

The Supreme Court of Ohio

GUIDELINES FOR TRAVEL BY COURT APPOINTEES

These guidelines are adopted by the Supreme Court and are intended to establish consistent standards and expectations regarding travel by Court appointees while on Court business.

These guidelines have not been adopted as rules pursuant to Article IV, Section 5 of the Ohio Constitution and should not be construed as requiring adoption.

SECTION 1.0. DEFINITIONS.

1.1. Definitions.

As used in these guidelines:

(A) “Court appointee” means either of the following:

- (1) A person serving on a board, commission, advisory committee, or task force, as appointed by the Court, the Chief Justice of the Court, or a Justice of the Court.
- (2) A person performing an official duty or responsibility for the Court at the request of the Chief Justice, a Justice, or a senior staff employee of the Court.

(B) “Travel status” means the time a Court appointee is traveling on Court business, beginning when travel to the destination commences and continuing until the time of return from such destination.

SECTION 2.0. AUTHORITY FOR TRAVEL.

2.1. Authority for Travel.

A Court appointee may travel on Court business when authorized by the Court employee who staffs the board, commission, advisory committee, or task force to which the appointee is assigned or by the Chief Justice, Justice, or senior staff employee who requested the appointee perform an official duty or responsibility for the Court.

SECTION 3.0. PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL OF TRAVEL.

3.1. In-State Travel.

A Court appointee shall obtain prior approval to travel in state on Court business from the Court employee who staffs the board, commission, advisory committee, or task force to which the appointee is assigned or the Chief Justice, Justice, or senior staff employee who requested the appointee perform an official duty or responsibility for the Court. The prior approval may be given verbally and may be of a continuing nature.

In limited circumstances, a Court appointee may be required to attend a continuing education conference, seminar, or workshop as part of the appointee’s training to serve. In this circumstance, the Court appointee shall follow the requirements of Administrative Policy 11 (Training and Education).

3.2. Out-of-State Travel.

A Court appointee shall obtain prior written approval to travel out of state on Court business from the Court employee who staffs the board, commission, advisory committee, or task force to which the appointee is assigned or the Chief Justice, Justice, or senior staff employee who requested the appointee perform an official duty or responsibility for the Court.

The procedure to obtain approval to travel out of state shall occur in the following order:

- (A) The Court appointee shall complete a “Travel and Conference Approval Form” (copy provided as Attachment A) and attach a copy of the notice, agenda, course description, or letter of invitation relating to the event the appointee will attend and reasonable estimates of the reimbursable expenses the attendee expects to incur;
- (B) The Director of Fiscal & Management Resources shall indicate the availability of funds to reimburse the Court appointee for the expenses that will be incurred by signing the form;
- (C) The Administrative Director shall indicate approval of the travel by signing the form.

SECTION 4.0. TIME OF TRAVEL.

4.1. Dates of Departure.

A Court appointee who is traveling out of state on Court business may begin such travel at Court expense no earlier than the day before the event begins.

4.2. Dates of Return.

A Court appointee who is traveling out of state on Court business may end such travel at Court expense no later than the day the event ends, if the event is scheduled to end before noon Ohio time. If the event is scheduled to end at noon or later Ohio time, the appointee may end such travel at Court expense no later than the day after the event ends.

4.3. Beginning and End of Event.

For purposes of determining the time a Court appointee who is traveling out of state on Court business is authorized to travel at Court expense, an event begins at the time of the first scheduled event as listed on the notice, agenda, course description, or letter of invitation attendees are invited or required to attend and concludes with the last scheduled event listed on the notice, agenda, course description, or letter of invitation attendees are invited or required to attend.

4.4. Extended Stay at Court Expense.

A Court appointee who is traveling out of state on Court business may be authorized to travel at Court expense for one or more days in addition to those authorized by Guidelines 4.1 and 4.2 if the appointee demonstrates the extension of the appointee's travel will result in a net reduction in travel expenses to be reimbursed by the Court, as determined by the Director of Fiscal & Management Resources. A net reduction in travel expenses to be reimbursed by the Court may be established by demonstrating the availability of a lower airfare, taking into account additional lodging, meal, and other travel expenses the appointee may incur during the extension of the appointee's travel time.

4.5. Extended Stay at Personal Expense.

A Court appointee who is traveling out of state on Court business may elect to extend the duration of the travel at the appointee's personal expense and begin or end the travel on days other than the days authorized in Guidelines 4.1 and 4.2. The extended travel shall not result in any additional expense to the Court.

SECTION 5.0. REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES.

5.1. Reimbursement of Transportation Expenses.

(A) Common carrier

A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for transportation expenses incurred when traveling on Court business by common carrier. Reimbursement shall be at actual cost, provided the cost is reasonable as determined by the Director of Fiscal & Management Resources. Reasonableness shall be based upon a demonstration that the cost is similar to rates by other reputable carriers in effect at the time the

travel arrangements are made for travel by the same mode of transportation, to the same destination, and at a similar time. Reimbursement shall not be provided for unused reservations on common carriers unless the Director of Fiscal & Management Resources determines the failure to cancel or use the reservation was unavoidable. Unused tickets shall be returned to the Office of Fiscal & Management Resources. Reimbursement for in-state travel by common air carrier is not permitted.

(B) Privately-owned motor vehicle

A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for transportation expenses incurred while traveling on Court business by privately-owned motor vehicle at the standard business mileage rate designated by the Internal Revenue Service. Reimbursement shall be made only to one of two or more Court appointees who are traveling in the same privately-owned motor vehicle.

(C) Taxi, shuttle service, and rented motor vehicle

A Court appointee shall not be reimbursed for transportation expenses incurred while traveling in state on Court business by taxi, shuttle service, or rented motor vehicle. A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for transportation expenses incurred while traveling out of state on Court business by rented motor vehicle in an amount not to exceed four hundred dollars.

A Court appointee who has traveled out of state on Court business by common carrier shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred for taxi, shuttle service, or rented motor vehicle transportation while at the out-of-state destination. Reimbursement shall be at actual cost, provided the cost is reasonable as determined by the Director of Fiscal & Management Resources.

Reasonableness in the use of a rented motor vehicle shall be based upon a Court appointee demonstrating that taxi or shuttle service was not available, that the use of a rented motor vehicle is more economical than using taxi or shuttle service, or that the destination was not easily accessible by taxi or shuttle service.

(D) Parking, tolls, and other transportation expenses

A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for other transportation expenses incurred while traveling on Court business, including parking and tolls. Reimbursement shall be at actual cost, provided the cost is reasonable as determined by the Director of Fiscal & Management Resources.

5.2. Reimbursement of Meal Expenses.

(A) Meal expenses

A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for meal expenses incurred while traveling on Court business involving an overnight stay. A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for meal expenses incurred on either an actual cost or per-diem basis, as selected by the appointee, at a rate not to exceed the maximum rate outlined in the table below. Reimbursement on an actual cost or per-diem basis when traveling overnight shall be consistently claimed for all meals during the same day of travel, but may vary from day to day.

If a Court appointee is attending a meeting, conference, seminar, or workshop and the registration fee includes one or more meals, the appointee shall not be reimbursed for other meals purchased during the same meal period, except for a breakfast purchased when a continental breakfast is included as part of the registration fee or because of special dietary needs.

Type of Reimbursement	Breakfast (4:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.)	Lunch (10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)	Dinner (6:00 p.m. to midnight)	All Day
Per Diem	\$7.00	\$8.00	\$15.00	\$30.00
Actual Cost (in-state)	\$9.00	\$12.00	\$19.00	\$40.00
Actual Cost (out-of-state)	\$12.00	\$18.00	\$30.00	\$60.00

(B) Allocation of expenses

Reimbursement for meal expenses requires an allocation for breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner. However, if a Court appointee is in travel status during more than one meal period in a day, the appointee may combine the maximum limits for those meal periods without allocation.

(C) Meal gratuities

A Court appointee who claims reimbursement on an actual cost basis shall be reimbursed for meal gratuities, not to exceed fifteen percent of the total reimbursable meal expense. The amount of the gratuity shall not count against the applicable maximum amount for reimbursements on an actual cost basis. There shall be no separate reimbursement for meal gratuities where meal reimbursement is made on a per-diem basis.

5.3. Reimbursement of Lodging Expenses.

(A) Commercial lodging

A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for lodging expenses incurred in commercial establishments while traveling overnight on Court business. Reimbursement shall be at actual cost, provided the cost is reasonable as determined by the Director of Fiscal & Management Resources. A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for lodging expenses only when the appointee incurs the expense more than forty-five miles from the appointee's residence. This limitation shall not apply to a Court appointee who is responsible for serving as staff support for or is otherwise required to attend a meeting, conference, seminar, or workshop sponsored or conducted by the Court. A Court appointee shall attempt to secure the lowest rate at a convenient commercial establishment and shall specifically request the government rate, if available, and exemption from applicable taxes.

(B) Noncommercial, private lodging

A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for lodging expenses incurred in a noncommercial, private dwelling while traveling overnight on Court business. Reimbursement shall be at fifteen dollars per appointee, per calendar day, except when lodging with the appointee's parents or children, including step-parents and step-children.

5.4. Reimbursement of Miscellaneous Travel Expenses.

(A) Non-meal gratuities

A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for non-meal gratuities incurred while traveling overnight on Court business, including tips for porter, housekeeping, and taxi services. Reimbursement shall be at actual cost, at a total cost not to exceed five dollars for all non-meal gratuities per day.

(B) Miscellaneous living expenses

A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for miscellaneous living expenses incurred while traveling on Court business for more than five consecutive calendar days, including laundry and dry cleaning services. Reimbursement shall be at actual cost, provided the cost is reasonable as determined by the Director of Fiscal & Management Resources.

(C) Alcohol and entertainment

A Court appointee shall not be reimbursed for alcohol or entertainment expenses.

SECTION 6.0. CLAIMING EXPENSES.

6.1. Travel Expense Report.

(A) Reporting requirement

A Court appointee shall be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred in accordance with these guidelines upon submission of a completed “Travel Expense Report” to the Office of Fiscal & Management Resources (copy provided as Attachment B). A “Travel Expense Report” submitted by a Court appointee shall be signed by the Court employee who staffs the board, commission, advisory committee, or task force to which the appointee is assigned or the Chief Justice, Justice, or senior staff employee who requested the appointee to perform an official duty or responsibility for the Court.

(B) Reporting deadline

A Court appointee shall submit a “Travel Expense Report” no later than sixty days after the travel expense is incurred.

(C) Receipts

A Court appointee shall attach to the “Travel Expense Report” original itemized receipts for all transportation, meal, lodging, and miscellaneous expenses for which reimbursement is sought, except for meal expenses when a per-diem reimbursement is claimed. Receipts are not required for non-meal gratuities of five dollars or less per day. The Director of Fiscal & Management Resources may require any reasonable form of verification of an expense, in addition to or in lieu of the required receipts, if additional verification is necessary to ascertain the propriety of the reimbursement or if the required receipts are not available. The Court reserves the right to contact the provider of any service claimed as an expense for such verification, including requesting duplicate itemized receipts. Failure to provide receipts or additional forms of requested verification shall be cause to disallow a request for reimbursement, except when a per-diem reimbursement is claimed.

SECTION 7.0. MISCELLANEOUS GUIDELINES.

7.1. Motor Vehicle Liability.

A Court appointee is advised to check with the appointee’s motor vehicle insurer regarding the scope of coverage afforded under the appointee’s policy of insurance for use of a personal or rented motor vehicle while traveling on Court business.

7.2. Application of Guidelines.

These guidelines shall apply to all boards, commissions, advisory committees, and task forces, with the exception that all requirements involving the Administrative Director and the Director of Fiscal & Management Resources as set forth herein shall be performed by the Secretary to the Board of Commissioners on Grievances and Discipline for all Court appointees of that board and by the Administrator of the Board of Commissioners of the Clients' Security Fund for all appointees of that board.

Effective Date: January 1, 2006

Amended: February 1, 2010