

# **CRA-007 TRAVEL POLICY**

*EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2022*

## **PURPOSE:**

It is the policy of the Hollywood Community Redevelopment Agency to provide a travel allowance for all employees traveling on CRA business.

## **POLICY:**

The policy is designed to cover reasonable employee expenses while traveling on CRA business and to promote the prudent use of public funds. This CRA policy utilizes the basic Travel Policy of the City of Hollywood, with a few differences to better reflect the mission of the CRA. Employee reimbursements are not intended to be employee compensation or an employee benefit program. The policy is designed to cover all employee travel. A few situations require exceptions, due to their unusual nature. Any exceptions must have prior written approval of the Executive Director, unless they are an emergency. In such an emergency, an after-the-fact written explanation will be required from the traveler. Reimbursement will be contingent upon the Executive Director's approval of the explanation.

## **PROCEDURE:**

### 1. AIRFARES

- a. The CRA will reimburse the traveler for the cost of the "Lowest Airfare", as applicable using Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood, Miami or West Palm Beach airports as the local departure and return point and flying on any regularly scheduled airline allowing for intermediate stop(s) as long as those stops do not increase travel time by over 2 hours. Departure(s) is to be between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. local time and the ticket issued one week in advance, or current airline policy.
- b. In the event the traveler cannot obtain the lowest airfare due to scheduling problems not within the traveler's control, or unavailability of seats, or any other reason approved by the Executive Director, the CRA will reimburse the actual higher cost "Coach Airfare." However, first class travel rate will not be reimbursed.
- c. If the traveler wishes to take a flight, or use a particular airline, for personal reasons, which costs more than the lowest airfare, and lowest is available he or she - may do so but will be reimbursed only for the lowest airfare.
- d. Lowest airfare will be used as the guideline in comparing costs of personal car vs. air travel, unless proper and timely planning of the trip would have allowed use of an even lower airfare.

- e. Use of lowest airfares, even when there are cancellation penalties, is required when the traveler is reasonably sure of being able to make the trip and scheduling allows such a reservation.
- f. If a reservation is made which has a cancellation penalty, and the traveler cannot make the trip due to serious personal or work related problems, and the traveler documents those problems, in writing, at the earliest possible time, the respective CRA will be responsible for any penalty. Unused tickets must accompany the travel expense form with indication that the trip was canceled, or the mode of travel changed.
- g. The CRA will not require the traveler to use alternate airports. However, the CRA will encourage use of alternative airports if it reduces the net cost of travel, including parking or taxi costs.

## 2. PARKING REIMBURSEMENT

- a. The CRA encourages travelers to obtain their own transportation to or parking at Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood Airport. Travelers parking at the airport will be reimbursed at long-term rates with receipt.
- b. For alternate Miami or Palm Beach airports, the traveler will be reimbursed, with receipt, for either parking at the current long-term rate or taxi service up to \$50.00 each way up to \$100.00 total. Those that qualify for mileage reimbursement for personal car use can charge the travel miles to and from the airport.
- c. Any parking expense reimbursements covered by this administrative policy, including valet parking, will be limited to regular parking rates.

## 3. RENTAL CARS

The policy of the Hollywood CRA is that no one is permitted to rent a car. Exceptions must be approved in advance by the Executive Director.

## 4. PRIVATE VEHICLE/CAR POOLING FOR TRIPS

- a. Personal reasons, such as combining vacation and official travel or spouse transportation, will not be considered adequate justification for not car pooling. While car pooling is not mandatory, it is strongly encouraged.
- b. The use of a private car will be reimbursed at the Internal Revenue Service prevailing rate. Mileage will be reimbursed based upon the [IRS](#) federal mileage rate for the then-current year, but total cost should not exceed the lowest airfare, plus any normal limousine fares to and from airports. Parking at the meeting site will be reimbursed provided a receipt is submitted. Meals and lodging reimbursement will be based on air schedules. If two or more employees car pool, which is highly recommended, and result in a net savings to the CRA, the CRA will

reimburse the owner of the vehicle used to car pool for the trip at the current mileage reimbursement rate.

- c. The mileage reimbursement rate includes factors for variable costs: gasoline, oil, lubrication, tires, battery, washing and fixed costs—depreciation, repairs, insurance and license fees. Those using personal vehicles are required to have the State required automobile insurance coverage of \$100,000 for each person, \$200,000 each accident and property damage of \$25,000. The CRA will not assume responsibility for any damage to an employee's vehicle. The mileage reimbursement payment includes a factor for liability, collision and comprehensive insurance coverage.
- d. If a CRA vehicle is assigned to the traveler or is available for the traveler's use, it should be used and may be required. Toll, fuel and other related expenses will be reimbursed, with receipts.
- e. The CRA Executive Director reserves the right to determine the mode of travel, i.e., which airline, and may specify limousine or charter bus travel rather than CRA or personal vehicle.

#### 5. HOTEL ROOM RATE POLICY

- a. The CRA will reimburse the traveler with receipts which will be reviewed for reasonableness.
- b. The CRA will reimburse for State sales tax, if applied by the hotel and the CRA's tax-exempt letter is not honored (only applicable for states other than Florida). Any tips will be only at the GSA rate for incidental expenses, as set forth below.

#### 6. TELEPHONE CALLS

- a. Personal calls will not be reimbursed.
- b. Business phone, Business Internet and Business FAX calls will be reimbursed with receipts and proper identification, including person called and purpose of call. Receipt and documentation must be presented with the Travel Expense Report, as required in Section 12 of this policy. Travelers cannot charge these calls on their home phone or credit card because cost documentation will not be available until a later date.
- c. If the hotel adds a service charge for each telephone call, even when those calls are made on a credit card or are toll-free calls, the CRA will reimburse the traveler for the service charge(s) for business calls only.

#### 7. MEAL REIMBURSEMENTS

- a. The CRA will reimburse cost of meals up to the per diem rates for the traveler's destination as established by the Florida per diem rates set forth by the GSA for the destination city or the nearest available city for which the GSA sets rates, at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>. For example, the CRA does not have a rate set by the GSA but the

City of Fort Lauderdale does, so that would be used as the closest available city. The webpage showing the Meals and Incidentals (M&IE) rates and breakdown for the destination city must be accompanied with the Travel Reimbursement Request Form and attached in the travel drop down tab found in the Expense page in Oracle. The M&IE rate includes taxes and tips, and therefore travelers will not be reimbursed separately for those items. Rates are also set forth for the first and last days of the travel for meal and incidental reimbursements. Incidental expenses are described as fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, hotel staff and staff on ships.

- b. The traveler will not submit a claim for any meals which are included as a part of the airfare, registration fee, or are otherwise complimentary. If a continental breakfast or lunch is offered as a part of the hotel charge, seminar or meeting, no meal reimbursement will be given for that meal period.
- c. The CRA Budget Manager will authorize meals and lodging based on actual air travel time/date in relation to convening hours of a conference, meeting, etc. Normally the following rules will apply:
  - (1) Travel prior to beginning date of conference, meeting, etc., overnight lodging and evening meal will be allowed, depending upon the starting time of the conference or meeting.
  - (2) Return—if the conference or meeting adjournment time or the availability of flights are such that it will not allow the traveler to return that day, overnight lodging and breakfast may be allowed.

## 8. EXTENDED TRAVEL

Extended Travel may be requested by the traveler, or dictated by significantly lower airfares.

- a. If requested by the traveler, extended travel may be allowed at the beginning or end of the trip, in order to reduce costs to the CRA, as supported by proper documentation.
- b. Extended travel will not occur during the traveler's normal work time, and the traveler will be reimbursed for per diem and lodging during the extended travel time, as long as the total net cost results in a cost reduction to the CRA.
- c. If a traveler is combining CRA business and vacation, and part of the extended travel time consisted of a bridge between the two, no reimbursement for expenses incurred during that bridge time will be allowed.

## 9. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND FUNDING

- a. Each district of the CRA shall have the authority to utilize its respective travel budget appropriation in a manner which it determines will further CRA objectives. While individual trips are identified for budget justification, actual trips are to be taken at the discretion of the Executive Director in accordance with this policy.

- b. Travel Request Forms are to be approved by the CRA Budget Manager and Executive Director, or CRA Designee. The CRA's Budget Manager shall be responsible for ensuring that the appropriate funding is allocated in the Budget for such travel expenses. Travel Request Forms will be sent directly to the City's Financial Services Department, General Accounting Division for processing upon approval of the CRA Budget Manager and Executive Director.

10. TRAVEL ADVANCE PAYMENTS

- a. Advances for conference registrations, airfares and hotel reservations will be processed upon submission of a Travel Request Form, except as otherwise noted in Section 15, Tri-County Travel, and Section 16, Local Travel.
- b. Airfare and other expenses will be reimbursed when the supporting ticket stub or receipts are presented with the Travel Expense Report in Oracle.

11. TIMING AND SUBMISSION OF TRAVEL FORMS

- a. The traveler shall submit a Travel Request Form a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to departure date to the CRA Budget Manager. A copy of any available brochures and literature must be attached to the Travel Request Form, specifically showing lodging and registration rates and any expenses included in the registration rate (e.g., meals).
- b. Close attention should be paid to critical dates within brochures and literature for cut-off dates where savings to the CRA can be achieved, (i.e., early registration, bargain room rates, etc.) The completed Travel Request form should be received by the CRA Budget Manager and forwarded to the General Accounting Division three weeks prior to the date the first check for any portion of the travel is to be issued.
- c. Travel receipts and related items are to be submitted to the CRA Budget Manager and Executive Director and forwarded on to the General Accounting Division through the Expense tab and Travel drop down in Oracle, within ten working days after completion of the trip, or future travel advances will be denied until the outstanding report is submitted.

12. FISCAL YEAR OVERLAP

Travel which occurs in the next fiscal year will be approved out of current fiscal year funds only if the travel occurs within the first 30 days of the next fiscal year and the required prior payment is processed in September of the current fiscal year in accordance with the fiscal year end closing procedures.

13. TRI-COUNTY TRAVEL (Ultimate destination in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach counties).

Travel Request Forms are not required for one-day events in the Tri-County area. Instead, a Direct Payment Voucher (DPV) form is to be used to request the conference or seminar registration fee.

If parking, mileage, tolls and meal reimbursements are allowed, as provided in other sections of this policy, a DPV form is to be completed upon return to the CRA and supported by a mileage summary, parking and toll receipts, or other applicable forms and receipts. (Meals will be reimbursed at per diem rates.)

For conferences or seminars lasting more than one day, the following procedures apply:

a. Tolls and Parking:

- (1) If a CRA car is used, tolls and parking will be reimbursed on a Travel Expense Report Form in Oracle.
- (2) If a personal car is used, mileage at the current rate, plus tolls and parking, will be reimbursed, except for those in management, executive, or senior executive level receiving a vehicle allowance, who will be reimbursed only for tolls and parking. For reimbursement, the employee shall use the Travel Expense Report Form in Oracle.

b. Meal Reimbursement:

- (1) If a meal is part of the official program of the conference or is otherwise complimentary, no reimbursement will be provided.
- (2) If the employee is required, as part of the reason for the travel, to be out of the CRA and to return home after 8:00 p.m., the cost of the evening meal, up to the current local per diem amount, will be allowed with a receipt.
- (3) All meal reimbursements will be submitted on a Travel Expense Report Form in Oracle.

c. Hotels:

Hotel costs are not authorized, except in special situations which are approved by the Budget Manager and Executive Director.

d. Advances:

Only conference registration advances will be issued for travel in the Tri-County area.

14. LOCAL TRAVEL—REIMBURSEMENT FOR USE OF PERSONAL AUTOMOBILE

- a. All CRA employees *not* receiving a monthly management vehicle allowance are eligible for reimbursement for mileage when using their personal vehicles for authorized CRA business. Mileage reimbursement for the first and last trip of a weekday will be based on the distance between the CRA Office, rather than the place of residence, and the destination. For weekend travel and travel originating after 6:00 p.m. on weekdays, mileage will be measured from the employee's place of residence.
- b. Reimbursement for mileage will be made at the rate authorized by IRS regulations at the time the travel took place. This mileage reimbursement rate includes factors for variable costs: gasoline, oil, lubrication, tires, battery, washing, and fixed costs: depreciation, repairs, insurance and license fees. Those using personal vehicles must have the State required automobile insurance coverage, plus minimum liability insurance coverage of \$100,000 for each person, \$200,000 each accident, and property damage of \$25,000. The CRA will not assume responsibility for any damage to an employee's vehicle. The mileage reimbursement payment includes a factor for liability, collision and comprehensive insurance coverage.
- c. For reimbursement, each employee must complete in detail a Monthly Mileage Reimbursement Summary Form with a DPV form and submit it to the CRA Budget Manager and Executive Director for approval. Following approval from the Executive Director, all forms should be forwarded directly to the General Accounting Division within five (5) working days after the end of each month
- d. In the event the total local travel mileage reimbursement plus parking expense is less than \$15.00 for the month for non-routine travel to a conference, monthly meeting or other approved event or purpose, an employee may submit the Monthly Mileage Reimbursement Summary and parking receipt, along with a Petty Cash Reimbursement Request approved by the CRA Budget Manager. Such reimbursements are subject to review by the CRA Budget Manager and to subsequent adjustments if necessary. The employee is responsible for reimbursing the CRA in the event of a subsequently identified discrepancy or error that resulted in an overpayment.
- e. This provision excludes any travel originating with a Travel Request Form. Such travel, regardless of the amount of reimbursement, must be completed using the procedures specified in Section 11 of the "Travel Policy and Procedures".
- f. Illegible or incomplete forms that lack authorized signatures, employee numbers, etc., will be returned to the traveler for completion or correction before being processed.