COUNTY OF ALLEGHENY

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Name Of Policy: AP 104 - Travel Policy	**Date Issued:** 8/14/25
Date(s) Revised:	**Issued By Direction Of**: John Fournier County Manager, Allegheny County

Scope:

This policy applies to the following individuals:

	Applies (X)		Applies (X)
Non-Union Full-Time Employees	X	Contract Employees	X
Non-Union Part-Time Employees	X	Temporary Employees	
Union Full-Time Employees	X	Third Parties	
Union Part-Time Employees	X	Any Person Who Works as an Agent for the County in Any Other Capacity	

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

All Allegheny County (henceforth referred to as “County”) employees covered under this policy who travel on authorized County business must follow the practices and procedures established by this Travel Policy. Each Department Director is responsible for limiting travel expenses to those that are deemed necessary for conducting official County business. All County employees traveling on official County business are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds. Excess costs, circuitous routes, delays, or luxury accommodations and services that are unnecessary, unjustified, or solely for the convenience or personal preference of the traveler in the performance of official County business are not acceptable under this standard, and travelers will be responsible for unauthorized costs and additional expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience. The County prioritizes sustainable transportation choices for all business-related travel and expects all employees to accommodate these preferences when feasible.

1.2 Purpose

The County allows employees who travel on authorized County business to have certain travel expenses incurred on authorized County business advanced and/or reimbursed. County employees must follow the procedures outlined in this Policy to have travel expenses advanced and/or reimbursed.

1.3 Scope

This Policy applies to all County employees who travel on authorized County business. The Row Offices may adopt this policy at their discretion, though it is recommended.

1.4 Compliance

County employees who fail to comply with the practices and procedures set forth in this Policy will not have the travel expenses they incur on authorized County business advanced and/or reimbursed.

1.5 Policy Review and Update

This document will be reviewed and updated as needed by County Leadership to ensure the practices and procedures outlined herein are appropriate for County needs. The County reserves the right to change this Policy at any time.

2. Authorization for Travel

2.1 Procedure

For all travel outside of the five contiguous counties (Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties), a travel request form must be submitted at least one (1) month prior to travel or the request may be denied. County employees from the same department who are attending the same seminar or conference are encouraged to submit their Travel Request Forms at the same time. All Travel Request Forms must be approved prior to authorized County business. An exception will be made for emergency travel or travel pursuant to an official court order or as deemed appropriate by the County Manager. All Travel Request Forms must include an estimate of the total cost to the County for the travel, presented in line-item detail and indicating which expenses will be paid in advance by the County and which expenses are to be reimbursed after the travel has concluded.

2.2 Travel Within Pennsylvania

Travel within Pennsylvania for one (1) or two (2) employees from the same department and for the same purpose must be authorized and approved by the Department Director. Travel within Pennsylvania for three (3) or more employees from the same department and for the same purpose must be authorized by the Department Director and approved by the Department of Budget and Finance. Documentation reflecting approval must be attached to post-travel reimbursement requests. If an employee is required to travel to destinations within the five contiguous counties (Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties) more than once a week, the Department Director can issue a blanket approval for that travel, subject to approval by the Department of Budget and Finance.

2.3 Travel Outside of Pennsylvania

Any travel outside of Pennsylvania must be authorized by the Department Director and approved by the Department of Budget and Finance. Any travel outside of Pennsylvania that is $1,000 or more per instance per person must be additionally pre-authorized by the County Manager or his or her designee.

3. Reimbursable Expenses

3.1 Grant-Funded Travel Considerations

Please be advised that grant-funded travel may have different requirements for reimbursement than the requirements indicated below. For example, grant-funded travel may require additional documentation to support reimbursement requests. County employees who rely upon grant funding for travel should adhere to the specific reimbursement requirements and/or regulations for the grant(s) at issue.

3.2 Reimbursable Expenses – Receipts Not Required

The following expenses are reimbursable to a County employee when traveling on authorized County business and DO NOT require receipts:

- **Meals and Incidental Expenses Paid by Per Diem:** Meals and incidental expenses will be reimbursed at the standard federal per diem rate as established by the U.S. General Services Administration for the first and last day of travel, as well as each travel day that includes an overnight stay. (For example, at the time this Policy was adopted, the standard per diem rate for meals and incidental expenses for the first and last day of travel was $51 per day; the standard per diem rate for meals and incidental expenses for travel including overnight stay was $68 per day.) Alcohol is not a reimbursable expense. Receipts are not required for per diem reimbursements.

- **Use of Privately-Owned Vehicle:** Employees are strongly encouraged to travel by public transit or county-owned vehicles (with preference for the electric pool fleet) when possible. County employees who must use a privately-owned vehicle for traveling on authorized County business may be reimbursed by the mile at a mileage rate not to exceed that established by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service or in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Mileage is to be measured from the employee's regular duty station. Mileage to/from an employee's home or the Pittsburgh International Airport is not reimbursable. Drivers must have a valid driver's license and carry automobile insurance meeting at least the minimum statutory requirements. Employees must provide documentation, such as Google Maps, showing proof of mileage. When two or more employees are traveling to the same destination and privately-owned vehicles are the only option for travel, employees are required to carpool unless the employees provide compelling reasons to travel separately and receive prior approval from the Department of Budget and Finance.

3.3 Reimbursable Expenses – Receipts Required

The following expenses are reimbursable to a County employee when traveling on authorized County business and DO require receipts:

- **Conference Registration:** To be reimbursed for the cost of registration, or to have such costs covered in advance as outlined in Section 4 below, Employees are required to register when discounted rates apply (e.g. "early bird" registration). If employees miss the discounted registration deadline, they will only be reimbursed for the cost of registration at the early discounted rate unless they provide a compelling reason for missing the deadline and receive prior approval from the Department of Budget and Finance. *See* Section 4 below for travel advances for registration costs.

- **Lodging:** The cost of hotel rooms will be reimbursed for any night of travel which is required for County business. This does not include the cost of lodging if it is not required for County business (e.g. staying overnight when the destination is less than three hours away and the event does not start until 10 a.m. or later). If an employee opts to stay longer than is required for work-related reasons, they are responsible for the portion of the cost of a hotel room for those days.

- **Air, Train, Public Transit, Bikeshare, and Bus Fares:** The cost of air, train, public transit, bikeshare, and bus fares will be reimbursed at the lowest cost class of travel (e.g. economy class). Employees are encouraged to research transportation options before traveling. *See* Section 4 below for travel advances for air, bus, or rail fares. Employees may book at a different class, but will only be reimbursed for the economy class cost.

- **Ground Transportation:** Employees are strongly encouraged to travel by public transit or other sustainable means of transportation. When two or more employees are traveling to the same destination, maximum use shall be made of special group travel discounts and joint use of ground transportation including taxi cabs, app-based car service (such as Uber), County-owned vehicles, and shuttle service when available. When two or more employees are traveling to the same destination and privately-owned vehicles are the only option for travel, employees are required to carpool unless the employees provide compelling reasons to travel separately and receive prior approval from the Department of Budget and Finance. Car rental is only permitted when specifically authorized and approved by the Department Director and the Department of Budget and Finance and secured at the lowest practical cost. Employees should prioritize rental of a hybrid or electric vehicle when available.

- **Parking:** The cost of parking incurred on authorized County business may be reimbursed if an employee uses their privately-owned vehicle or a County vehicle. This does not include the cost for parking in downtown Pittsburgh if that is the employee's primary place of business. When employees travel to downtown Pittsburgh and downtown Pittsburgh is not their primary place of business, parking will be reimbursed at an amount not to exceed $25. The County will reimburse for the cost of parking at the Pittsburgh International Airport at the lowest possible rate (e.g. economy).

- **Tolls:** The cost of tolls incurred on authorized County business may be reimbursed if an employee uses their privately-owned vehicle or a County vehicle.

- **Other Costs:** Other costs incurred on authorized County business may be reimbursed in the County Manager's discretion.

3.4 Reimbursement Requests

Reimbursement requests for travel within the five contiguous counties (outlined in Sections 2.1 and 2.2 above) must be submitted once per month. All other reimbursement requests must be submitted within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the travel. If a request is not submitted within thirty (30) days, the County Manager reserves the right to deny reimbursement.

4. Advanced Payment for Travel

4.1 Advanced Payment for Travel

Advanced payment for conference registration costs and air, bus, or train fares may be authorized and approved by the Department Director and paid for on the Department's Purchasing Card ("P-Card"). Requests for putting travel advances on the P-Card must be made to Purchasing no later than five (5) business days ahead of time. If a scheduled trip is cancelled, the employee shall reimburse the County for all travel advances that are not refunded directly to the County within thirty (30) days of the cancellation. The County will not provide advance payment for per diems, or other incidental expenses.

5. Sustainability Guidelines

5.1 General Expectations

As part of the Climate Action Plan, the County has set carbon emissions reduction goals for all County operations, including employee travel for official County business. Employees are expected to travel by sustainable means unless they are not feasible.

5.2 Sustainable Traveling Tips

Below are some additional tips for sustainable travel while on official County business:

- County employees are encouraged to attend conferences virtually should that option be available.
- County employees should use county-owned electric vehicles whenever possible for in-county travel. County-owned electric vehicles are also available for longer distance travel, but employees should research charging options along their travel route and at their destination.
- County employees should prioritize rental of hybrid vehicles at a minimum, or fuel-efficient sedans and zero emissions vehicles when feasible. If using an electric vehicle, research charging options at the travel destination and/or lodging (when applicable).
- County employees should use sustainable means of travel at their destination (e.g., walking, biking, public transit, ride share), even if their primary mode of transportation to the destination was by automobile. Research bikeshare, public transit options, and other sustainable modes of travel ahead of time.
- County employees should use e-receipts and tickets whenever possible to reduce wasted paper. E-tickets are accepted for reimbursement purposes.
- Other ways to reduce impact when traveling include:
    - Packing a reusable travel mug and water bottle, rather than relying on disposable bottles or cups.
    - Asking housekeeping to clean hotel rooms post-check out rather than during the hotel stay to reduce the amount of energy and water consumed.
    - Packing reusable utensils and toiletries, rather than relying on disposable products.
    - Dining and shopping locally. Research local and small businesses to support ahead of time.