

These Travel Rules govern travel for RESA 7 employees authorized to be reimbursed travel expenses by or on behalf of RESA 7 and includes all in-state and out-of-state travel.

SECTION 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 Approval to travel shall be secured in advance by the employee in accordance with these regulations.
- 1.2 Under no circumstances should an employee travel out of region and/or state without proper approval.
- 1.3 All travel arrangements should be designed to incur the minimum expense required for successful completion of the mission.
- 1.4 Employees traveling out of the RESA 7 area are required to submit an *In-State Travel Request* to the Executive Director or his/her designee. All requests should be submitted at least one week in advance of travel dates. However, exceptions may be granted for circumstances beyond control of the employee when approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee. Without approval, any expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the employee.
- 1.5 Employees traveling out of the state are required to submit an *Out-of-State Travel Request* to the Executive Director or his/her designee. All requests should be submitted at least 30 days in advance of travel dates. Without approval, any expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the employee. Purchasing Card limit changes must be made to the Director of Finance prior to travel.
- 1.6 Employees are responsible for submitting a Travel Expense Report, with all required attachments, to their supervisor for signature. Falsification of expenses may result in corrective action, reprimand and/or termination of employment.
- 1.7 It shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director to ensure compliance with the regulations and ensure that all travel expenditures are within the budgetary allowances of the spending unit.
- 1.8 **Definitions**
 - 1.8.1 "BRIM" means Board of Risk and Insurance Management.
 - 1.8.2 "GSA" means the U.S. General Services Administration.
 - 1.8.3 "Purchasing Card" mean the payment account issued by the financial institution. and administered to make payment for transactions.

- 1.8.4 “Official Workstation” means the city/town, county in which the employee works. For most employees, this will be the location will be the RESA 7 Office.
- 1.8.5 “Third Party Booking” means using an internet travel site such as Expedia, Priceline, Travelocity, Kayak, Hotels.com and the like, where a Traveler may research and book travel reservations.
- 1.8.6 “Travel Expense Report” means the form/format approved by RESA 7 Finance Department that is to be used for setting all travel related expenses incurred pursuant to the Rules.
- 1.8.7 “Traveler” means a RESA 7 employee authorized to be reimbursed travel expenses by or on behalf of RESA 7.

SECTION 2. TRANSPORTATION

2.1 Ground Transportation

- 2.1.1 A traveler must possess a valid operator’s license to drive a vehicle while traveling on behalf of RESA 7.
- 2.1.2 The Traveler must annually complete and pass the BRIM Safe Driver Test.
- 2.1.3 The traveler is responsible for following all applicable laws and requirements while driving and for any fines and/or penalties resulting from citations, charges or warrants attributable to the operator. Such fines and/or penalties are not reimbursable expenses.
- 2.1.4 Travel between the place of residence and the official workstation is not reimbursable. An immediate supervisor may deem that the point of travel may start from the employee’s place of residence rather from the official workstation when the miles from the place of residence to the destination would be less than the miles from the workstation to the destination.

2.2 Privately-Owned Vehicles

- 2.2.1 Travel between the place of residence and the official workstation is not reimbursable.
- 2.2.2 Mileage allowance for privately-owned vehicles engaged in RESA 7 business will be based on the GSA rate in effect at the time of travel. The rate covers all operating costs such as fuel, maintenance, insurance, etc., and no additional reimbursement will be made for such expenses.

2.2.4 Insurance

- 2.2.4.1 Owner's personal insurance will be primary for liability insurance coverage. Owner should contact their automobile insurer to discuss coverage available/required when using their own vehicle on RESA 7 business.
- 2.2.4.2 RESA's insurer, BRIM (Board of Risk & Insurance Management), will provide excess liability coverage for additional protection to the Traveler using their personal vehicle in the course of RESA 7 business. Being excess, BRIM's coverage will only be available after the vehicle owner's coverage is exhausted. In addition, travel out-of-region/state must have approval.
- 2.2.4.3 BRIM does not provide coverage that will pay for damage to a personal automobile regardless of the cause. Further, BRIM will not pay the owner's physical damage deductible.
- 2.2.4.4 BRIM coverage requires approval of out-of-region travel.

2.2.5 Mileage Reimbursement

- 2.2.5.1 Mileage reimbursement rate for work-related travel will be the GSA mileage rate in effect at the time of travel.
- 2.2.5.2 The mileage allowance will be based on the shortest practical route to and from the destination.
- 2.2.5.3 When calculating mileage reimbursement for work-related travel, the starting point shall be the residence of the employee or the RESA 7 Office or the official workstation, whichever is closer to the destination.
- 2.2.5.4 Travel commencing from the employees' residence to a destination other than the RESA 7 office or official workstation requires a mileage deduction of 30 miles roundtrip or the employee's total daily workstation commute; whichever is the least.
- 2.2.5.5 When calculating reimbursement requiring a portion of the day at the RESA 7 office or the official workstation; reimbursement will be any miles beyond the total daily workstation commute.

- 2.2.5.6 County-funded RESA 7 employees will follow their respective county's travel policy for mileage reimbursement of privately-owned vehicles.

2.3 **Commercial Rental Vehicles**

- 2.3.1 A commercial rental vehicle should only be used when a temporary need arises and the cost will be less than the reimbursement associated with a privately-owned vehicle. Only the Traveler renting the commercial rental vehicle is permitted to operate the vehicle. If RESA 7 employees are traveling together it must be noted on the rental agreement if they will operate the vehicle.
- 2.3.2 For travel of more than a few days in duration, weekly rental rates may be reimbursed if they result in a lower total cost than the daily rate.
- 2.3.3 Reimbursement for commercial rental vehicles will be made at actual cost for the daily rental charge for a mid-size or smaller vehicle, plus mileage fees and fuel costs.
- 2.3.4 Reimbursement may be made for a full-size vehicle if more than three (3) people are traveling together on business and for larger vehicles if a group of five (5) or more is traveling together.
- 2.3.5 Travelers shall use the State contract for car rental services when possible
- 2.3.6 Rental fees should be paid by a Purchasing Card.

2.4 **Air Transportation**

- 2.4.1 The traveler should use the most economical mode of transportation that is consistent with the purpose of the trip.
- 2.4.2 Allowable reimbursement for commercial airline travel shall include the actual cost for the least expensive logical fare via the most direct route, or a reasonable alternative route if it results in a lower fare.
- 2.4.3 Travelers shall not book flights through a Third Party Booking vendor.
- 2.4.4 Airfare should be paid by a Purchasing Card.
- 2.4.5 Travelers may not specify a particular airline to accumulate mileage or promotional plans such as frequent flyer programs if it results in a higher fare. Travelers may retain frequent flyer points properly accumulated.

2.4.6 When a Traveler requests to drive his or her personal vehicle rather than fly for business, reimbursement shall be based on actual in-transit expenses (mileage and other costs incurred while in-transit, such as lodging, meals, parking, etc.), not to exceed the least expensive logical commercial airline cost plus local transportation to and from the airport and parking (where required).

SECTION 3. REIMBURSEMENT

- 3.1 Reimbursement of travel expenses paid from federal, state and private grants shall be governed by the terms and conditions of the grant if they differ from those contained in these Rules; otherwise, these Rules shall govern the reimbursement.
- 3.2 Travel Expense Reports must be completed by the Traveler and include all required receipts and forms attached before submitting to immediate supervisor.
- 3.3 When a receipt is required, the receipt must be the valid, itemized receipt issued by the vendor or service provider documenting the transaction.

SECTION 4. MEALS

- 4.1 Meal expense reimbursement is based on the temporary duty location and is not to exceed the maximum per diem established by the GSA. Alcohol and entertainment expenses are specifically excluded. Meal reimbursement is allowed when lodging is listed as “gratis” or “no charge.”
- 4.2 Meal expenses are reimbursable for travel requiring overnight lodging.
- 4.3 If a meal(s) is provided gratis or included within a registration fee of the business travel, the per diem rate must be reduced by the appropriate amount. To determine the amount of deductions for meals, allowances for meal expenses shall be deducted accordingly:

Breakfast	25% of the maximum daily rate established by GSA
Lunch	25% of the maximum daily rate established by GSA
Dinner	50% of the maximum daily rate established by GSA
- 4.4 On the first and last day of travel of an overnight trip when no meals are provided, the maximum allowable reimbursement is based on 75% of the GSA per diem rate for the specific city. Departure or arrival times are not considered.
- 4.5 Meal expenses for single day travel are not reimbursable unless the Traveler is in travel status for more than 12 hours in a 24-hour period and reimbursement has been approved by the Executive Director. The maximum reimbursement is 75% of the GSA rate. Date and time of departure and return must be clearly noted on the Travel Expense Report.

SECTION 5. LODGING

- 5.1 Allowable reimbursement for lodging shall include the actual expenses for overnight accommodations.
- 5.2 Reimbursement for a single occupancy shall be at the least expensive single-room rate available.
- 5.3 Lodging within the State should be at the government rate or conference group rate when applicable.
- 5.4 Travelers shall not book lodging through a Third Party Booking vendor.
- 5.5 The lodging facility location should be as convenient as possible to the location where business is being conducted.
- 5.6 Charges incurred due to the failure of the traveler to timely cancel the facility will be considered the personal expense of the employee and not eligible for reimbursement.
- 5.7 Overnight lodging costs will be limited to time required for meetings. Any extended stay, either prior to or after a meeting will be the sole responsibility of the employee.
- 5.8 Sales tax is to be paid if the lodging facility is located outside the State of West Virginia.
- 5.9 Prior night lodging will be reimbursed for meetings/trainings/conferences that begin before the start of the employee's normal work day or exceeds a 1 ½ hour commute one-way.
- 5.10 Under certain circumstances, lodging may be reimbursed for overnight stays within the region.
- 5.11 Travelers may retain points properly accumulated through Hotel Rewards Programs.
- 5.12 Exceptions to overnight lodging regulations may include the presence of/or anticipated inclement weather conditions as approved by the employee's immediate supervisor.

SECTION 6. REGISTRATION

- 6.1 Registration fees and event-related materials for meeting, conferences, seminars, and/or workshops are reimbursable.
- 6.2 Receipts are required for reimbursement. The receipt or documentation provided by the event sponsor shall be sufficient for reimbursement.

- 6.3 Travelers are to adjust meal reimbursement (per diem) requests for meals included with the registration fee.
- 6.4 Travelers should verify acceptable payment methods with the event sponsor prior to attending. Registration fees should be charged on a Purchasing Card when possible.

SECTION 7. OTHER EXPENSES

- 7.1 Travelers may incur miscellaneous business-related expenses for which reimbursement may be made, if appropriate. Receipts are required. Such expenses and reimbursement may include, but are not limited to:
- Taxi and/or shuttle fees
 - Baggage fees
 - Road Toll
 - Parking fees
 - Others as deemed appropriate and approved by the immediate supervisor
- 7.2 When a non-employee accompanies a Traveler on official business, RESA 7 shall in no way be responsible or liable for any expenses, actions or inaction of the non-employee whatsoever.