

Subject	Office Procedure No. 8 – Reimbursement of Travel, Conference, Training, Education and Other Business Expenses
Summary	The accompanying Office Procedure No. 8 has been revised to conform with existing practices to encourage staff development, including job-related professional affiliations and education.
Recommendations	This is an informational item.
Financial Implications	None.
Options	Not applicable.
Attachments	A. Office Procedure No. 8 – Reimbursement of Travel, Conference, Training, Education and Other Business Expenses
Changes from Committee	

Background

The Authority has a policy to encourage staff development to improve job performance, skills, knowledge and qualifications. Office Procedure No. 8 establishes the guidelines, procedures and other provisions applicable to this policy. Office Procedures are amended from time to time under the administrative discretion of the Executive Director. The attached procedure has been amended to more clearly specify existing provisions related to professional affiliations and education. Specifically, a dollar limit of \$500 has been set for job-related professional affiliations, and education reimbursement terms now require a written plan for the discretionary approval by the Executive Director.

Office Procedure #8

Reimbursement of Travel, Conference, Training, Education and Other Business Expenses

I. Statement of Policy

For Authority business and for activities supporting its work program, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority encourages its employees and Board members to attend meetings and conferences, and primarily for its employees to participate in training opportunities, to pursue education goals and to maintain memberships in relevant professional organizations. Expenses incurred in the course of such activity shall at all times be consistent with Authority business purposes, policies and procedures, and be consistent with the ethical principles of public service and maintaining public trust.

II. Purpose

This procedure establishes and defines eligible business expenses in connection with authorized Authority business travel, conferences, training, education, and professional association membership expenses. The procedure also sets forth the process by which Authority employees and Board members shall request authorization and obtain reimbursement for eligible expenses.

III. Definitions

Eligible claimants for Authority reimbursement of authorized expenses include Authority Board and Ex-Officio Members, Authority employees, and members of Authority advisory committees (Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC)).

Authorized expenses means those expenses as described in this procedure incurred by eligible claimants directly connected with authorized Authority business travel, conferences, training, education and professional association memberships eligible for reimbursement.

Authorized Authority business travel, conferences, training, education and professional association memberships means any activity that has received specific authorization through the process described in this procedure.

IV. Authorized expenses

The following expenses shall be eligible for reimbursement in connection with this procedure, including the following:

- A. **Mileage** – The use of a private automobile for Authority business travel for offsite meetings, conferences and training. The mileage shall be measured between the

regular work location and the site of the business meeting, conference or training, or from the origin of the trip, whichever is less. The rate of reimbursement shall be the rate in effect at the time as established by the Internal Revenue Service.

Authority employees or officials who receive an automobile allowance shall not be eligible for mileage reimbursement.

All Authority employees or officials using a private automobile for authorized Authority business are required to have automobile insurance in compliance with State law. The Authority employee's or official's own insurance company shall be responsible for responding to any claim made against the employee or official in connection with the driving of a private automobile on Authority business.

- B. Air Travel** – Air travel in connection with authorized Authority business travel for meetings, conferences and training. Governmental or group rates offered by the meeting or conference organizers shall be used whenever possible. In all other cases, economy or coach fares will be the rate eligible for reimbursement.
- C. Lodging** – Overnight lodging in connection with authorized Authority business travel for out-of-region meetings, conferences and training. Claimants shall seek reasonable, economical, group rates where available, for comfortable, safe and secure lodging. The Executive Director reserves the right to determine which lodging is reasonable, economical, comfortable, safe and secure, at his or her sole discretion.
- D. Meals** – Meals in connection with authorized Authority business travel for meetings, conferences and training. Reimbursement rates shall be for actual expenditures (receipts required) in an amount not to exceed \$15.00 for breakfast, \$25.00 for lunch and \$35.00 for dinner, as amended from time to time by the Authority Board. Reimbursement for expenses higher than the established rates for banquet meals at authorized conferences, professional meetings or training, or special events or functions may be eligible for reimbursement per approval by the Executive Director. Expenses associated with the consumption of alcohol are strictly not eligible for reimbursement.
- E. Conference and Training Fees** – Registration and related costs for authorized Authority conferences and training. Claimants are expected to obtain registration discounts for early registration where available.
- F. Education Fees** – Tuition for authorized Authority continuing education or a college degree. Education must be relevant to enhancing job knowledge or job related skills. Employees are required to prepare a written request outlining the objectives for obtaining the education, expected timeframe and coursework and cost estimates, including tuition and books. The written request is to be submitted to the Executive Director for consideration and discretionary approval prior to enrolling in coursework, provided the employee intends to seek Authority reimbursement. Depending upon the cost of the proposed education, the Executive

Director may agree to reimburse all or a portion of the estimated cost. Actual reimbursements are eligible only after the completion of each quarter or semester as evidenced by supporting documentation from the college or university.

Expenses for travel, lodging, or meals and mileage related to education are not eligible for reimbursement.

G. Memberships and Professional Affiliations – Memberships in professional organizations, and certifications and licenses related to transportation, financial management, and government operations or issues as approved by the Executive Director. Employees are encouraged to be active participants in such professional affiliations. A maximum of two memberships per employee totaling no more than \$500 per year is available for memberships to be reimbursed to the employee or paid directly by the Authority. The Executive Director may authorize an amount greater than this limit on a case by case basis when it is in the best interest of the Authority.

H. Miscellaneous – The following miscellaneous expenses are also eligible for reimbursement:

- Transit fares, bridge tolls and parking for authorized Authority business, travel, off-site meetings, conferences and training;
- Food, beverages (non-alcoholic) and kitchen supplies in support of authorized Authority business or meetings;
- Authority related telephone or internet charges incurred while at an authorized Authority meeting (off-site), conference, training or special event or function;
- Other authorized Authority business expenses less than \$50, as approved in advance by the Executive Director or his/her designee.

VI. Expense Reimbursement Procedure

A. Advance Approval – Authority-related business travel, conferences, training, education or other expenses eligible for reimbursement under this procedure must be specifically and separately approved in advance by the Executive Director or his/her designee, and be within budget capacity. Travel expenses for purposes of attending Authority Board and Subcommittee meetings, or other related functions are excluded from advance approval.

B. Out-of-State Travel – The Executive Director shall report to the Authority Board any employee costs for out-of-state Authority-related training, conferences or travel as an informational item.

C. Reimbursement Request:

1. A request for reimbursement of Authority business travel, conference, training, education or membership expenses shall be submitted to the Executive Secretary within forty-five (45) days after the expenses were incurred, using the applicable reimbursement and travel demand form. Each claim must clearly indicate the date, nature of expense, and the amount for which reimbursement is being requested.
2. As applicable, each reimbursement request must be accompanied by the prior authorization made by the Authority and the original receipt(s) for the expense being claimed. Failure to submit the necessary receipts will result in denial of the reimbursement claim. Reimbursement of personal expenses for meeting refreshments or office supplies will be approved by the supervisor who authorized such purchases.

Board members' mileage expense demands (for attendance at Authority Board and Subcommittee meetings) shall be prepared by the Executive Secretary *bi-annually* (in June and December), and will be submitted for payment after Board members' signatures have been obtained and approved by the Executive Director.

Board members' bi-annual meeting mileage expense demands will be supported by copies of the Authority Attendance Logs for the applicable 6-month period.

3. Reimbursement requests submitted by Authority employees, Authority Board members and Authority Advisory Members shall be reviewed for approval by the Executive Director or his/her designee. Reimbursement requests by the Executive Director shall be reviewed for approval by the Chair of the Authority.
4. The Executive Secretary shall submit approved reimbursement claims for direct payment to the individual.

VII. Board Member and Advisory Commissioner Reports

Board Members or Advisory Committee Members who have attended an authorized business meeting, conference, training or special event shall provide a brief report regarding their attendance at the next regularly scheduled Authority Board or Advisory Committee meeting. The report must be agendized in advance, and include a general statement of how the Board or Advisory Committee Member's participation at the meeting was associated with, or has an impact on, Authority business. The report may be written and distributed, or may be presented orally.