

Suggested policy format and content. RTPA specific policy should be developed in consultation with RTPA Legal Counsel, Board of Directors and appropriate regulatory agencies.

RTPA TRAVEL POLICY

TRAVEL EXPENSES

This policy is intended to establish a basis for the reimbursement of employee travel, including attendance at meetings, training, seminars or conferences and provide guidelines for Board members and employees who have been approved to travel on behalf of RTPA.

It is desirable and beneficial to RTPA and its constituents to have Board members and employees participate in state and national activities, training, and conferences related to RTPA's subject matter jurisdiction.

Procedures

- 1.1 Board members and employees must fill out a travel request form prior to traveling overnight on RTPA business. The project code, purpose of travel, and trip budget must be filled in on the form. The form must be approved by the Executive Director prior to the time of travel. The expense report must document that expenses meet existing RTPA policy. All documents related to reimbursable expenditures are public records subject to disclosure under state and federal law.
- 1.2 Penalties for falsifying expense reports include, but are not limited to the following:
 - 1.2.1 Loss of reimbursement privileges
 - 1.2.2 Restitution to RTPA
 - 1.2.3 Civil penalties for misuse of public resources
 - 1.2.4 Prosecution for misuse of public funds
 - 1.2.5 Disciplinary action for employees
2. Overnight Travel Expense Reimbursement
 - 2.1 The Travel Expense form must be used by Board members and employees to record actual trip expenses. The report should be completed within thirty days from the return date. For Board members and employees, the actual expenses must be approved by Executive Director. The form should then be forwarded to the Director of Finance and Administrative Services for processing, with a personal check attached for any funds due to RTPA. Failure to submit expense reports within the required time frame may result in the traveler not being reimbursed or collection action being taken if money is owed to RTPA.
 - 2.2 All expenses should be itemized, including items RTPA may have paid for in advance so that that the report provides a complete record of expenses. It is the traveler's responsibility to submit a completed report in order to receive prompt reimbursement.

- 2.3 Receipts for expenditures must be attached to the expense report for all expenses where a receipt is practicably attainable. A receipt is mandatory for all expenses in excess of \$10 unless a written satisfactory explanation is provided. Such written explanations are subject to approval by the Director of Finance and Administrative Services.
- 2.4 Travel advances may be requested. Any travel advance shall not exceed the total estimated amount of the trip, minus any items prepaid by RTPA, such as airfare and registration.
- 2.5 Employees will be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses up to the reimbursement amounts established by the California Human Resources for non-exempt/excluded employees when such travel is authorized for state or federal reimbursement. The expenditure guidelines established in IRS Bulletin for Special Per Diem Rates should be observed as upper limits for reimbursement of non-state or federal funded travel, unless the circumstances dictate otherwise and the expense is approved by the Executive Director.
- 2.5.1 Air Travel – Air travel is to be coach class for the most direct route. Travelers are encouraged to book at least 14 to 21 days in advance to qualify for the lowest airfares. RTPA will cover the cost if it is more cost-effective (i.e., difference in airfare as compared to the additional cost for hotel and meals) to include a Saturday stay. Travelers should consider this option, when practical.
- 2.5.2 Personal Auto Use – In the event that a private auto is used for the trip, mileage shall be paid at the currently established Internal Revenue Service rate. Maximum reimbursement shall not exceed the cost of using a rental car, train, or commercial airline to reach the same destination.
- 2.5.3 Ground Transportation – In using surface transportation, the least expensive alternative must be utilized where practical. For example, an airport shuttle should be used instead of a taxi. Such transportation should be used for travel to and from the airport and for reasonable business-related trips at the location.
- 2.5.4 Parking – RTPA will reimburse the lesser of the parking cost for a personal auto left at the airport or the cost of a shuttle service or cab to and from the airport.
- 2.5.5 Personal Travel – If a traveler wishes to combine RTPA travel with personal travel, or to travel with family members, the traveler may do so, provided that it does not exceed the cost equivalent of a single-person trip.
- 2.5.6 Rental Car – Use of rental cars must be pre-approved. RTPA will only reimburse for the cost of renting the least expensive size vehicle necessary for the number of people traveling. RTPA will not reimburse for rental car insurance coverage because employees are included under RTPA general automobile insurance coverage.
- 2.5.7 Meals – RTPA will pay for meals while the traveler is in travel status. The maximum reimbursement amount for meals will be calculated by multiplying the applicable per diem rate in IRS Notice 2012-63 by the number of days of travel.
- 2.5.8 Business Meals – Reasonable business meals involving outside persons or when necessary to conduct RTPA-related business are permitted. All such meals must be itemized with justification on the Expense Report to determine if eligible for reimbursement.
- 2.5.9 Hotel – Travelers will be reimbursed for the cost of a moderate and reasonably priced single occupancy hotel room. Travelers should request the “government rate” when making hotel reservations. If a hotel stay is needed in connection with a conference or other education

activity, lodging costs shall not exceed the maximum group rate published for the conference. If the group rate is not available, the traveler must use comparable lodging.

- 2.5.10 Other Business-Related Expenses – Other business-related expenses that arise when traveling such as supplies, equipment rental, reprographics, facsimiles, and other documented business-related expenses may be reimbursed when traveling on RTPA business and used for RTPA purposes.
- 2.5.11 Registration – Travelers requesting to attend a conference or training that requires registration should do so in sufficient time to take advantage of any discounts.
- 2.5.12 Cancellation Penalties – In the event that registration, airfare, hotel deposit, or similar items that require prepayment are paid and nonrefundable and the traveler is unable to attend, then the traveler will be responsible for reimbursing RTPA for all prepaid amounts, unless the inability to attend is for valid business reasons, medical reasons or personal emergencies, as approved by the Executive Director for employees or the Executive Committee for Board members.
- 2.5.13 Nonallowable Expenses – RTPA will not provide any reimbursement for personal entertainment expenses, travel expense for family members, movies in hotels, personal items, charitable contributions, alcohol, air travel insurance, or any other expenses not deemed necessary for business purposes. RTPA also will not provide reimbursement for the purpose of attending political events or for expenses incurred with any private club that discriminates on the basis of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or any other discriminatory criteria in its membership policy.

3. Local Expense Reimbursement

- 3.1 Expense reports must be submitted that record any potentially eligible expenses. The form must be submitted together with all receipts and should be submitted within thirty days of the expense being incurred. The report must describe the item or the destination (if mileage reimbursement is requested) and the purpose. The traveler should indicate which project number each item should be charged to.
- 3.2 Expenses are eligible for reimbursement if they are related to and necessary to carrying out RTPA business. They may include, but are not limited to: business meals or meetings, mileage, parking, and miscellaneous out-of-pocket expenses. The Executive Director may disallow any extraordinary or inappropriate expense. Whenever possible, travel should be by public transportation.
- 3.3 All necessary approvals must be obtained in advance and the form must be submitted to the Finance Department. Reimbursement will ordinarily occur within thirty days.
- 3.4 Mileage will be reimbursed in accordance with California Human Resources PML-026 for non-exempt/excluded employees when the agency automobile is not available. If an employee chooses to use a personal vehicle when the agency automobile is available, mileage will be reimbursed at \$0.15 per mile.

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EXHIBIT I – SAMPLE TRAVEL REQUEST
EXHIBIT II – SAMPLE TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT WORKBOOK
EXHIBIT III – SAMPLE LOCAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT