

WAC 142-40-040 Travel. (1) Except as provided in subsections (7) and (8) of this section, all overnight or out-of-state travel by commissioners and by commission staff must be approved in accordance with commission policy in advance of departure to be eligible for travel expense reimbursement.

(2) All travel expenses must be within the preapproved budget limits as provided for in WAC 142-40-030(1).

(3) Reimbursement for transportation expenses shall be at actual cost subject to the following limitations:

(a) If an employee chooses not to use the state's travel services, travel must be booked at the lowest commercially reasonable cost and exclude any fees due to personal preference or convenience not necessary or critical to commission business.

(b) If an employee chooses not to use the state's travel services, coach airfare will be reimbursed with the expectation that the lowest commercially reasonable fare is found.

(c) If a commissioner or commission employee uses his or her automobile for transportation, mileage shall be reimbursed at the current rate set by the GSA for business travel.

(d) Car rentals up to full-size cars and related fuel expenses. Larger or different types of vehicles require prior approval.

(e) Other transport, including public transit, taxi, and ride-share services, related to commission business travel shall be reimbursed.

(f) Customary tips for transport and meals shall be reimbursed in accordance with commission policy.

(4) Reimbursement for lodging expenses shall be at actual costs and travelers should adhere to the GSA per diem rates as closely as possible. Accommodations should be standard rooms and must be the lowest commercially reasonable cost and exclude any fees due to personal preference or convenience not necessary or critical to commission business.

(5) Reimbursement for meals shall be at actual costs, plus tip, provided that such costs are reasonable for the particular market in which the expense is incurred.

(6) Each person traveling on official commission business shall submit request for reimbursement in accordance with commission policy. Receipts for each expense for which reimbursement is requested must accompany the reimbursement request. Expenses will not be reimbursed unless such a request, accompanied by receipts where required, is timely submitted. Receipts may not be required for expenses under a certain dollar threshold as stated by the Washington dairy products commission policies, which are to be reviewed annually.

(7) No advance approval of travel and related expenses is required for attendance at regular or special meetings of the commission or a committee thereof within the state of Washington.

(8) Day trips by commissioners and commission staff, as well as overnight travel within Washington state by commission staff for commission business, do not require approval in advance of departure and travel-related costs for day trips are reimbursable under WAC 142-40-040(5).

[Statutory Authority: RCW 15.44.038, 15.44.060, and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 20-13-026, § 142-40-040, filed 6/9/20, effective 7/10/20.]