

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF NEW ORLEANS
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
October 25, 2022**

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-23

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) seeks to revise the current Travel Policy to serve as an up-to-date, streamlined and consistent policy that provides clear direction and procedural guidance on Agency travel as applicable.

WHEREAS, the revision to the Travel Policy is based upon industry best practices and reflects the current standards of the Agency's operations and expectations regarding the appropriate use of Agency travel expenditures.

WHEREAS, the revision to the Travel Policy also represents a correction to the inconsistencies and references to other non-applicable policies that exist in the current Travel Policy.

WHEREAS, with the approval of the revision to the Travel Policy, HANO seeks to amend the current employment policy, adopted on March 29, 2022, by adding the revised Travel Policy to the Employee Handbook, Section C1.15 – Employee Travel.

WHEREAS, HANO request to add associated policy and procedural forms that are referenced in the employment policy as appendices to the current Employee Handbook.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of New Orleans hereby adopts for implementation, the revision of the Travel Policy, the addition of the policy and procedural forms as appendices, and amends to the Employee Handbook of the Housing Authority of New Orleans, dated March 29, 2022.

Executed this 25th day of October 2022.

APPROVAL:



**CAROL JOHNSON
PRESIDENT, BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**



October 25, 2022

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Commissioners
President Carol Johnson, Vice President Avery Foret, Commissioner Isabel Barrios, Commissioner Percy Manson, Commissioner Sharon Jasper, Commissioner Monika McKay, Commissioner Kim Piper, Commissioner Paul Richard and Commissioner Jeffrey Vappie

Through: Evette Hester
Executive Director

From: Kelly Walker
Director, Human Resources

Re: Approval of Revision to HANO's Travel Policy

The Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) hereby submits for approval the revision to the Agency's Travel Policy. HANO's revised Travel Policy serves as an up-to-date, streamlined and consistent policy that provides clear direction and procedural guidance on Agency travel as applicable. Moreover, the revision to the Travel Policy is based upon industry best practices and reflects the current standards of the Agency's operations. The revision also represents a correction to the inconsistencies and references to other non-applicable policies that exist in the current Travel Policy.

The Employee Handbook states that "with the exception of the voluntary at-will employment policy, these guidelines are subject to modification, amendment or revocation by HANO at any time, without advance notice. Therefore this Handbook as well as the policies and procedures established by HANO will be supplemented and amended when the need arises. These provisions replace all other existing policies and practices and may not be changed or amended without the expressed written approval of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of New Orleans." (HANO Employee Handbook *Introduction*, Pg.6 Para 2 and 4).

With the approval of the revision to the Travel Policy, HANO hereby request for approval to amend the current employment policy, adopted on March 29, 2022, by adding the revised Travel Policy to the Employee Handbook, Section C1.15 – Employee Travel. Lastly, HANO also request to add associated policy and procedural forms that are referenced in the employment policy as appendices to the current Employee Handbook.

To ensure that HANO maintains consistency in providing employees with current agency information and incorporate necessary policy changes that aligns with Agency operations, HANO hereby submits the revised Travel Policy below:

HANO Travel Policy

Policy

The Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) will reimburse travelers for legitimate business expenses incurred by them in connection with the performance of their HANO assigned duties. All items must be ordinary and necessary and must be incurred in connection with HANO's business. All travel expenses should be incurred offering the most economic advantage to HANO.

Travel status is time spent performing official business travel away from the traveler's official station. Travel status begins with the traveler departs his/her home, office, or other point of departure and ends when he/she returns to his/her home, office, or other point.

The daily per diem allowance will be authorized for travel status outside of ...

In making expenditures, travelers are required to minimize expenses. To ensure the HANO meets its fiduciary responsibility, all expenses, other than the daily per diem allowance and miscellaneous gratuity items, must be supported by appropriate documentation and itemized on the Travel Request/Reimbursement Form.

Scope

The policy applies to all Commissioners, employees, and others who travel on behalf of, or represent, HANO in an official capacity.

Travel Guidelines

- A. All travel requests must be submitted in advance of travel on the Travel Authorization Request form and approval by the appropriate supervisor and the Executive Director or his/her designee.
- B. A travel advance may be requested from accounting upon authorization by the appropriate supervisor and the Executive Director or his/her designee. A travel advance is an accommodation for the purpose of defraying expenses inherent to official travel and accordingly should be kept to a minimum. Requests for advances should be made on the Travel Authorization Request form. After approval by the Executive Director or his/her designee, the form must be submitted to Finance at least Five (5) business days prior to the departure.
- C. Travel advances will be included in the regular accounts payable check run and will be directly deposited into the employee's bank account or provided in the form of a check no later than three (3) business days before and no earlier than 30 calendar days prior to the scheduled departure date. Exceptions may be approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee.
- D. Expenses for approved HANO travel will be paid or reimbursed when properly documented by the traveler and approved by the appropriate supervisor and the

Executive Director or his/her designee. Reimbursement for travel expenses will be in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Registration Fees

All registration fees will be prepaid by HANO. An exception must be approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee.

2. Commercial Carrier

Normally, HANO will issue prepaid tickets for bus, rail, or airline transportation. If it is necessary to purchase transportation en route, the traveler should use his/her personal credit card or cash. En route purchases such as early departure changes or emergency airline ticket changes should be claimed on the Travel Request/Reimbursement Form and may require additional justification before reimbursement.

In order to secure the best fares available, sufficient planning must be done to obtain 14-day rates or other special advance purchase fares.

Fares requiring extra night stays or similar restrictions shall be utilized provided that the cost of additional hotel nights and meal allowances make the trip less costly than without the extra night(s) stay. Documents must be included to prove it is cost effective to stay over extra night(s). Should extra stay be voluntary and if there is a difference in fares, the recipient will be responsible for paying the difference in the fare.

If traveling by air, reimbursement shall be limited to coach fares, unless a need for a reasonable accommodation exists or if a flight will exceed three non-stop hours. If the traveler chooses a first class or business class fare, they will pay the difference between coach and first/ business class fare.

3. Personal or HANO-Owned Automobiles

Travelers who use their personal automobiles will be reimbursed the standard mileage rate as established by the IRS, plus tolls and parking will be reimbursed and a gas card may be provided. Employees are to use HANO-owned vehicles when available.

Fines incurred, for automobile violations or personal misconduct, are not reimbursable.

Non-Reimbursable Costs

Non-reimbursable costs include, but are not limited to, fines and tickets for traffic violations.

4. Taxi Fares/ Rideshare Fares

If an individual travels by common carrier, taxi and/or rideshare fares will be allowed for necessary transportation. Shuttle service and porters are also reimbursable expenses. Receipts for fares should be submitted by the traveler.

5. Rental Car Guidelines

With approval from the Executive Director or his/her designee, on the travel form, travelers may rent a car at their destination.

a) Rental Car Guidelines

Reimbursable costs include the daily rental fee, mileage fee, gasoline charges tolls and authorized insurance charges. Receipts for these costs should be submitted with the Travel Request/Reimbursement Form.

Rental cars should be returned to the rental agency with a full tank of gas to avoid surcharges for refueling.

b) Rental Car Cancellation Procedures

Travelers should request and record the cancellation number in case of billing disputes.

c) Authorized Rental Car Drivers

All individuals who intend to drive the rented vehicle must be listed with the rental agency for insurance purposes. If allowed by the rental agency, the vehicle should be rented in the name of the HANO.

d) Insurance

The Agency's automobile insurance will cover travelers on approved HANO official travel. However, if the traveler chooses to take any personal time at either end of the trip, this is not covered by HANO's automobile policy. Therefore, the traveler would need to either purchase insurance for the personal time or check with their insurance carrier to see if he/she would be covered by their personal insurance. The traveler would also be responsible for all rental car costs during the personal days.

Additional liability insurance should not be purchased from the rental agency unless required by state law.

If available, physical damage waiver insurance should be purchased from the rental agency.

6. Lodging Accommodations

Lodging accommodations will be made based on reasonable costs incurred.

Original documentation (hotel bill or receipt) indicating costs have been paid in full must be submitted for reimbursement.

7. Meals

Travelers who travel outside of the New Orleans area will receive a per diem allowance based on the amount specified by the GSA (U.S. General Services Administration) at the time of travel. If the traveler uses less than the per diem allowance, he/she does not have to refund HANO or submit meal receipts. If the traveler spends more than the allowance, the reimbursement will not exceed the per diem rate. The GSA per diem allowance can be obtained from the Finance and Human Resources Departments or from the GSA website: www.gsa.gov.

8. Miscellaneous

a) Gratuities – Customary and reasonable gratuities should be limited to:

1. Taxi and airport service – not to exceed 20% of the fare
2. Hotel maid service - \$5.00 daily
3. Baggage not to exceed \$5.00 per bag

**Extenuating circumstances that create excess expenses will be considered, on a case-by-case basis, by the Executive Director and/or his/her appointed designee.

b) Communication Services

Electronic communication services may be utilized for official HANO business (e.g. usage of Wi-Fi, etc.) during travel but should be kept to a minimum.

c) Phone Calls

Each traveler may call home for the purpose of safe arrival notification. Other personal long distance calls are the responsibility of the traveler.

d) Miscellaneous Tolls, Tips, Etc.

Miscellaneous tolls and tips should be receipted when possible. However, if a receipt is not available or practical, a statement must be provided on the Travel Request/Reimbursement Form.

HANO requires travelers to submit to Finance the completed Travel Request/Reimbursement Form within 30 days of trip completion. Failure to comply may result in expenses not being reimbursed or travel privileges being suspended. Delinquent travel expense reports will be referred to the Executive Director for further action.

e) Dry Cleaning Services

Cost for reasonable dry-cleaning/laundry services may be reimbursed at the

cost for travel lasting more than 3 work days or in cases where luggage is delayed and/or lost during travel.

9. Non-Reimbursable Expenditures

The following are examples of expenditures that are not reimbursable and should not be considered as all inclusive:

- a) Charges for television, pay television movies, or recreation and personal expenses (entertainment, lounge, alcoholic beverages, nightclub, theater, cover charges, etc.).
- b) Expenses incurred due to family member accompanying the employee on a business trip.

The policy rescinds any previous policy covering the same material.



Travel Request/Reimbursement Form

Budget Line Item: _____ Department: _____

Requested By: _____ Title: _____

Date Requested: _____ Departure Date: _____

Reason for Travel: Training Conference Meeting Client Other

<i>Attach documentation for all projected costs</i>	Advance Travel Amount	Advance to Vendor	Advance to Employee	Actual Expense (verified w/receipts)	Reimbursement Payment Due to Employee
Registration or Conference Fee:					
Hotel (room+tax):					
Flight:					-
Mileage (include tolls and parking):					-
Per Diem:					-
Taxis, Fares, and/or Rental Car:					-
Other: <i>(please specify)</i>					-
Other: <i>(please specify)</i>					-
Other: <i>(please specify)</i>					-
Other: <i>(please specify)</i>					-
Other: <i>(please specify)</i>					-
Total Expense	-	-	-	-	-

Requester's Certification Statement

Please note, by signing this Travel Request/Reimbursement Form, you certify and agree the requested travel is necessary and appropriate, as it relates to your position. Lastly, you certify you have read and agree to abide by the Travel Procedure.

Requester's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signatures to Approve Travel:

Department Head: _____ Date: _____

CFO: _____ Date: _____

Executive Director: _____ Date: _____

Signatures to Approve Amount Due for Reimbursement to Employee: (to be completed within 15 work days of return)

(Attach original receipts to support actual expenses, if applicable)

Requester: _____ Date: _____

Department Head: _____ Date: _____

CFO: _____ Date: _____

Executive Director: _____ Date: _____

Housing Authority of New Orleans



Travel Procedure

September 2019

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HANO Travel Procedure

I. Introduction:

The Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) incurs expenditures related to travel and entertainment that occur in furtherance of its mission, and have a business purpose related to its delivery of program activity. Each person responsible for making decisions concerning these expenditures must verify if an expense represents a permissible use of HANO's funds.

HANO's primary funding source is provided by the federal government. Therefore, HANO adopts federal guidelines and the guidelines provided through applicable Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Cost Principles, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Per Diem Rates and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Standard Mileage rate.

II. Purpose:

This Travel Procedure is to provide guidelines and establish procedures for individuals incurring business travel expenses on HANO's behalf.

III. Objectives:

- Ensure that employees understand HANO's procedures for business travel.
- Provide employees traveling on behalf of agency business with a reasonable level of service, comfort, and safety at the lowest cost.
- Maximize the organization's ability to negotiate discounted rates with preferred suppliers and reduce travel expenses.

IV. Definitions:

Authorized Persons:

- A. The Executive Director/Department Head is allowed to deem persons as an authorized traveler for official HANO business only.
- B. Members of boards follow the State Travel Policy.
- C. Resident Council/Tenant Council Members, Advisors, consultants, contractors and other persons who are called upon to contribute time and service to HANO who are not otherwise required to be reimbursed through a contract for professional, personal, or consulting services.
- D. Consultants and Contractors that are reimbursed through a contract and / or service agreements.

Conference/Convention: a meeting (other than routine) for a specific purpose and/or objective. Non-routine meetings can be defined as a seminar, conference, convention, or training. Documentation required is a formal agenda, program, letter of invitation, or registration fee. Participation as an exhibiting vendor in an exhibit /trade show also qualifies as a conference. For a hotel to qualify for conference rate lodging it requires that the hotel is hosting or is in conjunction with hosting the meeting. In the event the designated conference hotel(s) have no room available and exceeds the GSA rate, the Executive Director may approve to pay actual hotel cost not to exceed the conference lodging rates for other hotels located near the conference hotel.

In-State Travel: all travel within the borders of Louisiana or travel through adjacent states between points within Louisiana when such is the most efficient route.

International Travel: all travel to destinations outside the 50 United States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam and Saipan.

Lowest Logical Airfare: In general, these types of airfare are non-refundable, penalty tickets. Penalties could include restrictions such as advanced purchase requirements, weekend stays, etc. Prices will increase as seats are sold. When schedule changes are required for lowest logical tickets, penalty fees are added.

Parking Cost: Parking Costs incurred while on official business/meeting are reimbursed and require a receipt. However, when attending a conference, individuals may be asked to park within a reasonable walking distance at a lesser costs. For airport parking and travel beyond 12 hours, HANO reimburses at the long-term parking rate.

Per Diem and Meal Allowance: a flat rate paid in lieu of actual travel reimbursements for people on extended stays only.

Receipts/Document Requirements: Supporting documentation, including original receipts, must be retained according to record retention laws. Receipts are attached to the travel reimbursement request when submitted to Finance for payment and not required for the meal allowance that are paid consistent with GSA per diem rates by states.

Routine Travel: travel required in the course of performing his/her job duties. This does not include non-routine meetings, conferences and out-of-state travel.

Travel Period: a period of time between the time of departure and the time of return.

Travel Routes: the most direct traveled route must be used by official travelers.

Traveler: a state officer, state employee, or authorized person performing authorized travel.

V. Procedure:

- A. All non-routine travel must be authorized and approved in writing by the Executive Director. The Executive Director may delegate this authority in writing. Approval documents are attached to the travel and expense reimbursement form when submitted to Finance for payment.
- B. Travel related to contracts and agreements are approved by the individual that assumes the official contract administration as assigned by the Procurement Manager.
- C. Travel related to grants are approved by the Grant Administrator that monitors the grant activity for compliance or by the Executive Director if agency personnel are traveling as part of the authorized grant activity.
- D. Travel conducted by HANO staff is eligible for a 100% coverage of pre-paid costs (airfare, conference registrations and hotel reservations). These costs are approved for payment on the Commercial Credit Card maintained by the respective department or Finance Department. Appropriate documentation must be attached to permit the charges. All other costs such as meal allowances are eligible for a 75% travel advance for anticipated out of pocket travel costs. An expense reimbursement request form will have to be filled out and routed for approval signed accordingly. All forms are submitted to the Payroll Department in Finance for payment through the payroll system consistent with the HANO's payroll cycle. A separate payment will be made to the employees account for the request. If a travel advance was requested they will be settled no later than 5 business days after the conclusion of the authorized travel and all unused funds are punctually repaid, if applicable.
- E. All cash advances and settlements must have proper documentation attached to support the outlay of costs as well as original receipts when settling the activity. No receipts are required for the meal allowances.
- F. For meals and incidentals refer to the GSA rates by states at (<http://www.gsa.gov>). The GSA meals and incidental charts breaks out the rates for breakfast, lunch and dinner should you need to deduct any of those meals from your trip voucher. For example, if your trip includes meals that are already paid for by the government (such as through a registration fee for a conference for a dinner), you will need to deduct those meals from your voucher. Refer to Section 301-11.18 of the Federal Travel Regulation for specific guidance on deducting these amounts from your reimbursement claim. A complimentary breakfast offered at the hotel/motel or conference or by any other common carrier does not affect your meal allowance.

G. NO REIMBURSEMENT WHEN NO COST INCURRED BY TRAVELER.

This includes but is not limited to reimbursements for any lodging and/or meals furnished at a federal or state institution or furnished by any other party at no cost to the traveler. In no case will a traveler be allowed mileage or transportation when he/she is gratuitously transported by another person.

- H. If a rental car is required or chosen as the most cost effective means to travel, please book the reservations through an on-line source to achieve a cost benefit as often times on-line bookings have favorable rates. Only the cost of a compact or intermediate model is reimbursable. Reimbursement for fuel will be based on actual fuel costs. A receipt must be provided when seeking reimbursement. A moving violation will not be reimbursed by HANO. One or more individuals traveling together will share the rental car. Pre-paid Fuel Options, for rental vehicles, are only to be allowed with prior approval from the Department Head, when the traveler can document that the pre-purchased amount was necessary and that the amount charged by the rental company is reasonable in relation to local gasoline cost. Each agency/department shall familiarize itself with the existence of the fuel/repair contract(s), terms and conditions as well as locations of vendors.
- I. Gasoline (Receipts Required) Reimbursements require an original receipt, and only regular unleaded gasoline, or diesel when applicable, should be used. This applies for both HANO owned vehicles and rental vehicles, as midgrade, super, plus or premium gasoline is typically not necessary.
- J. Personal Use of Rental- Personal use of a rental vehicle, when rented for official state business, is not allowed.
- K. **Insurance for Vehicle rentals Within the 50 United States:** Insurance for car rental companies is not reimbursable. When on official business, HANO's vehicle policy provides coverage for rental vehicles and any fleet vehicle for damages. Therefore, the insurance coverage for a rental car shall be declined. Should a collision occur while on official business, the accident should immediately be reported to the HANO Legal Department calling 504-670-3393. Any damage involving a third party must be reported to the appropriate law enforcement entity to have a police report generated.
- L. All air travel booking should be booked at least 14-21 days in advance to achieve a cost benefit as many carriers increase costs the closer you book to your departure date.
- M. All approved routine travel for official HANO in-state business must be conducted by using a HANO vehicle. HANO provides the fuel for HANO owned vehicles via use of the fueltrac card. If a HANO vehicle is not available, HANO will reimburse

mileage using the IRS mileage rate per mile driven. Use the travel reimbursement form when filing the claim.

- N. Cost for ground transportation such as buses, subways, airport shuttle/limousines, and taxis are reimbursable when the expenses are incurred as part of approved travel. Airport shuttle limousines, taxis and all other public transportation where a receipt is available, requires a receipt for reimbursements. A driver's tip for shuttle/limousines and taxis may be given and must not exceed 20% of total charge. Amount of tip must be included on receipt received from driver/company. This is considered and part of the incidentals that are otherwise limited by the GSA to \$5.00 per day. Therefore, HANO will not reimburse the additional incidental fee.
- O. If the hotel provides free WI-FI, no internet costs will be reimbursed.
- P. No reimbursement is provided for ordered movies or room service. Out of state telephone costs for official business will be reimbursed, if charged.

VI. Claims for reimbursement:

All claims for reimbursement for travel shall be submitted on the travel reimbursement form or expense reimbursement form depending on the nature of the trip. All forms are submitted to the Payroll Department and processed within HANO's established pay periods. Employees receive a separate deposit for such reimbursable. All claims shall include all details provided for on the form. It must be signed by the person claiming reimbursement and approved by his/her immediate supervisor. In all cases the date and hour of departure from and return to domicile must be shown, along with each final destination throughout the trip clearly defined on the form. All estimated expenses must be clearly delineated and supported. This is necessary for every trip, not just when requesting a travel advance. For every travel authorization request, the purpose of the trip for travel must be stated in the space provided on the form.

Mileage reimbursement shall be computed by one of the following options. Commuting miles are not eligible for reimbursement:

1. On the basis of odometer readings from point of origin to point of return.
2. By using a website mileage calculator or a published software package for calculating mileage such as Tripmaker, How Far Is It, MapQuest, etc. Employee is to print the page indicating mileage and attach it with his/her travel expense form.