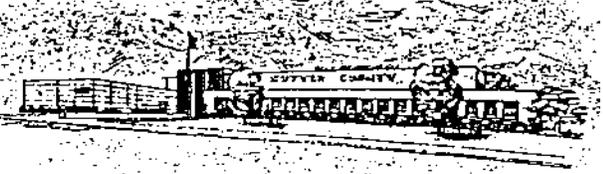


# COUNTY OF SUTTER

463 SECOND STREET  
YUBA CITY, CALIFORNIA 95991



June 15, 1994

ROBERT E. STARK, CPA  
Auditor-Controller  
phone (916) 741-7127

To: All Employees

Re: Travel and Business Expense Policy

Attached is a copy of the new Travel and Business Expense Policy which the Board of Supervisors has approved to take effect July 1, 1994.

The biggest change which will affect everyone who travels is the elimination of the requirement for meal receipts. Meals will now be reimbursed without receipts on a per diem basis up to a maximum of ~~\$30~~<sup>\$47</sup> per day. An optional reimbursement rate for special circumstances is also available with the approval of your department head up to \$47 per day with receipts.

We recommended this change to make it easier to account for and claim travel reimbursements. The Travel and Business Expense Accounting form has also been redesigned to reflect the change and make it easier to use.

*Robert E. Stark*

Robert E. Stark, CPA  
Auditor-Controller

Attachment

COUNTY OF SUTTER

TRAVEL AND BUSINESS EXPENSE POLICY

JULY 1994

GENERAL REIMBURSEMENT POLICY:

When it is necessary for County officers or employees to travel or incur expenses on County business, it is the intent of the Board of Supervisors that those officers or employees not be required to bear an undue burden as a result of that requirement, nor are officers or employees expected to accrue any personal benefit from the conduct of County business. The Board of Supervisors has therefore adopted a policy that County officers or employees shall be eligible for reimbursement for all necessary and reasonable expenses incurred when performing County business. The underlying principles of this policy are:

- County employees shall secure transportation and lodging with the prior approval of their department head.
- County officers or employees are expected to secure meals and other expenses as economically as possible commensurate with standards available at the site of the business being conducted.

SCOPE:

This policy shall apply to all County officers and employees and, when appropriate under these rules, members of boards and commissions.

REVIEW AUTHORITY:

The primary review and approval of employee claims shall be the responsibility of the department head. Claims approved by the department head shall be submitted to the Auditor-Controller for review and payment, subject to reasonable audit adjustments to conform with the requirements of this policy. Disputed claims shall be subject to further review by the County Administrative Officer.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS:

1. Out-of-State-Travel on County Business
  - A. In order to receive reimbursement for out-of-state or out-of-country travel, related to County business, **prior** approval by the Board of Supervisors is required. Such approval must be submitted with the claim in the manner prescribed by the Auditor-Controller.
  - B. Specifically exempted from the above requirement are those instances which require employees to leave the State on matters involving a criminal investigation, the transporting of prisoners, court wards, or psychiatric patients.
2. Authority for In-State Travel
  - A. Travel by members of other Boards and Commissions of the County shall be first approved by the Board of Supervisors except as provided by ordinance or State law or when the distance from Yuba City is 100 road miles or less.
  - B. County officers and department heads are authorized to travel in-state within the performance of their duties and within the limits of budgeted funds. County employees are permitted to travel in-state as may be authorized by the department head or designee. Department heads' in-state travel

of more than five consecutive work days shall first be approved by the County Administrative Officer or designee.

3. **Means of Travel and Travel Reimbursement**

- A. County automobiles will be used when available as determined by the department head. Only persons employed by the County shall be transported in a County automobile except upon the specific approval or direction of the department head.
- B. Private automobiles may be used upon approval of the department head when a County automobile is not reasonably available. The County shall not be liable for any claim for vehicle repair or restoration arising out of the use of a privately owned automobile. Private automobile mileage shall be reimbursed in accordance with appropriate Memoranda of Understanding (MOU's). County officers or employees not covered by MOU's shall receive the mileage rate in effect for the General unit.
- C. Air (coach class), train, or other means of transportation may be authorized by the department head when in the best interests of the County. No non-scheduled air transportation may be used except upon prior approval of the County Administrative Officer. The traveling officer or employee is responsible for obtaining any tax exemption, discount or other benefit available to the County or its employees. Frequent flyer miles or similar benefits, or promotions, except those with a de minimis value, shall accrue to the benefit of the County.
- D. The use of other transportation shall be reimbursed at actual cost with department head approval or Board approval when there is a demonstrated County benefit. A receipt is required to support the expense.
- E. Rental of automobiles or other special conveyances will be allowed only when necessary for the conduct of County business. Justification may be required.

4. **Incidental Expenses**

The following expenses may be claimed when necessarily incurred in the performance of official County business:

- A. Parking and storage fees.
- B. Streetcar, bus, train, taxi and airporter fares.
- C. Automobile rental or leasing costs excluding add-on insurance damage waiver policies.
- D. Ferry, bridge and road tolls.
- E. Long distance telephone, telegraph, and fax charges for County business. Specifically excluded are calls home.
- F. Registration and conference fees and actual meal expenses when the meals are part of a conference.
- G. Baggage transfer fees, tips and other expenses for which receipts are not available.
- H. Other necessary expenditures. No claim for alcoholic beverages or personal services such as cleaning, laundering, barbering or similar items will be allowed.

5. Reimbursement for Meals

Meal rates are established to reimburse County officers or employees for the additional cost of eating meals away from home when the expense is incurred while conducting County business.

A. Reimbursement for meal expense off the business premises in the bi-county area is specifically prohibited for individual employees or groups consisting solely of County employees (so-called conferences, working luncheons, study groups, department management luncheons, etc.).

B. For purposes of determining entitlement to meal expense reimbursement outside the bi-county area, the following guidelines apply:

**Breakfast:** Breakfast may be claimed if travel began at or prior to 7:00 A.M. and terminated at or after 9:00 A.M.

**Lunch:** Lunch may be claimed if travel began at or prior to 11:00 A.M. and terminated at or after 2:00 P.M.

**Dinner:** Dinner may be claimed if travel began at or prior to 4:00 P.M. and terminated at or after 7:00 P.M.

C. The following meal rates shall apply:

(1) Reimbursement for meals including tips will be allowed up to the following maximums on a per diem basis. A full 24 hours or partial day's reimbursement will be controlled by the daily rate or combined rate for eligible meals with variances allowable in per meal costs.

	10/1/03	
Breakfast	\$ 11.00	
Lunch	13.00	REIMBURSEMENTS
Dinner	23.00	WITHOUT
	\$ 47.00	RECEIPTS

(2) At the discretion of the department head, to meet the exigencies of special business conditions or travel situations on an individual employee basis or on a trip basis, reimbursement for meals including tips will be allowed for actual cost up to the following optional maximums with receipts. Variances in per meal costs will be allowed for full or partial day reimbursements in a manner similar to that noted above.

Breakfast	\$ 9.00	OPTIONAL
Lunch	13.00	ACTUAL COST
Dinner	<u>25.00</u>	REIMBURSEMENTS
	\$47.00	WITH
		RECEIPTS

The department head shall notify the Auditor-Controller of authorizations to claim meals at the optional rates by the specific notation in the remarks box of the travel and business accounting form "ACTUAL MEAL COST OPTIONAL REIMBURSEMENT AUTHORIZED", initialed by the department head.

- D. Reimbursement will be provided for the actual cost of a meal for persons who serve on a personnel interview panel and the cost of the County employee's meal who escorts the panel.

In situations similar to the above, when authorized by the department head, meals may be provided to other governmental employees or private individuals who, at the County's request provide services gratuitously which benefit the County, or in other business situations of potential benefit to the County. Meals within the bi-county area for County officers or employees whose attendance is required may be reimbursed.

- E. When a County officer or department head hosts a conference or meeting that will be of benefit to the County of Sutter, the expenses of that meeting shall be reimbursable at actual cost. The expenses of such meetings, including the expenses of meals held in conjunction therewith, including meals of duly authorized delegates or representatives thereto, may be paid upon presentation of claims and receipts, in the normal manner described in Part 8 of this policy, with the exception that the claim shall also be reviewed for appropriateness and approved by the County Administrative Officer prior to being submitted to the Auditor-Controller. Receipts will be submitted with the claims.

Documentation required for reimbursement shall substantially conform to IRS requirements to substantiate business expenses by adequate records or sufficient evidence corroborating the (1) amount, (2) time and place, (3) business purpose, and (4) business relationship of the entertained person or persons.

- F. Per diem rates shall be reviewed annually by the Auditor-Controller and adjusted the first working day of the month after the adoption of the Final Budget to reflect the meal allowance for the Sacramento area allowed by Federal Travel Regulations.

Optional meal rates shall only be increased at the direction of the Board of Supervisors.

#### 6. Lodging

- A. (1) Reimbursement will be allowed for lodging obtained at a distance of 50 road miles or more from Yuba City determined by the shortest commonly traveled direct route.
- (2) Reimbursement will be allowed regardless of the distance from Yuba City, excluding the bi-county area, when lodging is obtained while attending a conference or other job-related meeting.
- B. Reimbursement for cost of lodging is limited to actual cost incurred and will be reimbursed only at the single room rate unless more than one employee shares room accommodations.
- C. Receipts are required to verify lodging claims.

#### 7. Regulation of Travel

County officers or employees shall be responsible for ensuring that they comply with all laws, regulations, and rules governing travel while traveling on County business.

(County officers should be aware of the requirements of Government Code §1063. Absence from State of county or judicial district officer.)

8. **Claim Procedure**

No reimbursement for travel and business expense shall be paid without submitting a "County of Sutter Travel and Business Expense Accounting" form, or other form(s) prescribed by the Auditor-Controller from time to time. Receipts must be attached for air or rail travel, automobile rental, registration fees and other expenses for which receipts are normally issued. Failure to complete forms as required or to submit the proper receipts may be grounds for denying reimbursement.

Claims signed by the employee, department head, and where appropriate the County Administrative Officer or the Board of Supervisors, must be submitted to the Auditor-Controller.

9. **Double Claiming**

To claim reimbursement for the same costs from more than one source (e.g., submitting claims for reimbursement to a State or Federal agency or other source and to the County) is prohibited by this policy. However, if another source provides only partial reimbursement, the balance up to the limits authorized by this policy, may be claimed. Appropriate documentation must be submitted with the claim (e.g., the State claim form showing the costs that are being paid by the State).

10. **Advances**

Funds may be advanced by the Auditor-Controller for any travel or business expense covered by this policy.

A final claim identifying actual expenses shall be submitted to the Auditor-Controller within five days of return from the trip for which the advance was issued or prior to termination of County employment, whichever event occurs first, along with any advance in excess of the claimed amount.

11. **Taxable Reimbursements**

In some situations reimbursements of travel and business expenses or portions thereof may be taxable. An example of this is the County's policy to reimburse the cost of meals even though an employee is not on an overnight stay. The County is required to report these reimbursements as part of the employee's wages on Form W-2.

12. **Questions—Application and Interpretation of Policy**

Questions concerning application and interpretation of this policy should first be directed to the Auditor-Controller. In the event of a disagreement, the County Administrative Officer should be consulted for further review. County Counsel will be consulted for legal review as appropriate.