

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
BOARD ACTION SUMMARY

DEPT: Auditor-Controller

BOARD AGENDA #: *B-1

AGENDA DATE: March 15, 2016

SUBJECT:

Approval of the Revised Stanislaus County Travel Policy Effective March 15, 2016

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2016-129

On motion of Supervisor Withrow, Seconded by Supervisor O'Brien
and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Chiesa, Withrow, DeMartini, and Chairman Monteith

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

1) Approved as recommended

2) Denied

3) Approved as amended

4) Other:

MOTION:

ATTEST:


ELIZABETH A. KING, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

File No.

**THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
AGENDA ITEM**

DEPT: Auditor-Controller

Urgent

Routine

JK

BOARD AGENDA #: *B-1

AGENDA DATE: March 15, 2016

CEO CONCURRENCE: _____



4/5 Vote Required: Yes No

SUBJECT:

Approval of the Revised Stanislaus County Travel Policy Effective March 15, 2016

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Approve the revised Stanislaus County Travel Policy effective March 15, 2016.

DISCUSSION:

The County Travel Policy provides guidance to County departments, agencies and employees with payment and reimbursement of travel expenses incurred while traveling on County business outside the jurisdictional boundaries of Stanislaus County. Approximately \$1.1 million was spent on travel related expenditures during Fiscal Year 2014–15. The \$1.1 million represents approximately one-fifteenth of one percent of total expenditures listed on the Comprehensive Annual Financial Statements as of June 30, 2015. The intent of the policy is to ensure taxpayer monies are spent appropriately while employees are traveling on County business.

The Board of Supervisors approved the current Travel Policy on September 11, 2012. In order to ensure the policy remains relevant periodic revisions are necessary. The proposed revisions are included with the agenda in a draft format.

A focus group comprised of representatives from the Auditor-Controller, Chief Executive Office, Clerk Recorder/Elections, Community Services Agency, County Counsel, and Library reviewed the policy in its entirety. The draft revised policy was presented to the Department Heads for their review and suggestions for improvement which were incorporated into the draft revised policy.

The intent of the revisions is to enhance internal controls over travel related expenditures and provide efficiencies for those employees traveling on County business outside the jurisdictional boundaries of Stanislaus County.

Following is a summary highlighting the significant proposed revisions and additions:

Lodging/Accommodations:

The requirement to obtain the Hotel/Motel Transient Occupancy Tax Waiver has been removed as the majority of cities and counties located in the United States do not accept the exemption for local government employees. The limited savings obtained through the exemption process does not warrant the time spent meeting this requirement which results in inefficiencies.

Meals:

There are two meal options available in the Travel Policy: meal limits and per diem. The meal limits have been increased for the three meal categories and the per diem rates are now based on the travel destination site per the rates issued under the United States General Services Agency (U.S. GSA). Rates are set by the federal fiscal year, effective October 1st of each year and provide the maximum allowances that federal employees are reimbursed for expenses incurred while on official travel.

Under the provisions of the 2012 Travel Policy, employees would occasionally have to utilize personal funds in order to cover the costs of meals incurred while traveling. The revision to the meal limits and the per diem rates will allow reasonable business expenses to be fully paid by the County. The adjustment to both meal options are detailed below:

Meal Limits:

<u>Meal</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2016</u>
Breakfast	\$12.00	\$15.00
Lunch	\$15.00	\$20.00
Dinner	\$25.00	\$35.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$52.00	\$70.00

The meal limits, one rate for each meal category, are used for all travel destination sites. The rates should be reasonable when considering all possible destination sites traveled to by County employees. Meal limit purchases require itemized receipts. The amount spent for meals when choosing the meal limit option can be less than the limit amount assigned to each meal category.

Per Diem Rates:

<u>Meal</u>	<u>Per Diem for Modesto</u>	<u>Per Diem for Sacramento</u>	<u>Per Diem for Los Angeles</u>	<u>Per Diem for San Francisco</u>
Breakfast	\$11.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$17.00
Lunch	\$12.00	\$16.00	\$16.00	\$18.00
Dinner	\$23.00	\$28.00	\$28.00	\$34.00
Incidentals	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00
	\$51.00	\$64.00	\$64.00	\$74.00

The per diem amounts determined by U.S. GSA are based on destination site. U.S. GSA provides a user friendly tool on their website to locate the appropriate per diem amounts. U.S. GSA provides six different tiers for meal rates and includes a \$5 incidental rate not included in the meal limits. Use of per diem rates does not require obtaining an itemized receipt.

Allowable Tips:

An allowable tip under the Travel Policy has been expanded to not only include tips for meals but also tips for transportation and hotel employees while traveling on County business. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) definitions and limits were incorporated in this expanded section.

POLICY ISSUE:

Periodic revisions of the Travel Policy are required to ensure travel requirements are relevant and County assets are spent appropriately.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The recommended changes to the Travel Policy effective March 15, 2016 will result in immaterial cost increases to departments that will be accommodated within existing department budget authority.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' PRIORITY:

The recommended action is in alignment with the Board's priority for the Efficient Delivery of Public Services.

STAFFING IMPACT:

Existing County staff from the departments that participated in the focus group performed the work to revise the Travel Policy, effective March 15, 2016.

CONTACT PERSON:

Lauren Klein, CPA

Auditor-Controller

(209) 525-6398

ATTACHMENT(S):

- A. Draft Revised Travel Policy
- B. Draft Revised Trip Authorization Form

ATTACHMENT A

Draft Revised Travel Policy



COUNTY OF STANISLAUS

TRAVEL POLICY

***Approved by the Stanislaus County
Board of Supervisors***

on

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1. INTRODUCTION

Policy Statement

Performance of Stanislaus County (County) business may necessitate periodic travel by County officials/employees beyond their offices or locations of normal work activities. The County shall pay for business expenses when reasonable, necessary and directly related to conducting business outside the jurisdictional boundaries of Stanislaus County except for transactions that pertain to Sections 2.5.B Vehicle Travel and 4. In-county Meals. County travelers shall exercise prudent judgment and show proper discretion for accountable and economic use of public funds.

1.1 GENERAL

County department heads are accountable to the Board of Supervisors and the public for the funds and assets entrusted to them. Each County department head is responsible for administering and ensuring compliance with the basic County Travel Policy in accordance with policy mandates and guidelines. Entities that are not governed by the Board of Supervisors may each establish their own travel policy.

1.2 PURPOSE

- A. The County Travel Policy mandates and guidelines establish the basic foundation of rules and requirements that departments must follow. In order to meet certain federal and/or state subvention requirements, some departments may need to develop additional internal policies relating to documentation and provide guidance for record keeping and an approval process. Departments may establish more restrictive guidelines to best meet their own unique needs.
- B. Exceptions to the Travel Policy must be documented in writing with copies furnished to the Chief Executive Office. The Chief Executive Officer, or his/her designee, must approve any exceptions to the Travel Policy.
- C. **All** travel must be for **business-related** purposes. This may include, but is not limited to the following: conventions, conferences, training, seminars, and meetings. Travel to meet the legal obligations of the County, which includes, but is not limited to, the transportation of prisoners, and placement of juveniles is also included in this category. Such travel expenses include meals, incidentals, lodging, and transportation for both employees and clients being transported. Each employee is expected to exercise good judgment in incurring travel expenses.

2. TRAVEL POLICY PROVISIONS

2.1 TRAVEL APPROVAL

The department head or designee(s) ("department head") is responsible for ensuring that the most cost-effective travel alternatives are selected, taking into account such factors as costs involved with travel and employee time. The department designee shall be determined by the department head in writing and include in the written documentation what the designee is authorized to approve.

A. Outside the County

A Travel Authorization Form shall be completed by all County personnel before incurring travel and other related expenses, such as registration and hotel expenses. The department head shall review and approve the Travel Authorization Form regarding employee travel. Such authorization forms must be supported by written documentation including the business purpose of the travel. If applicable, documentation should include a copy of the conference agenda or other documentation containing relevant information, such as, date, location, training information, sponsor, and registration fee. (the format of the Travel Authorization Form is left to department head discretion, but at a minimum, should include the information referenced above).

When a department head signs an employee's travel authorization form, the department head authorizes all of the elements of the travel, including transportation, lodging, and meals and incidentals. These forms are subject to audit by the Internal Audit Division of the Auditor-Controller's Office and must be available for review. Based on the needs or requirements of a position that requires unexpected or emergency or routine (repetitive) travel, the department head may pre-approve such travel with a "blanket" trip authorization covering a specified period of time. All other supporting documentation remains the same (see Appendix for Travel Authorization Form).

B. Outside the Country

Travel, including all travel related expenses, to other countries requires advance written approval from the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Operations Officer/Assistant Executive Officer. The Board of Supervisors must approve travel to other countries for the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Operations Officer/Assistant Executive Officer.

C. Non-salaried Boards or Commissions

Non-salaried members of boards or commissions established by state law or County ordinance may be allowed expenses incurred for meals, incidentals, lodging, mileage or public transportation while attending meetings or on authorized trips. The department head must approve in writing trips and expenses for those boards and commissions for which they have oversight responsibility.

D. Special Committees

Special committees created and appointed by the Board of Supervisors may be reimbursed for actual expenses when permitted by law and specifically authorized in advance by the Board of Supervisors and documented in writing. Grand Jury members are to be reimbursed for mileage according to the current rate used by the County.

E. Non-County Agencies

Agencies governed by outside boards for which the County maintains complete accounting records shall notify the Auditor-Controller, in writing, of the individual(s) authorized to approve the agency's travel expense claims.

Stanislaus County Employees' Retirement Association (StanCERA)

A travel policy adopted by the StanCERA Board shall be the controlling document for all StanCERA travel costs. Travel reimbursement limits set forth in StanCERA's policy shall be authorized for Board members, County employees and staff members assigned to, or working for, the StanCERA, where the Board of Retirement has, at a regularly scheduled meeting, approved the cost(s) that exceed(ed) the County's limits. The Board of Retirement may also approve other business related expenses such as tips for taxi or

airport shuttle drivers, on-line communications (which allow Board members, County employees and staff members to be productive and actively conduct business while away from their work site), or any other expense that the Board of Retirement deems to be an appropriate business expense.

F. Volunteers

Travel of volunteers may be approved by the department head and must comply with all provisions of the Travel Policy.

G. Personal Service Contract Employees

To reimburse travel expenses of personal service contract employees, such term(s) must be set forth in his or her personal service contract. Unless stipulated otherwise, all provisions of the Travel Policy apply when the personal service contract authorizes travel reimbursements.

H. Shared Employees

Contracts involving employees providing services on an interdepartmental basis will be subject to regular employee travel and expense reimbursement guidelines.

2.2 PAYMENT FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES

A. Purchasing Cards

The County Purchasing Cards are the preferred method of payment for travel expenses and are at all times governed by the County Purchasing Card Policy. Please refer to the County Purchasing Card Policy usage. Itemized receipts must be obtained to support purchasing card usage except when the per diem option is chosen for meals or for miscellaneous out of pocket expenses listed in Section 2.8.

B. Payroll Reimbursement

For reimbursement through the payroll system itemized receipts must be submitted. The Travel Authorization Form must be available for review. Any item on the Travel Authorization Form that the employee is claiming for reimbursement through payroll must include copies of the documents that substantiate the expenses. This would include items such as the business purpose of the trip, the agenda for a conference, a copy of a hotel bill, receipts for meals if the daily meal maximum is chosen and a mileage log that includes the destination and miles.

All items charged to a County Purchasing Card must be identified and excluded from the reimbursement claim being made through payroll.

C. Missing Receipts

When a receipt is lost, a Misplaced Receipt Form must be completed by the employee and signed by the department head to certify that the expense was a valid County travel expense. Please refer to the Purchasing Card Policy for specific requirements.

2.3 TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

A. Discounts

Employees are encouraged to take advantage of government discounts, Internet travel discounts or travel agency's special rates available for car rentals, hotels and other incidental travel requirements.

B. Travel Expenses Before / After County Business

The department head shall make a determination to include such factors as employee schedules, distance, weather conditions, meeting participation or emergencies when approving travel expenses for extended travel time before or after a conference, or seminar, etc. Reasons for approval should accompany written documentation. Examples of reasons include setting up before an early morning meeting presentation or attending an early meeting (e.g. 7:00 AM).

C. Employees Traveling Together

Employees who pay for lodging for multiple County employees, traveling together, must list the names of all employees on the receipt.

D. Cancellation of Reservations

Employees who are unable to honor a reservation will be responsible for canceling in compliance with the terms of the hotel, airline, etc. The employee must return any refundable deposits or unused airline tickets to the County. Charges to the County or lost refunds resulting from failure to cancel a reservation shall be charged to the employee unless the employee can show that such failure to cancel the reservation was the result of circumstances beyond the employee's control.

2.4 LODGING / ACCOMMODATIONS

A. Cost

Lodging accommodations should be moderate considering location, and availability. This would typically be comparable to a three-star hotel. However, it is recognized that rates for conference-negotiated hotels may be more or less than the standard hotel rate. Conference/seminar rates will be accepted with proper documentation. The department head is responsible for ensuring that the most cost-effective alternative is selected.

Additional expenses associated with extending travel to save costs (e.g., Saturday night stay for domestic travel), may be reimbursed when the cost of airfare plus the additional expenses would be less than the cost of airfare had the traveler not extended the trip. Such expenses, which include lodging, car rental, and meals, shall not exceed the amount the County would have paid had the traveler not extended the trip.

B. Internet Charges

Internet charges for laptop use when traveling on County business must be for business purposes and approved by the department head.

2.5 TRANSPORTATION

The department head is responsible for ensuring that the most cost-effective and practical method of transportation is selected. Factors that may be considered include salary cost, staff schedules, distance of travel, and department priorities. Substantiation for mileage reimbursement must include the date, business purpose, and destination. Substantiation for mileage reimbursement must be completed within a reasonable time, which is defined as no later than 30 days after incurring the reimbursable expense. Computations may be done to compare the difference between air travel, private vehicle, a department owned-vehicle, and a rental vehicle from the County-contracted vendor.

A. Air Travel

If airfare is less expensive than vehicle travel and the employee prefers to drive, reimbursement shall be made only for the cost of airfare. The department head may approve either means of travel in advance; however, reimbursement will be at the lower rate. Documentation must be provided to substantiate the difference between a reasonably scheduled flight and associated costs, such as parking, baggage costs, ground transportation and mileage reimbursement.

Reimbursement for travel by commercial aircraft shall be limited to the economy class rates. Employees are not authorized to travel in Business Class, First Class or any other class of travel (unless upgraded for free by the airline) without prior authorization by the department head. Such approval shall only be granted upon showing that no other class was available and this airline and flight are the only ones available to the employee for the travel.

Reimbursement for travel by private aircraft or chartered aircraft shall be limited to commercial airfare rates. The Chief Executive Officer may approve exceptions to the foregoing when it is necessary or desirable to meet the business obligations of the County.

B. Vehicle Travel

Departments shall compare the cost difference between a private vehicle, GSA fleet service motor pool vehicle, a department-owned vehicle, and rental vehicle from County-contracted vendor for trips greater than 100 miles one-way. Rate comparison information relating to motor pool rental and personal vehicles may be obtained from GSA-Fleet Services web site (<http://saturn/intranet/Departments/PURCHASING/pdf/vehicle-cost-comparison-calculator.pdf>). The department head may approve any mode of vehicle travel; however, reimbursement will be based on the lowest cost option. While the mode of vehicle travel is at the department discretion, fiscal stewardship of public funds is to be considered in making the decision.

County employees who choose to transport a spouse, companion, or other in a rental vehicle shall be required to rent said vehicle at their own expense and then submit a claim for payroll reimbursement upon their return.

County employees who receive a car allowance are prohibited from checking out a County vehicle or County-contracted rental vehicle for in-county travel. Exceptions would include use of a special vehicle, such as a van or truck, for transporting passengers or materials, and other exceptions considered at department head discretion. Reasons for the exception must be documented.

Procedures for vehicle accidents and reporting forms are available from CEO Risk Management and the GSA Fleet Services intranet site.

1. Vehicle Rental

The County has a contract for rental vehicles. Rental vehicle information is available on the GSA Fleet Services intranet site <http://intranet/departments/GSA/fleet-services>.

Generally, a rental car should be used when:

1. Multiple business meetings that require travel between points make use of public transportation impractical.
2. Two or more County employees are attending the same meeting and one rental car for the group would be more economical.
3. It is less expensive to rent a car overall.
4. Fueling should be done under the current GSA Fleet Services Guidelines. Current guidelines are available on the GSA Fleet intranet site as listed above.

2. GSA Fleet Services Motor Pool or Department-Owned Vehicle

The County maintains an automobile pool for authorized County employee travel. Requests for use of an automobile from the GSA fleet services motor pool by an authorized driver shall be made to GSA fleet services at least one working day in advance of the planned trip. The County policy prohibits personal use of the County vehicle except for travel to and from the trip location and during breaks for meals. Fueling for County motor pool or department-owned vehicles should be done at Card Lock Fuel Program stations. Contact GSA Fleet Service for current card-lock fuel programs. Card-lock fuel program information is available on the GSA Fleet intranet site as listed above.

3. Private Vehicle In and Out of County Mileage Reimbursement

Mileage reimbursement for both in- and out-of-county travel shall be paid according to the current mileage chart maintained by the Auditor-Controller's Office, or odometer readings, or Internet map services mileage calculations such as MapQuest or Google Maps, and attached to the Travel Authorization Form. Employees must comply with applicable state laws regarding insurance coverage.

There is no mileage reimbursement for travel between an employee's (all employees, including elected officials) residence and their normal worksite (commute mileage). If an employee reports to work as usual and then is requested to travel to another site, the cost associated with the travel to the other site is reimbursable.

The County has an established mileage rate, which is available from the Auditor-Controller's office. The mileage rate may be adjusted annually based on the IRS stated rate for that year. Incremental IRS rate increases are not automatic. If the IRS increases the mileage rate during the course of the year, the increase may be taken to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

4. Mileage Reimbursement Substantiation (Non-taxable)

The IRS requires mileage reimbursements for in- and out-of-county travel to be substantiated for the reimbursement to be non-taxable to employees. For the mileage reimbursement to be treated as non-taxable, employees must document the mileage, destination, and business purpose of each trip. This information must be available for in- or out-of-county mileage reimbursement to be made. A mileage log that is available or attached to the Travel Authorization Form for mileage reimbursement is acceptable as long as it includes the information above (see Appendix for the Mileage Log Form). MapQuest or Google Maps may be used in lieu of the mileage chart or odometer readings.

C. Travel Time

All references are to travel time. Travel time pertains to time spent physically traveling (driving, flying, or other transport) to the location. Compensable time does not mean overtime. Departments may flex an employee's schedule to avoid overtime liability.

1. One-Day Trips

Time spent traveling as part of an employee's daily work activity during regular work hours is FLSA (Fair Labor Standards Act) compensable work time. This includes travel from one job site to another, or travel from a designated meeting place to a job site. For example, the employee reports to work as usual at 8:00 a.m., and then drives to a 10:00 a.m. meeting/training in another county.

Time spent traveling outside of regular work hours is FLSA compensable work time if the travel is from home to an alternate worksite outside the County for a one-day special assignment/ training/meeting. For example, the employee leaves home at 6:00 a.m. to travel to Sacramento for a meeting at 8:00 a.m. The employee is compensated for the travel time regardless if he/she is the driver or the passenger. However, the department should adjust the employee's work schedule to avoid any overtime liability.

2. Overnight Travel

For overnight travel, travel by an employee who will be away from home overnight is work time only during those periods that coincide with the employee's regular working hours (e.g., 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.) Such time is counted as hours worked even if it occurs on a non-working day (e.g., Saturday or Sunday between 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.). Travel outside of regular working hours as a passenger in a plane, train, boat, bus, or automobile does not qualify as hours worked. Travel time is only compensable if the employee is the driver. For example, the employee leaves home at 6:00 a.m. to travel on a trip that will last more than one day. If the employee is a passenger (not the driver) in a vehicle where another employee is driving outside of regular work hours, this is not FLSA compensable work time. The driver is paid for the time spent driving because that employee is working.

Overnight travel is FLSA compensable work time if the travel is away from home, keeps the employee away overnight, and work is performed while traveling. For example, the employee leaves home at 6:00 a.m. to travel for an overnight trip and is escorting a patient, client, or inmate on behalf of the County.

D. Long Term Travel Policy (Non-taxable)

The County defines long-term travel as a trip that is 5 days or more. At department head discretion, employees traveling under the long-term travel policy will have two options for meals, 1) the daily meal maximum or 2) the per diem option as stated in Section 2.6 A. Once selected, the option will apply for the duration of the trip.

If employees utilize their purchasing cards, they will comply with the established reimbursement rates for lodging and meals as stated in Section 2.4 for lodging and Section 2.6 A.1. for meals and incidentals. If employees select the per diem option, they will be required to comply with Section 2.4 for lodging and section 2.6 A.2. for meals and incidentals. Employees may chose to select the option of utilizing Advances for Long Term Travel or payroll reimbursement when choosing the per diem option. Employees

selecting the per diem option for their travel are not permitted to charge meals to a County-issued purchasing card.

1. Advances for Long Term Travel

Per diem advances for meals will be made available for long term travel. The advance will be requested on an approved Request for Travel Advance Form (see Appendix) and will be processed in a normal payroll cycle within 30 days of the travel start date. Requests submitted more than 30 days in advance of the travel start date will be returned to the department to resubmit within the 30-day period.

Travel advances are not treated as wages, are not subject to employment taxes and are not retirement contributable as long as they are related to the business of the employer, substantiated by the employee, and any unused excess is returned to the County within 30 days of the trip end date.

Upon completion of the trip employees will be required to certify that they did complete their trip and used the advanced per diem on the Per Diem Travel Certification Form (see Appendix). Departments are responsible to track cash advances and ensure that a certification form is filed with the department 30 days following completion of the travel. Failure to complete the certification form within 30 days of the trip end date will result in the full amount of the advance being repaid to the County through a payroll deduction (advances are received by employees as a single payment and will be repaid to the County as a single deduction).

Department petty cash funds are not to be used for payment of travel advances to employees.

2. Trips Home

Departments are to develop guidelines for employees, who have accepted a long-term assignment or training assignment, regarding the frequency the County will reimburse these employees to return home during the assignment. For example, when an employee attends a four (4) week training that is only available on the East Coast, a department may wish to limit County reimbursed travel to one time during the four (4) week period. A department should consider factors such as length of stay, travel distance, personal needs of employee and departmental needs.

2.6 MEALS

A. Meal Options

1. Daily Meal Maximum

The meal rate option reimbursements will be made for the actual amount spent up to the limit. The limit on meals includes an allowance for a 15% tip; however, the department head is authorized to approve overages up to 20%. Tips for meals should be calculated based on the pre-tax amount of the meal as recommended by the California Board of Equalization. Meals are not reimbursable if they are purchased within County jurisdictional limits (e.g., an employee who is required to attend an all-day meeting at County Center III is not entitled to meal reimbursement).

Meal rates are as follows (including tax and tip):

Breakfast	\$15.00
Lunch	\$20.00
Dinner	\$35.00

A higher tip limit is approved in those instances where the tip is automatically added to the bill by the restaurant for a large group. For seminars and meetings at which luncheons and/or dinners are provided, the employee is not entitled to a meal allowance. A complimentary continental breakfast is not considered a meal and a limit for breakfast is allowable.

Itemized Receipts

An itemized receipt must be retained to document the transaction when using your purchasing card or seeking payroll reimbursement for meals. Itemized receipts must be submitted to the department upon return from the trip. A detailed listing of purchases is required. A charge slip that does not list the item purchased and only contains the total amount of the purchase cannot be substituted for an itemized receipt. A Misplaced Receipt Form must be completed and approved; otherwise the employee will be responsible for payment of the charge (refer to Section 2.2 C).

2. Per Diem

The per diem rate option for meals and incidentals is determined annually by the U.S. GSA, effective the first pay period after October 1st. Please refer to the rate that corresponds to your destination site at the GSA website <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120>.

Under this option, the meal allowances for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and incidentals are combined into one amount. The description for incidental expenses includes fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers and hotel staff. Employees utilizing this option are eligible for payroll reimbursement at a flat rate and are not required to provide receipts for reimbursement.

One Day Trip (Taxable)

A one day trip is defined as a trip that is 24 hours or less. A taxable allowance is authorized for trips that are 12 hours up to and including 24 hours.

Exception: please note that the per diem rate for one day trips between 0-12 hours is not included in the U.S. GSA rates. These rates will not automatically adjust with the U.S. GSA rates. The per diem rate for one day trips between 0-12 hours will be equal to the daily meal limit for lunch or \$20 (see Section 2.6 A.1).

Overnight Trip

An overnight trip is defined as a trip that is over 24 hours, but less than 5 days. Per diem for meals and incidentals is available for non-travel days (24 hour periods). This per diem amount will be adjusted to 75% on the days of travel to and from as determined annually by the U.S. GSA rates.

For seminars and meetings at which meals are provided, the employee is not entitled to a per diem allowance for those meals. The daily per diem amount will be reduced by the meal amount listed in the U.S. GSA tables for those meals that are provided. A complimentary continental breakfast is not considered a meal and the per diem for breakfast is allowable.

B. Partial Day Travel

Employees may qualify for meal allowances for the portion of the day they are out of the County on business. Allowable meals should be indicated on the Trip Authorization Form (see Section C. for guidance when authorizing meal allowances). The individual daily meal limit amounts are listed above in Section 2.6 A.1.

C. Time Schedule

The following time schedule is an example to aid the department head in authorizing meals when employees have regular 8-5 work schedules.

MEAL	TRAVEL BEGINS BEFORE	TRAVEL ENDS AFTER
Breakfast	6:00 AM	9:00 AM
Lunch	11:00 AM	2:00 PM
Dinner	4:00 PM	7:00 PM

D. Meals Submitted for Reimbursement

If a County Purchasing Card is not used (the employee pays with cash or his/her own personal credit card), meal reimbursements will be made through the County payroll system. Reimbursement through the County payroll system is available for both meal options listed in Section 2.6 A.

1. Daily Meal Maximum

Itemized receipts must be available (or the appropriate reimbursement claim form) for reimbursement through the payroll system if the daily meal maximum option is chosen. Only the cost for that meal will be allowed for reimbursement. Employees who purchase meals for multiple County employees (traveling together) must list all names on the receipt or on the Misplaced Receipt Form.

In the event a receipt is lost, or unavailable, a Misplaced Receipt Form must be submitted. If a receipt or a Misplaced Receipt Form is not submitted, the employee shall not be reimbursed for the purchase.

If the purchase was placed on a County Purchasing Card, the employee shall be financially responsible for the charges and payment.

Receipts must be retained for a five-year period or as required by grant or other legal requirements.

2. Per Diem

No receipts are required if the per diem option is chosen and submitted for reimbursement through the County payroll system.

E. Taxable Meal Reimbursement

Meal reimbursements are classified as either taxable or non-taxable per IRS Regulations. Definitions and examples are provided below:

1. Taxable Meals

Meals are taxable during travel that does not require sleep or rest.

2. Non-taxable Meals

Meals are non-taxable based on the following:

- a) If an overnight stay is involved
- b) Group meals such as –
 - Lunch provided during training classes
 - Meals provided as part of an organized conference
 - Meals provided employees on County premises for the convenience of the employer

F. Training Meals

With department head approval, meals provided as part of a training seminar or association meeting that exceed meal rates are allowable and are not considered exceptions.

G. Meals for Legislators or their Aides

Per an Attorney General's opinion, the County may not lawfully expend funds to reimburse County officers and employees for their expenses in buying meals for legislators or their aides at meetings to discuss legislation of interest to the County.

2.7 ALLOWABLE TIPS

Tips are allowable and reimbursable for the following business related expenses:

- Transportation that takes you between an airport or station and your hotel plus the hotel and temporary work location or meeting place
- Hotel employees that carry baggage and provide housekeeping services (allowed only if per diem option is **not** chosen – the per diem rate includes incidental costs)
- Food and beverages: inclusive in meal limit as stated in Section 2.6 A.1. at a rate of 15% or up to 20% with department head approval.

Tip amounts will not exceed the following percentages based on the amount charged for the following services:

- Transportation: 10 – 15% of the fare
- Bellman/Porter: \$1 to \$2 per bag
- Housekeeping services: \$2 to \$10 depending on the quality of services

2.8 MISCELLANEOUS OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES

Itemized receipts are required for any purchase in excess of \$15.00. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Taxi and BART fares
- Streetcar, city bus, ferry fares and road tolls
- Parking expenses

2.9 PROHIBITED PURCHASES

- The County will **not** pay for any costs incurred by or related to a spouse or companion. Expenses related to a spouse or companion should neither impact nor increase County costs in any manner.
- The County will **not** pay for any alcoholic beverages.
- The County will **not** pay for any type of tobacco.
- Personal expenses are **not** allowed. Personal expenses include, but are not limited to laundering, barbering, massages, tips other than allowable tips listed in this Travel Policy, any pay TV expenses and personal phone calls, except as noted below for personal communication. Any non-business charges appearing on any billings must be identified and excluded from any claim for reimbursement.

Exception - When traveling out-of-county and staying overnight, employees are permitted to make personal phone calls as defined by the County Telecom Policy.

3.0 RECORD KEEPING

Written documentation to support the travel must be located in centralized department files and available for audit purposes. Each department must retain all documentation supporting travel activity for a minimum of five (5) years, or longer, if a department Record Retention Policy so requires.

4.0 IN-COUNTY MEALS

With department head written pre-approval, in-county meals are allowable when incurred in conjunction with a County business meeting for public purpose or special project, when oral interview boards include non-county employees, and/or for recognized training programs where the employee's attendance is required all day without a discretionary lunch period and the meal cannot be claimed through another agency. County business meeting for a public purpose may include non-county employees and employees from other governmental agencies. Costs of meals will be determined by the maximum meal limits described in Section 2.6 A.1. Daily Meal Maximum

Department heads are advised to design and implement procedures to help identify abuses of in-county meals and ensure that in-county meals are only reimbursed for authorized County purposes. The business purpose of the in-county meal must be documented and retained with the accounting records as support and for audit purposes.

ATTACHMENT B

Draft Revised Trip Authorization

**COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER
TRIP AUTHORIZATION**

SUBMIT THIS FORM TO YOUR MANAGER FOR APPROVAL IN ADVANCE OF THE TRIP

Motor Pool Rental _____ Private Car _____ Rental Car _____ Train _____ Bus _____ Air _____

Employee Driving: _____

Passengers: _____

Meeting Date(s): _____

Date Leaving/Arriving (if Different than Above): _____

Meeting Time: _____

Purpose of Trip: _____

Destination/Location: _____ (Code No.) _____

Estimated Cost of Trip:					Purchasing Card	Payroll Reimb.	Payroll Advance (meals only)	Per Diem (meals only)
FORM OF TRANSPORTATION								
Motor Pool:	Per Day	X	# of Days	Cost: \$	-			
	0.15	Per Mile	X	# of Miles	-			
Rental Car:	per day with sales tax			days =				
Personal Car:	Miles ROUND TRIP @ \$			0.540 Per Mile =	-			
Gasoline (estimated)					-			
Other (BART, Taxi, Bus, etc.)					-			
Parking					-			
Airfare:	Ea/Round Trip	# of Persons:			-			
MEAL LIMITS with receipts:								
BRKFST:	No. of Person(s)	X	15.00	X	No. Day(s) =	-		
LUNCH:	No. of Person(s)	X	20.00	X	No. Day(s) =	-		
DINNER:	No. of Person(s)	X	35.00	X	No. Day(s) =	-		
MEAL ALLOWANCE Per Diem:								
<i>(Note: The meal rate directly below [0-12 hours] is not included in the US GSA rates)</i>								
1 day (0-12 hours) =	20.00	No. of Person(s)	X	X	No. Day(s) =	-		
<i>Refer to US GSA current rates per destination location:</i>								
<i>US GSA website address: http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120</i>								
1 day (12-24 hours) =		No. of Person(s)	X	X	No. Day(s) =	-		
2 days and above:								
Travel day To/From =		No. of Person(s)	X	X	No. Day(s) =	-		
Full day =		No. of Person(s)	X	X	No. Day(s) =	-		
Meals & Incidentals Adjustment	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidentals				
Deduct for meals that are included in conference								
LODGING: Cash/Paid on MASTER CARD (Whose)								
Check for Government Rate _____								
Submit Transient Occupancy Tax Exemption Form _____								
Rate	P/Day Incl Tax x	Day(s) x	Person(s)		-			
(Name of Hotel) _____ Phone # _____								
Business Phone calls _____								
Internet Usage _____								
REGISTRATION: Cash/Paid on MASTER CARD (Whose)								
_____ x _____								
ESTIMATED TRIP COST:					\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

*PLEASE SUBMIT ALL ITEMIZED EXPENSE RECEIPTS IF USING PURCHASING CARD OR PAYROLL REIMBURSEMENT.
MEALS REIMBURSED THROUGH PAYROLL WILL BE TAXED UNLESS OVERNIGHT LODGING IS REQUIRED.

Management Approval (Division Manager) _____
Date

Department Head or Designee _____
Date