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City of Stamford Travel Policy

I. Purpose and Scope of Policy

This Policy is adopted pursuant to Ordinance No. 663, which requires that "No City Officer or employee shall spend or encumber any City funds for business travel, entertainment, or related expenses except as provided in written policy issued by the Mayor and approved by the Boards of Finance and Representatives."

II. Pre-Approval of Employee Travel

Pre-approval of employee travel is required in the following circumstances:

- Any travel which includes an overnight stay; or
- Any travel which involves air transportation; or
- Any travel in excess of 200 miles from the City of Stamford (400 miles round trip).

Employee travel satisfying the above criteria must be requested by the Officer or employee on the attached *Conference or Out of Town Trip Request Form*, approved by the applicable Department Head and Director, and approved by the Mayor. All out of town travel which does not meet the above criteria (i.e. - travel less than 200 miles from Stamford and not involving an overnight stay) shall be subject to the approval requirements promulgated by the individual Department or Director. Pre-approval of travel meeting the above requirements is required by all officers and employees, except the Mayor. Pre-approval shall not be required in the event of bona fide emergency.

III. Required Documentation

1. **Conference or Out of Town Trip Request Form.** As noted above, this form must be completed for employee travel which satisfies the criteria noted above. In those instances when pre-approval is required, this form must accompany the reimbursement request submitted to the Controller's Office.
2. **Report of Travel Expenditures Form.** This form must be completed and approved by the applicable department head whenever an employee requests reimbursement for business travel-related expenses. Requests for routine mileage reimbursement not related to a conference or business trip should be requested on the City's separate *Mileage Reimbursement Request Form*. Supporting documentation, consisting of receipts, paid invoices, hotel bills, etc. should be

attached to the *Report of Travel Expenditures* form to substantiate the reimbursement request. This form, and the supporting documentation, should be forwarded to the Controller's Office with the City's standard Voucher Payable form in a single reimbursement request for the entire cost of the trip. All reimbursement requests must be submitted within 30 days after returning from the trip

3. *Original Receipts.* Except for meals, where the City has established per diem allowances, standard City practice dictates that original receipts accompany all reimbursement requests. If other than original receipts are submitted, a written statement attesting to the accuracy of the submission must accompany the reimbursement request and be approved by the appropriate Department Head and Director. The Controller's Office will return any reimbursement requests unpaid to the originating department that are not in compliance with this policy.

IV. Limits on Expenses

1. Meal expenses will be reimbursed based on the Federal Meal & Incidental Expense per diem rates for New York City as adjusted annually by the General Services Administration. As of January 1, 1999, the per diem meal allowance is \$46.00 per day. Receipts are *not* required to document the foregoing per diem reimbursements. Meal expenses for trips which are not overnight are not reimbursable without the approval of the appropriate Department Head and Director. An employee on a one-day business trip is eligible for one meal if his or her work schedule for the convenience of the City extends beyond eleven hours (unless otherwise dictated by labor contract). Sub-limits for individual meals are as follows: Breakfast - \$9.00, Lunch - \$12.00, Dinner - \$25.00. Advance agreement with the department head (or Director in the case of a department head) is required.

2. Personal car mileage is reimbursed at rates provided by union contract. In the absence of union contract, reimbursement will be at rates permitted by the IRS. Reimbursement for car expenses will be made only to the driver. Mileage will be reimbursed only by the shortest route. When using a personal automobile for a day trip which originates from home, the mileage reported for reimbursement should be from home or from the Government Center, whichever is less. If a mode of transportation other than a City supplied vehicle or the employee's personal automobile is used, the mode and cost of transportation must be approved in writing by the appropriate department head.

3. Rental Car Policy. If the official business of the City requires a rental car, arrangements must be approved in advance by the applicable department head or Director at the most economical rate available. The City of Stamford is self-insured for damage to rental cars used on City business. Additional insurance coverage offered by the rental car company should be declined, and is not reimbursable. In the event of an accident, the employee should notify the rental company representative and the City Risk Manager immediately.

4. Hotel expenses for meetings in New York City are reimbursable only with advance approval of the Mayor. Without such pre-approval, conference or meeting expense reimbursements will be limited to public transportation expenses (round trip train and subway/cab fares).

5. Air travel will be considered only for trips over 200 miles (one way) from Stamford, and will be reimbursed at coach/economy rates. Flight arrangements should be made as far in advance of the travel date as possible to take advantage of "super saver" discounts.

6. Combined business and personal travel. If an employee combines business and personal travel, expenses should be paid directly by the employee, not charged to the City, for all those expenses or portion of expenses which are personal. The City will only reimburse that portion of a trip and those expenses which are directly related to City business. In those cases where an employee decides to have a family member accompany him or her on a business trip, the employee must pay all additional expenses (e.g., incremental hotel charges, meals, travel, etc.) No adjustment is permitted to cover the expenses of accompanying family members (e.g. exchanging a regular round-trip fare for two excursion fares).

7. Non-Reimbursable Expenses. The City will only pay for or reimburse expenses which are directly related to the business purpose of the travel. Personal expenses will not be reimbursed. Examples of

non-reimbursable expenses include:

- Personal (non-job related) telephone calls
- Dry cleaning
- Personal expenses (toiletries, clothing, etc.) and personal trip insurance.
- Personal legal charges and traffic violations.
- Personal property loss, theft, or damage, except upon the written approval of the Office of Legal Affairs.
- Alcoholic beverages
- Airline club fees
- Personal side trips and entertainment (movies, etc.)
- Recreational, health, and gym facility fees.
- Loss or theft of cash, travel tickets, credit cards, except upon the written approval of the Office of Legal Affairs.

V. Compliance Auditing

1. Department Managers signing the *Report of Travel Expenditures Form* are responsible for ensuring that all travel claims originating from their departments are in compliance with the City's Travel Policy. Department Managers should review all submissions for completeness, mathematical accuracy, compliance with expense limitations, and overall compliance with the Policy.

2. The Controller's Office is responsible for compliance verification with the City's Travel Policy. Travel claims which are submitted to the Controller's Office for payment processing will be processed only if they contain the following documentation:

- ***Conference or Out of Town Trip Request Form*** completed and signed by Mayor, when pre-approval of travel is required.
- ***Report of Travel Expenditures Form*** completed, signed by employee, and approved by Department Head or Director.
- ***Original Receipts Attached*** to substantiate all expenses, except for per diem meal expenses, or signed and approved affidavit attesting to the accuracy of the submission is provided in lieu of original receipts.
- ***Standard City Payment Voucher Form*** completed and signed.

All travel claims which are incomplete will be returned by the Controller's Office to the employee's respective department head.

3. The Office of Policy and Management will periodically select a random sample of travel expense reimbursements to review for compliance with the approved policy. A report of findings from this review will be forwarded to the Board of Finance Audit Committee to report on the status of compliance.