

<b>ODNR TRAVEL EXPENSE POLICY &amp; PROCEDURE</b>	
<b>- Effective</b>	September 1, 2008
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Purpose</b>	To outline the proper expense guidelines for travel & professional development activities.
 <b>Authority</b>	ORC 1501.01 ORC 126.31
 <b>Reference</b>	OBM Travel Rule OAC 126-1-02
 <b>Resource</b>	Chief of Office of Budget and Finance Chief of Office of Internal Audits

**General**

This policy outlines the travel expense reimbursement guidelines as issued by the Office of Budget and Management (OBM); this policy does not supersede OCSEA or FOP applicable collective bargaining agreement language.

**In-State & Out-of-State Travel**

There is no distinction between in-state and out-of-state travel. The OBM travel rule refers to either continental U.S. travel or out-of-country travel. Continental U.S. travel is travel within the United States and Canada. Out-of-country is travel outside of the United States and Canada.

At this time there are no travel exceptions for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on file with OBM.

**Authority for Travel**

Employees requesting travel reimbursement must complete a Travel Expense Report form. All travel by state agents at state expense or on paid travel status (includes an overnight stay) must be approved in advance by the Agency Director or his designee.

Requests within DNR for blanket pre approval of travel expenses will be handled on a case by case basis by the appropriate Division Chief, Deputy Director and Chief of the Office of Budget and Finance.

**Transportation Expenses**

Travel by Privately Owned Automobile: Exempt employees who travel by privately owned automobiles may be reimbursed for mileage incurred on state business at the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) standard rate which is currently 50.5 cents per mile. OCSEA and FOP employees will be reimbursed pursuant to applicable collective bargaining agreement language.

Documentation of why a personal vehicle was used rather than a "pool" vehicle should be attached to all travel reimbursement requests. This documentation will be evaluated as part of the management approval process of the travel expense report.

Receipts are required for all service expenses incurred in connection with the operation of state owned automobiles, all common carrier expenses, and all miscellaneous transportation expenses exceeding \$10/day.

All state agents shall not be reimbursed for mileage normally incurred during their daily commute from their home to their regular work location. For example, if the employee's normal commute is 10 miles, but the employee is reporting to another location 30 miles away, the employee is only reimbursed for 20 miles. OCSEA and FOP employees will be reimbursed pursuant to applicable collective bargaining agreement language.

**Meals**

Standard Meal Reimbursement: Reimbursement for meals for exempt employees is authorized only when overnight lodging is required. No receipts for meals are required for the standard meal reimbursement rates (including tips) for **full travel** days for exempts as set forth below:

Breakfast	\$ 6
Lunch	\$ 9
Dinner	\$12
Incidentals	\$ 4
Total	\$31

The amount of reimbursement will be prorated on **departure and return days** based upon the schedule as outlined below:

- (a) Maximum rate of \$10.00 if the employee is on travel status any time after midnight but no later than 10:00 a.m.
- (b) Maximum rate of \$13.00 if the employee is on travel status any time after 10:00 a.m. but no later than 4:00 p.m.
- (c) Maximum rate of \$16.00 if the employee is on travel status any time after 4:00 p.m. but no later than midnight.
- (d) On the day of departure or return, if the employee is on travel status for more than one of the above specified time periods, meal reimbursement is authorized in the amount of the total of the individual meal amounts specified for those time periods plus incidentals. Reimbursement of the total amount does not require an allocation for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Meal reimbursement in that total amount may be allocated for meals as the employee chooses.

OCSEA and FOP employees will be reimbursed pursuant to applicable collective bargaining agreement language.

At no time shall a state agent claim or be reimbursed for more than their actual travel expenses.

The meal reimbursement rates may be updated annually by OBM according to the federal schedule.

Conference Meals: If a conference includes or provides a meal, the state agent shall not be reimbursed for that same meal under paragraph (D) of the OBM travel rule (Rule 126-1-02 of the Ohio Administrative Code).

**Lodging**

Reimbursement for lodging in commercial establishments is authorized per state agent per calendar day at actual cost up to the maximum rate of \$80.00 plus applicable taxes on the entire room, or the lowest available government rate in the area with approval from the Director or his designee. Requests for lodging exceeding \$80 must be accompanied by 3 quotes attached to the travel request form.

Out of Country reimbursement lodging is authorized per state agent per calendar day at actual cost when such cost is reasonable as determined by the Director or his designee. Remember, that Canada is not considered out of country in accordance to the travel rules.

Overnight lodging may be reimbursed only when the state agent is traveling on official state business **and** is either:

- A. At a location greater than 45 miles of both that state agent's residence and headquarters, or;
- B. At a location greater than 30 miles of both the state agent's residence and headquarters for conference purposes.

Receipts are required for all lodging expenses.