel was on official business of the State of Florida and was performed for the purpose(s) state above.

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE: _____ TITLE: _____ DATE APPROVED: _____

ATTACHMENT B – TRAVEL REQUEST FORM

WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA
TRAVEL REQUEST FORM

Fiscal Year: _____ Department/Division: _____

Traveler Name & Title: _____ Account Number: _____

Date	Destination	Purpose of Trip	Number of Days on Travel	Estimated Cost
				Total $0.00

REQUIRED APPROVAL SIGNATURES

Traveler: _____ Date: _____

Approval Authority: _____ Date: _____

Revised – Approved By BCC on 5/13/25