

## **TRAVEL CLAIM FORM - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **GENERAL**

**Q:** What do I use the TRAVEL CLAIM FORM for?

**A:** Use this form to claim all out-of-pocket expenses related to prior approval travel. This includes conferences, seminars, and workshops.

**Q:** The district has assigned me to work at two schools each day. Do I use the TRAVEL CLAIM FORM to claim mileage reimbursement?

**A:** No. The TRAVEL CLAIM FORM is only for travel which has been prior approved. Please use the EXPENSE CLAIM FORM to claim itinerant mileage.

**Q:** What do I include with my TRAVEL CLAIM FORM?

**A:** Include proper signatures and budget codes; original receipts (except for meals and mileage); a copy of the prior approval form; and workshop/conference agenda showing meal information.

### **PER DIEM ALLOWANCE**

**Q:** What is per diem?

**A:** Per diem is an allowance to employees for meals and incidental expenses incurred while traveling on official district business.

**Q:** How are per diem rates determined?

**A:** Per diem rates are established by the US General Services Administration (GSA). Current rates can be found online at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). Employees are reimbursed from one of the established per diem rates based on their primary travel destination.

**Q:** What does the per diem allowance include?

**A:** Per diem includes an allowance for breakfast, lunch, dinner and incidentals.

**Q:** Why are there different per diem rates?

**A:** The different rates reflect the varying costs of living throughout the United States. For example, meal prices at restaurants in Spokane are generally higher than in Yakima, so the per diem rate paid to employees on travel status in Spokane (\$49) is higher than that of Yakima (\$39).

**Q:** Am I expected to know which per diem rate applies to my travel before completing the travel claim form?

**A:** No. When you submit your travel claim form, the Accounting Department will verify which per diem rate applies based on your primary travel destination. Based on the boxes you checked for the meals you paid for out-of-pocket, the Accounting Department will calculate the amount of per diem owed to you.

**Q:** My supervisor and the cabinet have approved my travel to Spokane for a conference from March 3rd – 6th (3 nights). What will my per diem reimbursement be?

**A:** Daily per diem for Spokane is \$49. You will be reimbursed at 75% of this rate (\$36.75) for March 3rd and 6th as these are your first and last days of travel; and \$49 for the 4th and 5th. Total reimbursement will be \$171.50.

**Q:** My supervisor and the cabinet have approved my travel to Seaside, Oregon for a workshop. I am leaving on February 2<sup>nd</sup> and returning February 3<sup>rd</sup>. What will my per diem reimbursement be?

**A:** Per diem for Seaside is \$54. You will be reimbursed at 75% of this rate (\$40.50) for both days as they are your first and last days of travel. Total reimbursement will be \$81.00.

**Q:** In order to get reimbursed at per diem for my travel, do I need to attach a copy of my meal receipts?

**A:** No. Per diem for meals and incidental expenses do not require individual receipts. However, you will be required to document the actual meals paid for out-of-pocket on your travel claim form and must include a copy of the conference agenda/itinerary which shows which meals were included in the conference fees. For meals that are included in the conference registration fees, the breakfast, lunch and dinner components will be deducted from the per diem.

**Q:** While on travel status, I tipped the hotel maid \$3 a day. Can I submit this for reimbursement?

**A:** No. Tips are considered incidental expenses and are included in your per diem allowance.

**Q:** I am going to the WASBO conference in Yakima on May 15-17 (Wednesday through Friday). Conference registration includes all meals on Thursday, and breakfast and lunch on Friday. What will my per diem reimbursement be?

**A:** The per diem rate for Yakima is \$39 per day. On the day of your departure you will get 75% of this rate (\$29.25). Since all meals are provided on Thursday, you will be reimbursed the incidental rate only (\$3). On Friday, you will be reimbursed 75% of the per diem rate, less the breakfast and lunch components (\$29.25 – \$7 breakfast – \$11 lunch = \$11.25). Total reimbursement will be \$43.50.

**Q:** I am going to an Excel class next Wednesday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.. The workshop agenda indicates everyone is responsible for their own lunch. Can I be reimbursed for my lunch expense?

**A:** No. Meals not part of a workshop agenda will not be reimbursed.

**Q:** I am going to a conference next week and my hotel offers a continental breakfast. Will this affect my per diem reimbursement?

**A:** No. Per diem reimbursements are not required to be reduced due to meals served on airlines; continental breakfasts which are included in the lodging rates; or receptions included in the registration fee of a conference, convention or formal training session.

## COMPLETION & SUBMISSION OF FORM

**Q:** What do I include with my TRAVEL CLAIM FORM?

**A:** Include proper signatures and budget codes; original receipts (except for meals and mileage); a copy of the prior approval form; and workshop/conference agenda showing meal information.

**Q:** I had several out-of-pocket meals and I don't know what the per diem rate is. How do I calculate the TOTAL PER DIEM and TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT due if I don't know this information?

**A:** Don't worry about calculating the per diem allowance or the total reimbursement. The Accounting Department will apply the applicable per diem rate and calculate the total amount owed to you. However, you can obtain the per diem rate information at the US General Services Administration website at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov).

**Q:** How do I indicate that my travel should be split between two different budget codes?

**A:** In the BUDGET CODE section at the bottom of the form, indicate the two different budget codes and the AMOUNT or PERCENT that should be applied to each code.

**Q:** What if I submit my form without the needed documentation?

**A:** If your form is received without the necessary documentation for processing, it will be returned to the employee with a note indicating the missing information that is needed. In order for timely processing, it is important to include a copy of your **Prior Approval Form, receipts, and itinerary/agenda showing meal information** (if you are claiming per diem for meals).

**Q:** To whom do I send my completed form and backup documentation?

**A:** After approval signatures and budget codes have been obtained, the form and backup documentation should be sent to the Accounting Services Specialist at 109 who serves your school.