

## **Mecklenburg County Manager's Office**

### **Travel Policy and Procedures Manual**

*Updated: June 14, 2019*

**POLICY:** This policy is intended to act in addition to the Mecklenburg County's Financial Policies and Procedures-Travel document. This policy does not supersede the Financial Policies and Procedures-Travel policy. The Mecklenburg County Manager's Office (CMO) recognizes and acknowledges the need for employees to travel for both conducting business and training opportunities relative to program operations. All CMO employees will be knowledgeable of and be responsible for following the Travel Policies and Procedures approved by Mecklenburg County. All CMO employees will receive internal training and review regarding this policy within 30 days of their hire-date and annually at the start of each new Fiscal Year. This policy will be reviewed and updated as needed by the Chief of Staff or their assistant.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and establish procedures regarding approval of travel and receiving reimbursement of expenses for CMO employees that incur expenses when performing official County business away from the office.

**PROCEDURE:** Specific and detailed procedures for travel can be found in the Mecklenburg County Travel Policy. More specific Department-level CMO policies are as follows:

- I. Out of town, over-night travel related to conducting County business or attending a training is a privilege and not a right. Therefore, the traveler should exercise good judgment when incurring travel expenses and use County funds prudently.
- II. Reimbursement to the employee of travel expenditures for day trips or over-night travel is contingent upon the availability of funds in individual division budgets. The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), the County's Executive Team (ET), Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Clerk's Office, Enterprise Project Management (EPMO), Business Process Management (BPM), the Assistants to the Board, and all remaining CMO staff all have separate divisional budget lines for travel and training expenses that need to be monitored.
- III. Supervisors or Managers approving the travel should ensure that:
  - a. the trip is necessary;
  - b. business value will be derived from it;
  - c. funds are available in the budget account identified; and
  - d. expenses charged by the traveler are reasonable and reported accurately
- IV. County Finance will reimburse travel expenses that have been approved as reasonable, are appropriately documented and are within the guidelines of the policy upon return and submission of documentation for reimbursement.

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- V. Employees that have a Travel Purchasing Card (P-Card), may use this card for direct payments for registration, hotel, and other travel related expenses for out-of-County travel, excluding meals. Advance payments are no longer authorized.
- VI. All approved County Travel Authorization and Expense Report documents should be saved and filed by either the employee or their assistant on their behalf, either in a digital or hard-copy format.
- VII. The Executive Assistant to the County Manager will, on at least a monthly basis, reconcile the travel funds available for use within the CMO office divisions.

#### **BEFORE TRIP**

- I. Employees are to complete and sign the County Travel Authorization and Expense Report (estimate tab) at least 10 days before their planned trip and provide supporting documentation for expenses estimated to be reimbursed to employee (hotel costs, travel arrangements/costs, registration fee, map denoting mileage estimate, etc.).
  - a. Direct payments for registration, hotel, and other travel related expenses except meals may be put on a travel p-card per Mecklenburg County Financial Policies & Procedures. Receipts for p-card purchases must still be included.
  - b. If employee is new or does not have a vendor number in the county financial system, employee must complete a W9 form and ACH form for electronic funds transfer.
    - i. Forms should be sent to [Vendor.Management@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov](mailto:Vendor.Management@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov). On this email, include your name and "EMPLOYEE" in the subject line. (The need for the ACH form is required for the financial system. It is separate from the payroll system.)
- II. The employee's Supervisor or Manager should review the request to ensure that the trip has a business purpose and funds are available. If the trip is approved, the Supervisor or Manager returns approved and signed the County Travel Authorization and Expense Report (estimate tab) to employee.
- III. All employees should make a digital or hard-copy backup copy of the approved County Travel Authorization and Expense Report (estimate tab) for their files.
- IV. After approval of their estimates form, the employee will need to send all supporting documents and the signed Travel Authorization form to the Finance Department for processing.

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#### AFTER TRIP

- I. Within four business days after their return date, the employee should complete, sign and submit the County Travel Authorization and Expense Report (Actuals Tab) to their Supervisor or Manager.
  - a. Documentation supporting all costs must be included (i.e. map or directions denoting mileage, hotel bill, and all documentation presented in the estimates page- including registration, flights, etc.).
  - b. Original and individual receipts must be taped to an 8 ½ x 11 piece of paper.
  - c. If money is owed to the County, a personal check for the amount owed must accompany the Travel Actuals form. If monies are due the traveler, he or she will receive payment via direct deposit for any monies due them.
- II. The employee's Supervisor or Manager should review the final County Travel Authorization and Expense Report (Actuals Tab) to ensure that the recorded total and the requested reimbursement align with the provided backup documentation. If approved, the Supervisor or Manager returns approved and signed County Travel Authorization and Expense Report (Actuals Tab) to employee.
- III. All employees will make either a digital or hard-copy of their final approved County Travel Authorization and Expense Report (Actuals Tab) document for their files.
- IV. Employees must then send their final documents to the Finance Department to be reviewed within 10 days of their return in accordance with County policy.
- V. Day trip travelers are expected to submit the Day Travel Report Form to their approver for processing within two business days of their return.

#### APPROVALS

- I. Each CMO Division has a position that is responsible for their team's travel approvals:

Division	Approver
County Commissioners	County Manager
County Manager	Finance Director
Assistant County Managers (ACM)	County Manager
Assistants to the County Manager	Respective Assistant County Managers
Clerk's Office	Clerk to the Board
EPMO Staff	EPMO Division Director
BPM Staff	BPM Division Director
OMB Staff	OMB Division Director
SP&E Staff	SP&E Division Director

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#### **TRAINING**

- I. The most current version of this policy and an accompanying summary presentation will be sent out by the Chief of Staff or their assistant to all CMO Division Directors each fiscal year. Division Directors will be responsible for distributing this policy to their staff and will be responsible for ensuring all staff receive the materials. The Chief of Staff or their assistant will be responsible for distributing the policy to the BOCC and the Executive Team.
- II. Within 30 days of their hire, new CMO staff will be required to receive this policy and the accompanying summary presentation and sign the Mecklenburg County Manager's Office Travel Policy Training and Policy Review Attestation Form, which is available on the CMO's MeckWeb Forms page. The Division Director of the new employee will be responsible for giving the new hire the travel policy and presentation, as well as ensuring they sign the Attestation Form.
- III. If this policy undergoes any changes, all CMO staff will be required to review the updated policy and sign a new Mecklenburg County Manager's Office Travel Policy Training and Policy Review Attestation Form. The edited policy will be sent out by the Chief of Staff or their assistant to all Division Directors to then distribute to their staff. The Chief of Staff or their assistant will be responsible for distributing the policy to the BOCC and the Executive Team.
- IV. Signed attestation forms should be sent to the assistant of the Chief of Staff or their assistant, who is responsible for monitoring compliance and for retaining physical and digital copies of the Attestations.
- V. Formal training, in a presentation form, will be given to the BOCC as needed or when edits have been made to this policy.