

## HARRISON COUNTY TRAVEL POLICY

The following policy is adopted by the Harrison County Commissioner's Court to be effective APRIL 14, 2008, and replaces any previous county travel policy, custom, or practice.

### GENERAL DEFINITIONS

1. **Educational Travel** ~Travel out-of-county for official educational seminars, conferences, and meetings. Travel expense forms must be submitted to claim reimbursement for educational travel. Items included on travel expense forms include by way of example meals, lodging, airline fares, use of personal auto, public transportation, and conference registration fees.
2. **Actual Expense** ~ The actual cost of any allowable travel expense supported by proper receipts or statements.
3. **Per Diem Allowance** ~The approved IRS Federal per diem rate paid in lieu of actual expenses for meals and incidental expenses.
4. **Authorized Signature** ~The signature of a Department Head, Elected Official, or employee authorized to approve claims for a county official or employee. This authorization must be on file in the County Auditor's office.
5. **Official County Business** ~ Business in which a county employee or official participates in an activity recognized by the County Commissioners Court as being official business of the county.
6. **Traveling County Employee** ~ The county official, department head, or employee traveling on official county business who accrues expenses to be reimbursed by the county.
7. **Auditor** ~ County Auditor or designated staff.
8. **Treasurer** ~ County Treasurer or designated staff..
9. **County Purchasing Agent** ~ County Purchasing Agent or designated staff.
10. **County Official or County Employee** ~ Any county employee or official who is authorized to travel on official county business.
11. **Travel Expense Forms** ~ Expense forms used to report all actual or estimated travel expenses for official county business to be submitted to the County Treasurer for reimbursement.
12. **Travel Time** ~ Means the employee will be considered "on the clock" while traveling from Marshall to the destination site and while returning to Marshall.

## RESPONSIBILITY OF OFFICIALS, DEPARTMENT HEADS AND EMPLOYEES

County Elected Officials and Department Heads are expected to plan the out-of-county travel for themselves and their employees to achieve maximum economy and efficiency. The purpose of the travel should be the same as that travel approved in the individual departmental budgets in any particular fiscal year. All county reimbursed travel must be for **OFFICIAL COUNTY BUSINESS ONLY**.

It is the responsibility of the Elected Official or Department Head to see that all Travel Expense Forms are properly completed and signed before being sent to the Purchasing Department.

If a travel advance (Travel Expense Form #1) is requested, it is the responsibility of the Elected Official or Department Head to see that the Travel Expense Form is presented to the Purchasing Department within the time restrictions set out on the travel forms.

Any refund due the county from the Travel Advance will be submitted to the County Treasurer and a copy of the Treasurer's receipt will be attached to Travel Expense Form # 2 when it is turned in.

It is the responsibility of the Elected Official or Department Head to see that all reimbursement forms to the State of Texas, or any other reimbursing agency other than the county, are promptly submitted to the reimbursing agency. When reimbursements are received they should see that those funds are deposited with the County Treasurer and copies of the receipts sent to the County Auditor.

It is the responsibility of the person traveling on official county business to keep all lodging invoices and vouchers to be submitted to the Treasurer on Travel Expense Form # 2. When the traveling employee requests to be reimbursed for actual expenses for lodging and other travel-related expenses, that employee must submit supporting invoices or statements with Travel Expense Form # 2 to receive actual reimbursement. The traveling employee will be reimbursed for meals at the per diem rate.

It is the responsibility of the traveling employee to provide copies of conference programs to support the payment of conference dues and registration fees. **CONFERENCE PROGRAMS/AGENDAS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE TRAVEL EXPENSE FORM # 1 IN ORDER TO RECEIVE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE IN ADVANCE.**

In the event an official or employee of the county receives an overpayment (through a requested travel reimbursement advance) for travel expenses, that overpayment will immediately be reimbursed to the county upon the return of the official or employee to the county.

It is the responsibility of the Elected Official or Department Head prior to departure to make a request to the Commissioner's Court and receive permission for all OUT OF STATE TRAVEL (except for travel by the Harrison County Sheriffs Department to obtain or deliver prisoners). Without such prior approval no reimbursement shall be allowed.

Section 152.011 of the Texas Local Government Code gives the Commissioners Court the authority to set travel expenses and other allowances for all county officials and employees. The County Commissioners Court allows reimbursement of travel expenses for county officials and employees who travel on official county business when funds have been allocated in departmental budgets for that purpose.

The traveling county employee will be reimbursed for actual expenses (see list below) incurred while traveling, provided the employee keeps and submits invoices, receipts, and all other documentation supporting the actual expenditures and this documentation is submitted to the County Treasurer on Travel Expense Form # 2.

The traveling county employee must submit receipts, invoices and documentation for the following in order to be reimbursed:

- Parking Garage Charges
- Lodging Statements
- Taxi Fares
- Conference Registration and Fees
- Automobile Expense Charges for County Vehicles

A Per Diem for meals/incidental expenses has been approved by the County Commissioner's Court as per the IRS Federal Per Diem rates by location. (Check the County Auditor's web-site for a list of cities and applicable rates).

All other requests for reimbursement, including lodging, must have supporting documentation in order for the traveling employee to be reimbursed. If requests for reimbursement on Travel Expense Form # 2 are not supported by documentation, the County Auditor will not approve the requests.

### MEALS

Meals and incidental expenses (tips, laundry, cleaning expenses, etc.) will be reimbursed at the currently approved IRS Federal per diem rates applicable to the destination site. If and when the IRS changes these rates, the new rates will be posted to the County Auditor's web-site.

For trips that **do not** require an overnight stay the employee will be eligible for 1/3 the daily per diem rate for locations within 100 miles of Marshall, and 2/3 the daily per diem rate for locations over 100 miles from Marshall. Payment of non-overnight per diem expenses will be paid through payroll in accordance with Federal Law. (See form attached)

For trips that require overnight stays per diem will be at 1/3 the daily rate for the date of departure if destination is 350 miles or less from the Harrison County Courthouse, and 2/3 the daily rate if destination is more than 350 miles, plus the full daily rate for each day the employee is at the conference, seminar or training meeting. If the conference concludes at such a time as to require an additional night of stay the travel rate will apply to the date of return.

The County will reimburse for county employee meals only. If the traveling county employee elects to purchase meals for friends or other county officials, that decision will be at the expense of the county employee and will not be reimbursed by the county. Receipts will not be required to substantiate meals and incidental expenses since we are utilizing the IRS per diem rates.

## LODGING

The County will reimburse the traveling county employee for the actual cost of lodging while traveling on official county business. If possible, the County employees are encouraged to book lodging at the hotel at which the Conference, seminar or training session is held. If this is not possible the traveling employee should always obtain lodging where a "conference or government rate" is offered. The county employee will obtain a lodging statement/receipt, which will be submitted with Travel Expense Form No. 2, when the employee returns to the County.

Those items, which will be reimbursed on the hotel statement, are:

- Daily Room Charges (up to the maximum allowed)
- Necessary Hotel Taxes
- Business Telephone Calls
- Hotel Parking Fees

Those items, which **WILL NOT** be reimbursed on the hotel statements, are:

- Meals (covered by daily per diem)
- Personal expense items such as cleaning or laundry
- Alcoholic beverage charges
- Recreation Facilities use charges
- Movies and personal phone calls

If the employee's spouse or dependents are traveling with the employee, the County will only pay the cost of a single room rate. Any additional charge for the extra person will be the employee's personal expense. If the actual lodging charges are more than the travel advance, the employee will be reimbursed for the difference upon proper submission of Travel Expense Form # 2. If the actual lodging charges are less than the travel advance, the employee will reimburse the county for the difference within five (5) business days after returning to the County.

Depending on travel arrangements, the county will reimburse the traveling county employee for a maximum of one (1) day lodging prior to the start of a conference or seminar and lodging through and including the last day of the conference or seminar. Any additional lodging will be at the expense of the county employee unless proof is presented that the additional lodging is a result of extended county business.

## APPROVED TYPES OF TRANSPORTATION

**COMMERCIAL AIRLINES** ~ Airline tickets must be paid for in advance. The county employee will submit Travel Expense Form No. 1 to the County Purchasing Department. The Purchasing Department staff will book the flight at the lowest available airline fare for the most direct airline route.

**TAXI AND BUS FARES** ~ The traveling county employee will obtain receipts for taxi or bus fares and will be reimbursed by the county for those fares related to county business. Receipts or statements will be submitted to the County Treasurer along with Travel Expense Form # 2 upon return to the county.

**AUTO RENTAL**~ Rental car leases should be done in advance through the Purchasing Department. The Commissioner's Court will allow the rental of a **FULL SIZE OR SMALLER VEHICLE ONLY** (as defined by the car rental company). Copies of receipts for fuel and other auto expenses must be submitted to the County Treasurer on Travel Expense Form # 2 for reimbursement. The County will not pay for rented vehicles at the destination site without prior approval of the Purchasing Department.

**PERSONAL AUTOMOBILES** ~ The County will pay the traveling county employee the stated IRS rate for each mile of use of their personal automobile while traveling in state on out-of-county business. The mileage payment will be based on the most direct route from the Harrison County Courthouse to the destination where county business takes place. Any business miles driven while at the destination, should be calculated upon return to the County and submitted to the County Treasurer on Travel Expense Form #2 for reimbursement. No other automobile expense will be paid to the traveling county employee other than the fixed price per mile as approved by the IRS rate. All out-of-state travel on official county business will be reimbursed at commercial airline rates or price per mile, whichever is most economical.

**COUNTY OWNED AUTOS** ~ The County will reimburse actual expenses, such as gas, oil or other such maintenance items. Receipts are required for all these items. All employees who are assigned a County owned vehicle must use that vehicle for out of county travel unless prior approval to use another mode of travel is obtained from the Commissioner's Court.

## LOCAL TRANSPORTATION EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Several departments in the County require their employees to travel within the county on official county business. When a county employee uses a personal automobile for this purpose, the employee may be reimbursed for use of their personal auto at the stated IRS rate per mile.

Before an employee may be reimbursed for local travel, there must first be a department budget allocation for local travel. This allocation will be made during the budget process or by the County Commissioner's Court.

When there is a departmental budget allocation, the county employee requesting reimbursement for local travel expense must complete the Local Transportation Expense Reimbursement form for this purpose and submit the form to the County Treasurer for reimbursement. These forms are available on the County Auditor's web-site.

Reimbursement for local travel is made from speedometer readings on the personal auto and a description of the purpose of the official county business.

## TRAVEL EXPENSE FORMS

**TRAVEL FORM #1** ~ Use this form when the official or employee desires to receive advance funding prior to beginning official county business or educational travel. Form #1 shall be submitted to the County Purchasing Department no later than 12:00 noon on the Tuesday before the Commissioner's Court meeting in order to receive prior approval.

**TRAVEL FORM #2** ~ Use this form when the official or employee requests reimbursement of travel expenses upon return of official county business or educational travel. In order for reimbursement to be approved, the traveling official or employee must submit receipts, invoices and documentation for the following:

- Parking Garage Charges
- Lodging Statements
- Taxi Fares
- Conference Registration and Fees
- Automobile Expense Charges for County Vehicles
- Meals/Incidental expenses

**LOCAL TRANSPORTATION EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT FORM** ~ Use this form to be submitted to the County Treasurer to claim reimbursement for use of personal auto for official LOCAL county business travel. Reimbursement will be at the current IRS rate.

**EXPENSE FORM FOR NON-OVERNIGHT MEALS** ~ Use this form for reimbursement of non-overnight per diem expenses. Payment for such expenses paid through payroll in accordance with Federal Law. Completed form should be submitted to the PAYROLL DEPARTMENT with your time sheet/payroll.

Person Submitting Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Purpose of Travel: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: In order to receive an advance on travel expenses, this form must be completed and **submitted to the Purchasing Department no later than 12:00 noon on the Tuesday before the Commissioner's Court Meeting** on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday and the 4th Tuesday of each month. Upon return to the County, Travel Form # 2 **MUST** be completed and submitted to the County Auditor along with a receipt from the County Treasurer for any refund due the County or added expense receipts incurred.

**Actual Lodging**

Date	Lodging (Verification of Amount Attached)	Daily Total
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

PO# \_\_\_\_\_ Make check payable to: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Meal & Incidental Expense (M&IE) Per Diem**

Date	M&IE Per Diem By Location
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PO# \_\_\_\_\_ Make Check Payable To: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated Travel and Transportation**

Airline, Bus, Train (Attach Supporting Information) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Personal Auto \_\_\_\_\_ Miles 50.5 cents per mile

PO# \_\_\_\_\_ Make Check Payable To: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated Other Expense**

Conference Registration Expense (Attach Supporting Information) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Expense (Explain In Detail) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

PO# \_\_\_\_\_ Make Check Payable To: \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Elected Official or Department Head**

"The above named employee is hereby authorized to submit this advance travel expense form for the purpose stated hereon."

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Official or Department Head

HARRISON COUNTY, TEXAS  
TRAVEL EXPENSE FORM NO. 2

NAME OF PERSON SUBMITTING REPORT: \_\_\_\_\_  
NAME OF EPARTMENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
DESTINATION: \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTURE DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ RETURN DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

MEALS: You may claim reimbursement for meals at the approved IRS Federal per diem rate so long as no per diem advance was received. If no advance was received but you are requesting reimbursement for meals, please attach a copy of the seminar or conference agenda to this form.

DATE	DAILY TOTAL
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
TOTAL (M&IE): _____	

LODGING: Actual expenses for lodging will be paid. Receipts must be attached for reimbursement to be paid.

DATES: TO: \_\_\_\_\_ FROM: \_\_\_\_\_  
RATE PER DAY: \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL LODGING: \_\_\_\_\_

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION

\*\*Airline, Bus, Train (Attach Travel Ticket Invoice)---- \_\_\_\_\_  
\*\*Personal Auto \_\_\_\_\_ Miles @ \_\_\_\_\_ cents Per Mile  
(Shortest Route)----- \_\_\_\_\_  
\*\*Other Travel or Transportation Expense (Attach  
Receipts)----- \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER EXPENSES

\*\*Conference Registration (Attach Receipt and Copy  
of Conference Program)----- \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL THIS TRAVEL EXPENSE FORM \_\_\_\_\_  
DEDUCT ADVANCE FROM FORM NO. 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
AMOUNT OF REIMBURSEMENT - OR - DUE TO COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

CERTIFICATION BY EMPLOYEE: "I certify that the Expenses as shown on this form are true and correct statements of expenses incurred by me while traveling on official county business."

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Employee

CERTIFICATION OF ELECTED OFFICIAL OR DEPARTMENT HEAD: "I certify that the above named employee received proper authorization for official county travel. I have examined the request for reimbursement and recommend the same for payment."

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Official



# HARRISON COUNTY EXPENSE FORM NON - OVERNIGHT MEALS

PERSON REQUEST FOR: \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE FOR TRAVEL: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY LINE ITEM # :

DATE	LOCATION (CITY)	AMOUNT (IRS rate)

TOTALS \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Elected Official or Department Head**

"The above named employee is hereby authorized to submit this advance travel expense form for the purpose stated hereon."

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Official or Department Head

**\*\*\* All non-overnight travel expense for meals are now paid through payroll.**

**TURN THIS FORM INTO EMMA  
WITH YOUR TIMESHEET/PAYROLL**