

## **EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS**

### **Purpose:**

To establish guidelines and procedures for budgeting and administering travel funds and expenses incurred by Bedford County Public School personnel when on approved official business.

**Definition:** Primary Account Manager is any person who is responsible for tracking expenditures for a given school or department.

### **A. Guidelines for budgeting and administering funds for travel:**

All reasonable and proper costs of transportation, lodging, subsistence, business communications, registration fees and/or incidental expenses incurred by Bedford County Public School personnel while on official business or attending seminars, conferences, or conventions are reimbursable in accordance with the following procedures:

#### **I. General**

- a. Employee will need to obtain the primary account manager's authorization prior to scheduling the event. Total estimated costs should be included when the request is made.
- b. The school board will not reimburse an employee for expenses of his/her spouse.

#### **II. Expense Reimbursements**

- a. Employees are required to obtain a refund for all advance payments of registration, lodging and/or transportation costs if the employee does not attend the meeting. The employee will be personally responsible for costs that are not refunded unless there are extenuating circumstances for not attending the meeting.
- b. All travel expenses should be submitted within 60 days of occurrence or they may not be reimbursed. The district approved travel reimbursement form must be used.

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### **III. Transportation**

- a. The least costly method of travel should be selected, taking into consideration the actual costs of transportation, employee's time, meeting schedule and the cost of meals and lodging. If total travel distance is greater than 150 miles a rental car may be a cheaper option depending on the length of the trip. If the employee insists on using his or her own car when a cheaper option is available, then the reduced federal reimbursement rate will be used to reimburse the employee.
- b. Employees are encouraged to travel together when attending the same event.
- c. Mileage reimbursement will be made according to the per-mile-rate set by the federal reimbursement rate. The account manager will determine if use of personal vehicle is warranted.
- d. When transportation by air is designated, an employee must use the lowest cost available. Whenever possible, plans should be made far enough in advance to take advantage of available discounts.
- e. Employees may be reimbursed for the cost of ground transportation and parking fees with proper receipts.
- f. Employees assigned to more than one school or location in any weekday will be reimbursed for travel between schools. All mileage must be reported on a Bedford County School Board travel reimbursement form and should be submitted at least every two months.

### **IV. Lodging**

- a. Most hotels/motels will accept a purchase order form from schools. However, it is strongly recommended that the employee verify acceptance of a purchase order prior to attending the conference and make plans accordingly. On occasion, payment of registration fees, and/or conference fees requires the submission of a check at the time of the registration. The employee may pay for these from his or her own pocket and request reimbursement or submit an invoice to the school for payment.
- b. Travelers should use standard room accommodations and only for the duration of the stay.

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### **V. Meals**

- a. Meals are only reimbursable if overnight travel is required; otherwise, the employee will be responsible for paying for his/her own meals. Meals will be reimbursed as follows:
  - i. on a per diem rate except for the date of departure and the date of return whereby the per diem rate will be set at 75% of the standard federal per diem.
  - ii. If meals are provided by the conference then the per diem rate for that meal will be deducted from the daily rate. This does not include complimentary continental breakfasts or meals provided by exhibitors.
  - iii. The superintendent or superintendent's designee will monitor the reimbursement of these costs for school personnel. Expenditures by the school board will be monitored by the chairman in collaboration with the superintendent.
  - iv. Rates will be based on the data provided on the General Service Administration website.
  - v. The daily rates will automatically load on the electronic reimbursement form for travel within Virginia. If traveling outside Virginia, employees will need to look up the per diem rates on the General Services Administration website.
  - vi. Per Diem daily rate includes \$5.00 for incidental expenses. These include the following: Fees, snacks, water and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, hotel staff, and staff on ships.

### **B. Procedures for Budgeting and Administering**

Each account manager is responsible for preparing an annual budget request for travel funds. The request is submitted to the appropriate department head for use in preparing the budget for the next year. Following budget adoption, each account manager will be advised of funds available for travel.

### **C. Reimbursement Procedures**

All expense reimbursements must be submitted in a timely manner. Signature of department head overseeing budget line item must be on the request. All receipts must be attached with the form. Meal receipts are not required as reimbursement is on a per diem basis

Approved By Superintendent: April 1, 2017