

CONFERENCES AND TRAVEL

The Monterey County Superintendent of Schools (County Superintendent) or designee authorizes members of his/her staff to attend conferences, workshops and meetings on behalf of the Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE) which have been approved by the Division and/or Department Head within the State of California. The County Superintendent must approve all travel out of the State. The Deputy Superintendent must approve all travel by Division Heads. No special written approval is necessary for travel required by an employee's normal job assignment within the four-county area of Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz, and Santa Clara Counties unless travel is connected with a specific conference or workshop. Payment for non-employees is permitted when program rules and regulations specify it is allowed. Travel reimbursements for spouses and children are not allowed.

Mode of TravelDetermination of up to 200 miles (one-way)

For trips of up to 200 miles (one-way) the generally accepted mode of travel is private auto except in those cases where the total expenses associated with common carrier travel are demonstrably less. Use of private vehicle requires completion of Personal Automobile Permission form annually. (Exhibit 1)

Determination of over 200 miles (one-way)

For trips in excess of 200 one-way miles, travel by air is authorized as the overall most cost-efficient mode of travel. If trips over 200 one-way miles are taken by car, train or bus the reimbursement for travel expense is limited to the amount that would normally be reimbursed for travel by airplane using the cost of the least expensive carrier with at least 14 calendar days' notice. Employees must complete the Travel Expense Cost-Efficient Certification form to determine the least cost mode of travel. (Exhibit 2)

Costs of travel on a common carrier may be reimbursed or acquired by purchase order with proper approval.

Travel by train is authorized for those situations where this mode of travel is cost effective in terms of both staff time and actual expense.

The San Jose Airport is considered the approved port of departure for air travel unless it can be demonstrated that departure from another airport is more cost effective in terms of plane ticket, parking and mileage expense. If an employee chooses to depart from another airport, and the costs are higher than departure from the San Jose Airport, reimbursement will be limited to the normal cost of a flight originating from the San Jose Airport.

Mileage Reimbursement

The cost of travel by private vehicle shall be reimbursed at the rate established by the Internal Revenue Service.

(cf. 3544.2 – Use of Personal Vehicle for MCOE Business)

Driver's License and Auto Insurance

An employee without a valid driver's license cannot drive their own vehicle, an MCOE-owned vehicle or a rental vehicle on county office official business. An employee without personal automobile insurance cannot drive their own vehicle on MCOE business and cannot certify insurance requirements for a mileage reimbursement.

Determination of Mileage

For travel on a workday, mileage for travel to or from a conference/meeting or port of departure is calculated from the employee's permanent work site. Employees must deduct the miles they normally commute from their home to their permanent work site, when calculating mileage during regular workdays.

For travel on a non-work day to and from a conference, workshop or meeting will be calculated from the employee's residence.

Use of VehiclesRental Vehicles

Rental cars are authorized for travel to conference/meetings as long as the cost of the rental car, including gas, is no greater than the mileage reimbursement for private auto travel. Rental vehicles are to be used in conjunction with official business only. Arrangements for car rentals should be coordinated through the Transportation Department. A current MCOE Driver Information Form must be on file with the employee's department, business office and transportation office. (Exhibit 3)

Automobile rental at the destination requires advance approval and will be authorized only if no transportation alternative is available or it is the most economical alternative.

County Office Vehicles

MCOE vehicles are to be driven by MCOE employees. The only exception is when employees of other agencies have MOUs with MCOE that specify the agency may use MCOE's vehicles. When an MCOE employee is checking out a county-owned vehicle, proof of a valid driver license will be required. A current MCOE Driver Information Form must be on file with the employee's department, business office and transportation office. (Exhibit 3)

Passengers in Vehicles

If an employee is driving an MCOE-owned vehicle or a rented vehicle, and are carrying passengers, the employee should be aware that they are assuming the responsibility of getting the passengers to their destination safely.

Unauthorized passengers are not allowed in an MCOE-owned or rental vehicle. Unauthorized passengers include spouses, children, friends or pets.

Chartered Aircraft

A chartered aircraft may be used when the cost incurred for such travel will be less than that of commercial airfare (economy class) or when circumstances warrant with the prior approval of the County Superintendent.

Per Diem Reimbursement

MCOE will reimburse the actual expenses or the per diem rate, whichever is lower. The customer copy of the receipts with itemized food for all meals must accompany the travel reimbursement. Alcohol and tobacco expenses are not reimbursable. For per diem, MCOE uses the meals and incidentals rates from the federal General Services Administration (GSA). The rates are based on Tiers that identify the particular area of the destination. (Exhibit 4) For rates outside of California, go to GSA website at <https://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877> to determine appropriate Tier for per diem.

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5	Tier 6
Breakfast	\$11	\$12	\$13	\$15	\$16	\$17
Lunch	\$12	\$13	\$15	\$16	\$17	\$18
Dinner	\$23	\$24	\$26	\$28	\$31	\$34
Incidentals	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5
Daily Total	\$51	\$54	\$59	\$64	\$69	\$74

Time of departure/return will govern amount of actual or per diem reimbursed on the first and last day of travel. Trips originating on the first day prior to 6:00 AM or returning on the last day after 7:00 PM are eligible for breakfast/dinner per diem. No meal reimbursements are allowed for day trips with no overnight stay.

Lodging

Hotel reservations should be made at the governmental rate whenever possible. Staff members should inquire about the availability of governmental rates when making reservations. MCOE is exempt from transient occupancy taxes at hotels and motels.

Please note: Request the Hotel/Motel Transient Occupancy Tax Waiver Exemption Claim for Government Agencies form (Exhibit 5) from the Business Office prior to overnight lodging.

If the cost of meals or lodging is included in the registration fee for the conference, workshop or meeting the employee cannot claim reimbursement for these costs.

The MCOE Employee Travel Request Form (Exhibit 6) must be completed and approved by the employee's Division/Department Head or the County Superintendent prior to the actual date of travel for the conference, workshop or meeting.

Other Costs related to Conference and Travel

Reasonable costs related to luggage are allowed and if used, will be shown on the "Other Costs" line of the MCOE Employee Travel Request Form (Exhibit 6).

Taxi, Uber, shuttle or similar transportation is allowed from airport to hotel and from hotel to conference center. Group-related activities at the conference that require transportation may be allowed if approved by the Division Head in advance.

Administrative Requirements – Advances/Reimbursement

Travel Advances for Employees

Requests for travel advances of 75% of expected costs will be authorized for attendance at conferences outside the four-county area if they are submitted in sufficient time for normal processing, normally 10 work days. Employees must complete a Request For Cash Advance form (Exhibit 7) and have the Division Head approve prior to submission to the Business Office. Employees may be allowed Travel Advances if the following conditions are met:

1. Employee would be unable to attend without a paid travel advance
2. Division Head must attest to this need by approving the Travel Advance request
3. Advances shall be granted only for approved out-of-area travel
4. Budget must contain available balance to cover cost of advance and reimbursement.

All staff members who are issued travel advances must fill out a travel reimbursement claim to clear their advances even if no reimbursement is due. If the claimed reimbursement is less than the advance, the balance must be repaid to MCOE.

Travel Advances for Mandated Travel by Parents of MCOE Programs

The County Superintendent or designee may approve, when submitted with a travel request, an advance payment of reimbursable expenses not to exceed 75% of the

estimated reimbursable travel expense. Travel Advances shall only be allowed if the following conditions are met:

1. Parent is required to be at conference or meeting based on program rules
2. Parent would be unable to attend with such an advance on reimbursable expenses
3. Program Director and Division Head must attest to the need of the request by approving the Travel Advance form
4. Advances shall be granted only for approved out-of-county travel
5. Program budget must contain available balance to cover cost of advance and reimbursement.

The program manager must complete a travel reimbursement claim and have the parent sign to clear their advances even if no reimbursement is due. If the claimed reimbursement is less than the advance, the balance must be repaid to MCOE.

Reimbursement Claims

All travel reimbursement claims should be submitted on a monthly basis. At fiscal year-end (June 30), all outstanding travel claims must be submitted by July 15 to allow the closing of the financial records. Claims for mileage or individual expenses should be accumulated until at least \$25 has been accrued or June 30 of that fiscal year, whichever occurs first.

Use of CAL-Card

For MCOE employees that have been assigned a State of California CAL-Card for restricted use for travel and conference expenses, please refer to the Monterey County Office of Education State of California CAL-Card Purchasing Card Program Regulations and Procedures guidelines. (Exhibit 8)

Travel Outside the State of California

All out-of-state travel must be approved in advance by the County Superintendent. The procedure includes:

- write a memo detailing:
 - the purpose of the out-of-state travel,
 - why the travel is important, and
 - what outcomes are expected following the travel
- completion of the Employee Travel Request Form
- approval of the Division Head
- approval of the Deputy Superintendent
- final approval of the County Superintendent.

Travel Occurring Outside Required Work Hours

Travel time to attend an approved offsite conference or meeting occurring outside of required work hours is compensable (does not include teachers and management).

Travel time for staff to drive to a location to supervise students will not be compensated. Staff time while supervising students outside normal work hours during an official trip is compensated.

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