CITY TRAVEL POLICY STATEMENT

PURPOSE

To set forth the policy for official City travel for reimbursement of expenses incurred by City Council members, appointed officials, members of special boards, commissions, committees, and employees while traveling overnight on official City business. This policy shall not apply for commuter (local) training seminars and local City business expenses, nor is it intended to supersede P.O.S.T. reimbursable travel policies established by the State of California or the Newport Beach Police Department. The governing rule for all City travel expenses shall be availability, economy, convenience, and propriety.

TRAVEL POLICY

A.   The City shall provide reimbursement for expenses directly related to attendance at approved conferences, seminars, meetings, and other official functions/ purposes.

B.   Official travel is planned, approved, budgeted, and controlled at the Department level, except in specific cases described below.

C.   Authorized travel approved in the annual budget requires no further approval beyond the departmental level. If, however, it becomes apparent that the total travel cost will exceed the budget estimate, the approval of the Finance Director must be obtained.

D.   Unbudgeted, unplanned travel requests shall be submitted by the Department Director to the Finance Director who will forward the requests to the City Manager for approval. Such requests shall include the proposed funding source for the travel (other travel canceled, reprogramming of other funds within the department, etc.).

E.   The City Manager shall adopt and enforce administrative procedures that assure that all City authorized travel is:

   1.   Paid directly by the City or reimbursed to the traveler based on actual, itemized expenses or should be covered by per diem payment.

2.   The City's per diem rate for Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) shall be equal to the U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA) M&IE rates. (www.GSA.gov).

PROCEDURE

A.   Each Department Director shall include all planned trips in the Department's annual budget requests. The Travel Authorization Form shall be used as a planning/cost estimation guide. For unbudgeted, unplanned travel, the same form shall be prepared at the time travel is requested.

B.   All requests for travel advances shall include the original Travel Authorization Form signed by the Department Head.

C.   The Travel Expense Claim Form shall be used to file the final travel claim with the Finance Director. A copy of the Travel Authorization Form must be attached.

D.   The Finance Department shall make a record of all travel payments on the original Travel Authorization form.

CONTINUITY OF CITY GOVERNMENT POLICY

With the advent of different modes of rapid transportation, there is the possibility of accidents injuring or killing several people simultaneously. Since Council Members are required to attend conferences, conventions and meetings outside City Hall, it is desirous to require that whenever possible, no more than three members of the City Council use the same transportation at the same time.

When it comes to the Council's attention that a conference, convention, or meeting in which transportation is required, Council Members shall make an effort to arrange their itinerary so that no more than three members of the City Council use the same transportation.   The City Clerk shall be utilized to provide alternate travel arrangements where necessary in order to comply with this policy.

This policy will help insure that there will be a continuity of City government and that there is always a majority of Council members capable of fulfilling the responsibilities placed upon them by the City.

In addition, the City Manager, Department Heads and other key personnel should use the same guidelines in traveling separately on official business whenever practicable.

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