

## Administrative Order



**Administrative Order No.:** 6-1

**Title:** Travel on County Business

**Ordered:** 3/11/2003

**Effective:** 3/21/2003

### **AUTHORITY:**

Chapters 112.061, 125.0104, 159.47 of the Florida Statutes and Sections 1.06 and 4.02 of the Miami-Dade County Home Rule Amendment and Charter.

### **SUPERSEDES:**

This Administrative Order supersedes previous Administrative Order 6-1, effective November 5, 1998.

### **POLICY:**

Certain travel by County officials, employees and other authorized persons may be considered necessary and useful to the conduct of County business. Attendance at selected professional meetings and training courses can benefit the individuals and, therefore, the County through an increased awareness of technical, programmatic and administrative developments.

However, the cost of travel, the resulting absence from ones normal County duties, and the public sensitivity to these issues, demand that alternative means of accomplishing travel purposes be carefully examined. Telephone (including conference calls) and written communications should be considered prior to requesting travel authorization. Even when no feasible substitute for traveling exists it is still incumbent upon the traveler and respective supervisors to seek out and utilize the least expensive mode of transportation and to keep the associated expenses, including but not limited to, lodging, taxi fares or auto rental, to an absolute minimum.

### **PURPOSE:**

It is the purpose of this Administrative Order to provide a reasonable and systematic means by which travel may be approved and controlled.

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## **OFFICIAL BUSINESS:**

Reimbursement for County employees for travel shall be limited to those expenses necessarily incurred in the conduct of official County business; i.e., the performance of a public purpose as authorized by the Board of County Commissioners, the County Manager, or a department director. Reimbursement for travel must be within the limitations prescribed by Florida law. Generally, lodging and meal allowances will not be provided for travel within the immediate vicinity of Miami-Dade County, which is generally defined as the area including and between West Palm Beach and Marathon Key. Any exception must have the prior approval of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). As for the Mayor and County Commissioners, they shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses as the County Commission approves.

## **MODE OF TRANSPORTATION:**

Except under unusual circumstances, the most economical and efficient method of transportation shall be used. Consideration should be given to the time away from one's normal duties, number of persons making the trip, amount of equipment and materials to be transported, and the cost of per diem and all associated travel expenses.

For travel out of the County but within the State, where a County vehicle is determined to be the most economical form of transportation, the Fleet Management division of the General Services Administration (GSA) may issue credit cards which may be used for all vehicle expenses.

Due to special insurance restrictions, no County or personal vehicle is to be used out-of-state on official County business without the express written permission of GSA's Risk Management Division.

## **TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS:**

In order to minimize travel expenses and to fully benefit from various cost saving opportunities, the County may enter into agreements with carriers, travel agencies, or other governmental entities to provide travel services in a specified manner. When such an agreement is in force, the County Manager shall designate a County Travel Coordinator who shall be responsible for overseeing the contractual provision of said services and for establishing and distributing procedures governing travel arrangements for individuals traveling on County business. Said rules and regulations must be fully complied with in order for a traveler to be eligible for travel reimbursement. The only exception to this requirement is in those situations where the traveler has requested and received the expressed approval of the Travel Coordinator to make his/her own travel arrangements.

Maximum daily rates may be used to control the cost of lodging expenses. Maximum allowable hotel rate amounts will be created for, a) frequently visited major metropolitan areas (e.g., Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.) and for, b) certain other frequently visited cities (e.g., Dallas, Jacksonville, New Orleans, Orlando, Tampa, etc.). These rates will be part of the County's travel procedures developed by OMB and updated annually to reflect market changes and other appropriate travel related procedures and guidelines. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if an official or employee is attending a conference or meeting on County business and the department involved deems it to be in the best interest of the County, the attendee may stay in the hotel where the conference or meeting is being held. The approval of the County's Travel Coordinator must be obtained on a case-by-case basis to exceed these rates. To control the cost of auto rental expenditures, the County will use State of Florida contracted rates when less expensive auto rental rates are not available.

#### **TRAVEL REQUESTS:**

The department shall initiate a Travel Request Form for each employee, official, or other individual authorized to travel outside the County or outside the County's immediate vicinity on official County business. The Travel Request Form shall be submitted directly to the travel liaison in the Finance Department. If approval is required by the County Manager's office or the Office of Management and Budget, the Travel Request must be submitted at least seven working days in advance of travel regardless of whether reimbursement of expense is anticipated. The Finance Department is authorized to design and modify the Travel Request and Travel Expense Report forms to comply with this Administrative Order and the Miami-Dade Travel Procedures and to gather such information as is necessary to properly account for monies advanced and reimbursed for travel.

#### **AUTHORIZATIONS:**

The following sequence of approvals is required for travel:

Employees and Consultants: The department director shall be responsible for authorizing travel for department personnel and consultants and for designating which funds are to be used to cover the cost of the trip. However, if the request for travel expenses exceeds the department's approved annual travel budget, the Travel Request must be preauthorized by the OMB before the travel occurs.

Department Directors, County Manager staff, Multiple Travelers, Travel on Legislative or Congressional Business, and International Travel: Authorization must be obtained from the County Manager or his designee(s) for 1) all travel by department directors; 2) all travel by County Manager staff; 3) in all situations when three or more people are traveling to the same location; 4) when legislative or

congressional business is the purpose for the travel and 5) all foreign travel.

Commission Appointed Individuals: In the case of travel by the Board of County Commissioners and individuals appointed by the County Commission to a committee, board or authority, authorization shall be by the Board of County Commissioners. If travel expenses for such individuals are to be charged to a specific County department, the department director shall indicate on the Travel Request Form whether funds are budgeted and available for the travel. Members of the County Commission shall approve the travel of their staff members.

#### **TRAVEL ADVANCES:**

Travelers requesting a cash advance shall indicate the amount needed on their Travel Request Form, up to a maximum of eighty percent of all reimbursable expenses. The funds shall be disbursed by the Finance Department upon receipt of a properly authorized Form.

The Finance Department shall have the authority to deny travel advance privileges to those individuals or to those departments which have failed to properly or promptly submit Travel Expense Reports.

#### **TRAVEL EXPENSES:**

Travel Expense Report. Where reimbursement of travel expenses is expected, travelers shall submit a Travel Expense Report approved by the department director to the Finance Department within five (5) working days following their return from a trip. Travelers must submit valid receipts for their own expenses (see Other Expenses) and for all other persons transported in their custody.

If the amount of the travel cash advance exceeds travel costs, travelers must return to the Finance Department the excess funds at the time their Travel Expense Report is submitted. Authorized travelers shall be reimbursed in accordance with Florida Statute 112.061 for per diem, lodging, and meal allowance rates, as established in this Administrative Order, and as described in the Miami-Dade travel procedures as updated from time to time. Foreign travel shall be reimbursed at the U.S. State Department foreign per diem rates for lodging and meals. Any exceptions to these per diem rates must be requested in writing to the OMB prior to travel. The Finance Department shall be responsible for distributing information regarding current reimbursement rates and the method of calculating travel time.

Other Expenses. The County may reimburse necessary incidental traveling expenses such as: taxi fare, auto rental, vicinity mileage (see A.O. 6-3) or the cost of other modes of ground transportation, ferry, bridge, road and other tolls, parking and storage fees, communication expenses, convention registration fees. No

personal expenses will be reimbursed.

The Finance Department shall have the authority to disallow any and all expenses not consistent with Florida law, this Administrative Order, or the Miami-Dade travel procedures.

### **TRAVEL BONUSES:**

As a result of traveling on County business, all benefits of travel bonus programs may accrue to the County. In every instance where a travel bonus is received, the traveler shall record the nature of the bonus on the Travel Expense Report form. The Travel Coordinator shall determine the final disposition of each travel bonus.

### **EXCEPTIONS:**

Members and related staff of the Tourist Development Council, when traveling on official business in the performance of tourism related activities as prescribed by Chapter 125.0104 of the Florida Statutes, shall be reimbursed for actual reasonable and customary expenses when meeting with travel writers, tour brokers or others connected with the tour industry. They shall be reimbursed for foreign travel at current rates as specified in the Federal publication "Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians, Foreign Areas)," as outlined in Chapter 125.0104, Subsection 9 of the Florida Statutes. All expenditures in excess of \$10 shall be substantiated by a paid bill, with the name and affiliation of the individuals involved in the expenditure clearly indicated on the receipt. Complete and detailed justification for all travel and entertainment-related expenditures shall be shown on the Travel Expense Report.

Members and related staff of the Industrial Development Authority, when traveling on official business in the performance of promotional and other related duties of the Authority, as prescribed by Chapters 159.46 and 159.47 of the Florida Statutes, shall be reimbursed for actual expenses when meeting with business prospects, potential purchases of Florida exports and foreign governmental dignitaries. Foreign travel for members or employees of the Authority and other authorized persons shall be reimbursed at the current rates as specified in the Federal publication "Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians, Foreign Areas)" as outlined in Chapter 159.47(1)(K) of the Florida Statutes. All travel and entertainment-related expenditures in excess of \$10 shall be substantiated by paid bills, with the name and affiliation of the individuals involved in the expenditure clearly indicated on the receipt.

### **PERSONAL LEAVE COMBINED WITH OFFICIAL TRAVEL:**

Employees wishing to combine personal leave with official County business must have the written approval of their department director. In the cases of the County

Manager's staff, approval shall be by the County Manager or his/her designee. Employees traveling under such circumstances will be reimbursed at the common carrier fare or the current mileage rate, whichever is less, and only for that portion of the travel which is clearly County business related. Per diem will be in effect only during the actual period of time spent on official County business.

This Administrative Order is hereby submitted to the Board of County Commissioners of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Steve Shiver

County Manager