

BERING STRAIT SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. BOX 225
UNALAKLEET, ALASKA 99684

TRAVEL POLICY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
 - a. Overall Goal
 - b. Scope

2. GENERAL PROTOCOL FOR REQUESTING TRAVEL
 - a. Traveler submits travel to Supervisor.
 - b. Supervisor submits formal "travel request" to Travel Manager.
 - c. Travel Manager creates the travel arrangements.
 - d. Day of travel
 - e. Travel changes

3. DISTRICT PLANE EXPECTATIONS
4. WEATHER EXPECTATIONS
5. SAFETY AND ACCIDENT REPORTING
6. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES AND ALLOWANCE
 - a. Definitions
 - b. Mode of Travel
 - c. Transportation Expenses
 - d. Travel-related Expenses
 - e. Computation Allowances
 - f. Other Expenses
 - g. Travel Advances
 - h. Travel Expense Reporting and Reimbursement

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1. INTRODUCTION

- a. Overall Goal: To accommodate travel that occurs within the school District in a safe, convenient and cost-effective manner.
- b. Scope: These regulations apply to all District employees who are traveling on District business, as well as anyone who has been authorized to travel at District expense (educational consultants, school board members, advisory education members, etc.)

2. GENERAL PROTOCOL FOR REQUESTING TRAVEL

- a. Traveler submits travel to Supervisor.
 - i. Travel must be submitted at least 21 days prior to out-of-state travel and 14 days for in-state travel.
- b. All travelers must use the Travel Request/Reimbursement Form (TRF)
 - i. The TRF initially represents formal order for transportation services.
 - ii. The TRF may be used only for official travel.
 - iii. The TRF must include:
 - 1. Name of the traveler(s)
 - 2. Dates of travel
 - 3. Destination
 - 4. Account number to be charged
 - 5. Purpose of the travel
 - iv. All copies of the TRF are submitted to the Travel Department. The traveler's copy will be processed by the Travel Department and returned prior to travel.
- c. Supervisor submits the TRF to the Travel Manager.
- d. Travel manager creates the travel arrangements and sends an itinerary to the traveler.
- e. On the day of travel, passenger is responsible for checking iCal or the carrier for updated travel times.
- f. Any travel changes will be done through the Travel Manager. The passenger will not create or revise travel.
- g. Travel Approvals
 - i. Only persons who have proper authorization may travel at District expense. Family members or companions are not authorized to accompany employees at District expense.
 - ii. Each traveler, except for those individuals specifically authorized by the Superintendent or designee, must have the approval of his or her supervisor documented on the TRF prior to departure.
 - iii. Approval of travel authorization forms may not be delegated to a level of authority lower than the traveler.
 - iv. The Superintendent must approve all out-of-state travel.

1. Delegation: Approvals defined in this section may be delegated only for purposes of absence or non-availability of the authorized individuals.

3. DISTRICT PLANE EXPECTATION

- a. Seat fare and charter rates are maintained on a sheet available from the Travel Clerk.
- b. Be ready and at the airport 30 minutes before the flight departs. You do not want to be responsible for delays that will impact all passengers after you.
- c. Baggage and Freight:
 - i. Baggage weight limit is 40 pounds per person. Excess baggage must be noted on travel request.
 - ii. All baggage and freight will be weighed and tagged or labeled before taken to the airplane.
 - iii. All freight traveling on the district plane must be approved by BSSD Aircraft Mechanic.
- d. Web-based calendar (iCal) will be maintained within 20 minutes of the plane's actual schedule. After itineraries are issued, they will not be reissued for schedule and time changes. All changes will be reflected on iCal. It is strongly recommended that the principal and traveler check the schedule at the beginning of the day and throughout the day to assure the schedule has not changed.
- e. Communication:
 - i. For primary communication with the District Plane, each site has been issued a marine radio for the purpose of keeping in touch with the District plane. It is to be on channel 5; squelch and volume will be checked at the beginning of each day. Typically the District plane will call in 20 minutes before arrival.
 - ii. For secondary communications, the principal has a radio in the residence.
 - iii. Lastly, the pilot has a satellite phone he can use to communicate with the site. The principal will provide a list of cell phone numbers. It is critical that the pilot spends the minimum amount of effort to contact site for notifying his arrival time.
 - iv. It is the principal's responsibility to:
 1. Assure smooth communication with the pilot.
 2. Contact the Travel Clerk if the plane is over 20 minutes late. If the Travel Clerk is not available, contact the BSSD Airplane Mechanic and then the Superintendent.
- f. Non-employee travel is subject to approval from the Superintendent. BSSD operates under FAA Part 91 as a private carrier. As such, the District will never compete with commercial carriers who operate under FAA Part 135.

- g. No passengers or freight will travel for “free.”

4. WEATHER EXPECTATIONS

- a. The purpose of this policy is to avoid unnecessary risk to life and safety of employees during District-approved winter travel by aircraft.
- b. Be considerate of weather conditions when taking people to the airport. (Ex: Dropping passengers off 30 minutes early when the weather is -30°F is not necessarily a good idea.)
- c. Students will not be allowed on piston aircrafts if the temperature at the departure or destination site is below -35°F. Students will not be allowed on turbine aircrafts (i.e. BSSD N406SD) when the temperature at the departure or destination site is below -40°F. These limits are board policy and are non-negotiable. (BP 3543)
- d. The principal may choose to cancel travel for his/her students or staff if conditions appear unsafe. However, such a decision should be made prior to an aircraft taking off to pick up those passengers. Once an aircraft takes lands for the pick up, the site will be charged for the trip.
- e. If airlines cancel due to weather, the District plane will cancel unless weather changes.
- f. Employee travel at temperatures colder than the aforementioned limitations (-40°F) will be at the sole discretion of both the employee and airlines.
- g. Employee travel on jet aircraft is not covered by this policy.
- h. The temperature at either the place of departure or the place of arrival will be based upon a National Weather Service reading or a temperature reading from an approved source. Approved sources shall be airline village agent(s) or an Automatic Weather Station (AWOS).

5. SAFETY AND ACCIDENT REPORTING

- a. If a vehicle accident occurs, the traveler shall:
 - i. Secure the names and addresses of all persons involved in the accident and all witnesses and owners of damaged property and the make, model, registration number and insurers of all vehicles.
 - ii. Notify the state troopers or local police immediately.
 - iii. Make no statement to anyone, except the proper authorities, as to who may have been at fault nor any statement which may even remotely be interpreted as an apology or as an acknowledgement of any responsibility for the accident (to do so may adversely affect the ability to right-fully defend the District or the individual making such statements in subsequent legal proceedings).
 - iv. Report the accident to the immediate supervisor and Business Office. The District may request documentation detailing the accident.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES AND ALLOWANCES

a. Definitions

i. Non-Reimbursable Expenses

1. Certain expenses, such as the following, are considered personal expenses and are not reimbursable.
2. Travel accident insurance in excess of that provided to employees by the District;
3. Vehicle repairs, towing services, lubrication, tire replacement, etc. for privately owned vehicles;
4. Meals at the traveler's workstation or residence;
5. Childcare or babysitting fees;
6. Personal telephone calls, including calls to the traveler's home or family;
7. Fines or penalties for parking or other violations;
8. Laundry and dry cleaning charges;
9. Entertainment expenses except as pre-authorized by the Superintendent;
10. Personal travel related expenses (including the incremental cost of additional lodging or room charges for family members, travel companions and others not on authorized District business);
11. Hotel stays and vehicle rentals beyond approved District travel dates;
12. The rental of GPS units or other added items to a rental vehicle;
13. Hotel stays of less than six (6) hours, unless approved by supervisor.

ii. Per Diem

14. Per Diem is the daily rate of payment to a traveler in lieu of reimbursement for actual charges for meals, tips and other incidental expenses incurred while traveling on District business.

iii. Residence

15. The residence of each traveler is the community where the traveler maintains a dwelling. If a traveler maintains more than one residence, the residence most clearly related to the traveler's workstation will be considered the traveler's principal residence.

iv. Travel Expenses

16. Transportation expenses consist of commercial carrier fares, vehicle mileage allowance, taxi and bus fares and other essential transportation costs.

17. Travel related expenses consist of charges for lodging, meals, tips and other incidental expenses incurred while traveling.
 18. Other expenses consist of charges for conference and registration fees, business telephone calls, parking fees, emergency purchase of supplies and other necessary costs related to travel.
- v. Workstation
19. The workstation of each traveler is the community where the traveler spends the major portion of working time or the place to which the traveler normally returns upon completion of assignments.
- vi. Superintendent
20. All references to Superintendent will mean Superintendent or his/her designee.

b. Mode of Travel

- i. Scheduled Commercial Air Carrier
 1. Scheduled commercial air carrier service shall be utilized for long distance individual travel, unless there is a compelling reason for use of another mode, such as medical necessity, less costly charter flights or inadequate time schedules.
- ii. Chartered Aircraft
 1. Chartered aircraft, with pilot, may be authorized when no scheduled transportation is available to meet the travel requirements and the aircraft chartered has an Air Taxi Certificate issued by the Alaska Transportation Commission.
- iii. Privately Owned Aircraft
 1. Travel by privately owned aircraft will not be authorized by the District.
- iv. Automobile Rental
 1. Automobile rental may be utilized when such use is in the best interest of the District.
 2. The traveler must obtain the lowest and most economical rate available.
 3. Rental vehicles may be utilized for authorized purposes only. The District's insurance of rental vehicles is effective only while an authorized driver is using the vehicle for authorized purposes.
 4. Since the District's insurance covers vehicle damage, liability, and hospitalization, insurance coverage offered by car rental agencies will not be paid or reimbursed.

5. Vehicles should be inspected for physical damage before first use and at the time returned in order to prevent misunderstandings with rental agencies.
 6. If a rental vehicle is used for personal purposes, the reimbursement request should be adjusted for any incremental costs related to the extended term of the contract, mileage driven or fuel charges incurred.
 7. When possible, the sharing of rental vehicles is encouraged.
 8. The fuel tank should be filled prior to returning the vehicle.
 9. If a vehicle is used for personal days connected with a District trip, the traveler will turn in the District rental vehicle and acquire a personal rental vehicle for that portion of the trip.
- v. Taxi Service
1. Taxi service should be used whenever practical.

vi. Special Transportation

1. Special transportation, including automobile, boat, aircraft or other conveyance may be authorized when in the best interest of the District. An explanation of the facts and circumstances documenting the necessity to use such special transportation must accompany the related travel request form.
2. A traveler may be reimbursed at rates agreed upon in advance for the use of boats, snow machines or other special conveyances.

c. Transportation Expenses

i. Travel Routing

1. Travel routing must be the most direct route and efficient mode unless authorized by the Superintendent.

ii. Travel for Employee Convenience

1. Any extra expenses resulting from travel on District business by an indirect route or less efficient mode for the traveler's convenience will be borne by the traveler and reimbursement will be based only on such charges as would have been incurred or reimbursed in traveling by the most direct route or efficient mode.
2. Any additional time away from work that may be required for such indirect travel shall be charged to annual, sick, or leave without pay.
3. Personal travel time must be identified on the traveler's expense report.

iii. Interruption or Extension of Travel

1. Per Diem or reimbursement allowances may be paid for periods of interruption or extension or travel incurred for the benefit of the District.
2. If travel is interrupted or extended for the personal convenience of the traveler, the per diem or reimbursement allowed may not exceed that which would have been incurred by uninterrupted travel.
3. Payment arrangements for the personal portion of the expenses should be made directly with the travel agency, airline or other vendor. Charges applicable to the personal portion of travel costs should not be processed through the District's accounting records.
4. No travel changes will be made after a trip is booked unless for a family or medical emergency. A family member is considered a parent, a spouse, or a child.
5. Trip extensions will not be allowed in excess of five (5) days on District-approved travel for personal reasons. Should a person exceed the five (5) days, the traveler is responsible for booking, paying, and returning to site.
6. Travel days are not considered part of the five (5) personal days.
7. Travelers who wish to extend their trip for personal reasons within the five-day window can book their own flight and be reimbursed for what the District would have paid for the direct roundtrip flight.

iv. Economical Accommodations

1. Travelers must utilize the most economical transportation available, unless:
2. Lower cost transportation methods are not available within reasonable time periods
3. Lower cost transportation is not in the best interest of the District, or
4. Waiting for lower cost transportation would result in a high overall cost.
5. If a person extends a trip for personal reasons and is staying in a District-paid hotel, the person should checkout of the District reservation and book a personal reservation for the personal portion of the trip

v. Discount Fare Savings

1. Travelers are not entitled to any savings resulting from the use of discount fares such as "Super
2. Savers". If a traveler exchanges or modifies a District paid ticket, any cost savings must be remitted to the District

vi. Acceptance of Gratuities

1. No employee or official may accept any gratuity resulting from, or based on District travel, unless such gratuity is received for the exclusive benefit of the District or is nominal in value
2. Acceptance of such gifts from an airline, travel agency or other vendor is governed by policy 33.15 and related regulations regarding ethics and ethics violations.

vii. Baggage Charges

1. Baggage charges paid or reimbursed by the District will be limited to personal and District baggage necessary to carry out District business.
2. Baggage must be shipped by the most economical and practical means available, and the reason for incurring excess baggage charges must be explained on the traveler's expense report.

viii. Travel Insurance

1. Group travel accident insurance is provided for each employee or board member while traveling on District business. Non-employees traveling on District business are not covered.

ix. Canceled Reservations

1. The District will not be responsible for payment of penalties for guarantees or reservations not canceled due to the traveler's negligence. If a traveler determines that he or she will not use accommodations, which were reserved, the traveler is responsible for release of such reservation within the time limits specified by the carrier, hotel or other vendor.

x. Return of Unused Tickets

1. Any unused ticket, or portion of a ticket, for travel that was canceled or terminated short of the scheduled destination shall be attached to an appropriately noted expense report requesting that a refund be obtained from the carrier, travel agency or other vendor.

d. Travel-related Expenses

- i. Employees and others authorized to travel may be reimbursed for travel related expenses at the applicable per diem rates, or at actual cost for lodging plus per diem rates for meals and incidental expenses, or at the actual costs for all expenses at the approval of the Superintendent. The method of reimbursement must be documented on the travel request form.
- ii. More than one method of reimbursement may be utilized for a single trip, if a reasonable basis for such treatment is documented on the travel request form and the arrangement is approved in advance.

- iii. Reimbursements at the lower of actual cost or per diem may be utilized if the agreement to reimbursement on such basis is made in advance of the travel.
- iv. Reimbursements at actual may be limited to the costs expected to be incurred at moderately priced establishments catering to the general public.
- v. Per Diem Reimbursement Allowances
 - 1. Alaska Rate
 - 2. The per diem reimbursement rates for travel in Alaska shall be the rate authorized by the Superintendent.
- vi. General Rate
 - 1. The general per diem reimbursement rates for travel outside of the District shall be the rate authorized for payment by the federal government in the locality (including international travel) in which the travel is performed.

vii. Lower Per Diem Reimbursement Allowance

- 1. The Superintendent may approve lower per diem rates than the standards defined in these regulations if the circumstances of the travel so warrant. Such circumstances may occur when a traveler stays in District facilities or other special circumstances exist.

viii. Group Travel

- 1. Meal allowances may be paid directly to members of a group or applied to the cost of group meals, banquets, etc. Meal allowances for groups may not exceed authorized per diem allowances. Supporting documentation, including receipts for cash allowances provided to members of the group will be required. Approval of the Superintendent will be required for the payment of meal allowances at rates below those authorized by these regulations.

e. Computation of Allowances

i. Appropriate Reimbursement Rates

- 1. The appropriate per diem reimbursement for a day is the rate prescribed for the community in which the traveler obtains overnight lodging.
- 2. If a per diem rate is not available for a specific location, the rate for the nearest major community or locality shall be utilized.
- 3. For travel within the District or to the lower 48, payment shall be at the rate established by the Superintendent, which is

currently \$45. For travel outside the District, but within Alaska, the rate shall be \$60. Nome is considered out-of-District.

ii. Partial Day Meal and Incidental Expense Allowances

1. No allowance shall be paid unless the associated travel requires overnight lodging.
2. On the day of travel from one's home base, per diem is not paid for breakfast. Lunch per diem is not paid if traveling from one's home base after 12 p.m. Dinner per diem is not paid if arriving at one's home base prior to 6 p.m., or when leaving one's home base after 6 p.m.
3. Per Diem is allocated for each separate meal as follows within the District or in the lower 48:

\$10 – Breakfast

\$15 – Lunch

\$20 – Dinner

1. Per Diem is allocated for rest of Alaska for each separate meal as follows:

\$10 – Breakfast

\$20 – Lunch

\$30 – Dinner

iii. Meals Available Under Special Circumstances

1. If meals are made available at no cost to the traveler, such as meals provided at conferences or by others at meetings, or if meal costs are reimbursed from other sources or reimbursed as representational expenses, the per diem allowance is not to be claimed for the provided meal.

iv. Travel Delays and Overheading (relocated to non-destination)

1. If an airline or other carrier assumes the cost of lodging or meals due to overflying a destination or other travel delays, the traveler may be reimbursed for necessary costs over and above those paid by the airline, provided the per diem allowances or expense reimbursements are adjusted accordingly.

f. Other Expenses

i. Business Phone Calls

1. Business phone calls must be documented as to date, person called, and phone number called.

ii. Supplies and Equipment

1. In unusual circumstances when clothing, camping equipment, tools, miscellaneous equipment or supplies are purchased, a statement indicating that such items have or will be returned to the District must be included with the approved expense report.

g. Travel Advances

i. General Requirements

1. Advances for individual or group travel may be issued to the traveler, if the anticipated reimbursable expenses exceed \$100.
 2. Advances may be issued for special expenditures if approved by the Superintendent.
 3. Advances shall not be disbursed any earlier than five working days prior to the date of departure, except in extraordinary circumstances.
 4. Advances shall be limited to 100% of estimated reimbursable expenses.
- ii. Advanced Liquidation
1. Advances not returned or otherwise covered by an expense report will be deducted from any future amounts due the traveler from any source, including payroll earnings.
- h. Travel Expense Reporting and Reimbursement
- i. Description
1. The reimbursement and expense report portion of the Travel Request/Reimbursement Form (TRF) represents official documentation by the traveler that he or she has appropriately reported all authorized travel expenses to the District.
- ii. Travel Expense Report
1. Travel expenses will be reimbursed only upon completion of a properly approved TRF.
 2. Expense reports are required for all travel, including travel for which all expenses are paid directly by the District. Approval of travel expense reports may be delegated, provided that trips, which deviate, from the authorized plan be re-approved by the traveler's supervisor.
 3. The reimbursement and expense report portion of the travel request/ reimbursement form represents official documentation by the traveler that he or she has appropriately reported all authorized travel expenses to the District.
 4. The Superintendent must approve reimbursement of actual costs for meals in excess of the authorized per diem allowance.
- iii. Receipts or invoice receipts are required for:
1. Lodging;
 2. Meal expenses in excess of \$10.00 if reimbursed at actual cost;
 3. All transportation expenses (ticket stubs, including airline tickets, are generally adequate);
 4. Taxi fares;
 5. Other expenses for which reimbursement is claimed;
 6. Original receipts should be submitted. If not submitted, the reason for the failure to do so must be explained on the expense report. Expenses for which required receipts are not provided may be disallowed for reimbursement.

iv. Payment Date

1. Reimbursement of travel expenses will be made to the traveler within fourteen days after receipt of a properly completed and approved travel expense report by the travel office.
2. No payment will be made for reimbursements requested more than 60 days after the due date of the expense report, unless approved by the Superintendent.

v. Travel Reimbursement and Expense Report

1. The expense report must be signed by the claimant and approved by the traveler's supervisor or the supervisor's designee.
2. The expense report must be filed with the business or travel office within fourteen days of completion of travel.
3. Personal travel and leave time during the period of travel must be noted on the expense report.
4. If a lodging or other receipts are required, but not available, a statement indicating why the required documentation is not provided must be included. Undocumented expenditures may be disallowed for reimbursement.

vi. Expense reports must include:

1. Copy of the Travel Request/Reimbursement Form (TRF) covered by the expense report;
2. Copy of any purchase order or other document committing District funds for the reported travel expenses;
3. Copy of used or unused airline or other carrier tickets;
4. Statement of the period of travel for which reimbursement is requested, including date and hour of departure and arrival at each destination;
5. All receipts and documentation are required by these regulations. Justification must be approved by the traveler's supervisor for deviations from originally authorized travel plans;
6. Identification of any reimbursement due from an outside agency or organization

vii. Reporting Compensation Received From Other Agencies or Organizations

1. If an employee receives compensation or stipends for attendance at any meeting, conference, workshop, seminar, or for serving on jury duty, the employee shall turn over to the District all moneys received and in turn shall be paid their current salary while on approved administrative, educational, or court leave.

7. FREIGHT

- a. Rates – Interdepartmental Freight Rate Sheet is available.
- b. All freight must be labeled. The BSSD label will be used and properly filled out.
- c. Non-BSSD freight is not to be hauled.
- d. Delivery schedule
 - i. Unalakleet
 - 1. Bins are considered low priority and will be shipped with two weeks. General freight rate is used.
 - 2. Freeze, priority items, and special consideration freight will be delivered as soon as practical. Rates used will be per location.
 - ii. Between sites and backhaul
 - 1. All freight moves will require communication with the District hangar.
 - 2. Freight rate used will typically be the general rate.
- e. Handling
 - i. Hangar staff, local maintenance staff, and itinerants (when available) will assume responsibility of handling all freight.
 - ii. The pilot's responsibility is to fly the airplane and we do not want to risk a physical injury due to freight. Even though the pilot is involved with loading and unloading and may choose to handle freight, he is not obligated.