

Chairman Oliver G. Gilbert, III

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Vice Chairman Anthony Rodriguez, District 10

Commissioner Marleine Bastien, District 2
Commissioner Keon Hardemon, District 3
Commissioner Micky Steinberg, District 4
Commissioner Eileen Higgins, District 5
Commissioner Kevin Marino Cabrera, District 6
Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado, District 7
Commissioner Danielle Cohen Higgins, District 8
Commissioner Kionne L. McGhee, District 9
Commissioner Roberto J. Gonzalez, District 11
Commissioner Juan Carlos Bermudez, District 12
Senator Rene Garcia, District 13

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Vice Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
And Members, Board of County Commissioners

FROM: The Honorable Oliver G. Gilbert III, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners, District 1

DATE: April 12, 2023

RE: Travel Procedures for the Board of County Commissioners

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "O. Gilbert III", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

One of my goals during my tenure as Chairman is to bring the various procedures for the activities of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) up to date and improve efficiency. Attached, please find Travel Procedures to be followed by the BCC. With the advent of the new Enterprise Resource Planning application (INFORMS), it is necessary to change some procedures. By combining the authorizations provided through State Statute, with clarifications for local issues, the BCC Travel Procedures will bring improved efficiency and allow for improved effectiveness. Please consider these procedures effective immediately.

Should you have any questions regarding these procedures, please feel free to contact Jennifer Moon, Chief, Office of Policy and Budgetary Affairs at 305-375-5882.

Attachment

Cc: Honorable Daniella Levine Cava, Mayor
Geri Bonzon-Keenan, County Attorney

Gerald Sanchez, First Assistant County Attorney
Jess McCarty, Executive Assistant County Attorney
Edward Marquez, Chief Financial Officer
David Clodfelter, Chief Budget Officer
Yinka Majekodunmi, Commission Auditor
Jennifer Moon, Chief, Office of Policy and Budgetary
Elda A. Green, Executive Director, Commission Support Staff

MIAMI-DADE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS TRAVEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Policy

Travel by Commissioners and Commission staff is necessary and useful to the conduct of County business. Attendance at conferences, face-to-face meetings with State and Federal Officials, and international missions to promote Miami-Dade County for economic development and international relationships are examples of activities that require travel outside of Miami-Dade County.

Travel expenses must be reimbursed, in compliance with Florida Statutes, for the amount equal to the value of the most efficient and economical means, taking into consideration travel time, season, cost of transportation, and per diem or subsistence required. FS 112.061 establishes the travel reimbursement rates, with certain justifiable exceptions and exemptions, which are applicable to counties in Florida.

Commissioners and Staff of the Board of County Commissioners must follow the procedures as delineated below. Because INFORMS is accessible as a web-based platform for submission of employee time and absence requests, as well as Travel Authorizations, only in the case of emergencies, should travel occur without prior authorization. Even in the case of an emergency, general information regarding the travel should be entered into INFORMS or sent to Support Staff so that a Travel Authorization may be initiated.

Travel Authorization

Travel Authorizations are required to be submitted prior to the travel and are initiated by the traveler or the Commission Districts' Travel Liaisons (TL). All travels must be processed through INFORMS; initiating a Travel Authorization in INFORMS expedites the distribution of the travel advance. Authorizations may be (1) initiated by the traveler in INFORMS, (2) initiated by the Travel Liaison in INFORMS, or (3) submitted to Support Staff for initiation in INFORMS utilizing a Travel Request Form (TRF) provided by Support Staff.

Instructions on how to enter information into the INFORMS travel authorization screen are found at this link: [INFORMS Travel Expense/Authorization Guide](#). These instructions include the creation of the Travel Authorization, inputting the required information, including the purpose of the trip, and submitting the travel request for authorization. All Travel Authorizations are finalized by Support Staff.

Hints when utilizing INFORMS to initiate a Travel Authorization:

- If you choose "Other" as the Business Purpose for the travel, utilize the "Notes" to provide a description before you complete the Travel Authorization
- Do not make a selection in the "Reference" drop down box
- Scan and attach any required document using the "Attachment" button
- If the TL or Support Staff creates the Travel Authorization on behalf of the traveler, the form can be saved, but not submitted for approval; the Travel Authorization does not route for approval until it has been submitted by the Traveler
- A travel advance of up to 80 percent of the estimated out-of-pocket travel expenses are typically processed through INFORMS; when inputting the Travel Authorization the

traveler may request either an advance sent via ACH payment (deposited into the traveler's account similar to direct deposit of an employee's paycheck) or a cash advance.

Transportation

Airlines

Airline tickets may be purchased using the assigned departmental purchasing card (P-card) designated specifically for air travel or in certain instances the traveler's personal credit card. The traveler must seek out and utilize the most economical and efficient airfare taking into consideration travel time, season, cost of transportation, and per diem or subsistence. For any airline flights five (5) hours or longer, seats with fares up to and including Business Class may be purchased. If Business Class seats are not offered by the airline, other seats of comparable class may be purchased. Travelers will be reimbursed up to a maximum of two (2) checked bags per travel. The traveler must always provide a copy of the checked bag receipt from the airline to be reimbursed for any additional luggage charges.

The use of a travel agency or third-party vendor is permitted. If travelling on official County business, the traveler will not be reimbursed for the use of accumulated personal frequent flyers miles to purchase airfare.

Automobiles

The use of an automobile to reach your destination should be considered for shorter in-state trips when savings outweigh travel costs and time permits. Due to special insurance restrictions, no County or personal vehicle is to be used out-of-state on official County business without express written permission of the Internal Services Department (ISD) Risk Management Division. Rental cars may be utilized at the destination. Insurance should be purchased from the rental agency when renting a vehicle.

Mileage reimbursement for the use of a personal vehicle during County travel will be equal to the standard federal mileage rate. As approved by the Board of County Commissioners per Resolution R-1345-03, please refer to rates at this link: [mileage reimbursement rates](#). Some rates will populate in INFORMS based on US General Services Administration Per Diem Rates. All points of departure, when driving from Miami-Dade County shall either be from the traveler's assigned place of work address or residence. When requesting a mileage reimbursement, a mileage map is required when determining the number of miles driven from the traveler's point of departure to their point of destination and a scanned copy of the map should be attached to the Travel Authorization.

When requesting reimbursement for Tolls, please either include the toll receipt or a scanned print out of the SunPass report. To calculate Florida Tolls, use the Toll calculator <https://floridasturnpike.com/TollCalc/index.htm>.

Lodging, Meals and Incidental Expenses

Lodging and Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&EIs) are authorized based on the per diem rate established by the federal government for domestic and international travel. Where meals are included as part of the conference, educational seminar, etc., they are to be deducted from the daily meals and incidentals. If the traveler chooses to not partake in the meals provided through

the conference, educational seminar, etc., a request for reimbursement for meals purchased in lieu of the provided meal will not be reimbursed. As noted above, Resolution R-1345-03, allows for the use of lodging and meal reimbursement rates (both domestic and foreign) to follow the published rates provided on the U.S. General Services Administration website and the U.S. Department of State's website.

When attending conferences/educational trainings where a hotel or group of hotels have been designated by the conference committee as "conference hotels", the daily maximum allowable lodging rate may be exceeded, if the traveler is staying in one of these designated hotels. When submitting the TRF, proof of such designation must be attached. This can be in the form of an agenda, copy of the registration, flyer, etc.

Travel Expense Documentation and Reimbursement

Travelers choosing to be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred must be substantiated as "paid" (i.e. itemized hotel bills, taxis or other on demand transportation option, and any other substantiated reimbursement expense). As an alternative to payment for actual ME&I expenses, the traveler can receive a per diem allowance (no receipts are required for this type of reimbursement). Receipts are not needed for food; the traveler will receive the maximum allowable daily meal reimbursement.

The following is a list of some travel expenditures NOT reimbursed by the County:

- ✓ Airline clubs
- ✓ Airline upgrades
- ✓ Seat upgrades and/or seat reservations except for medical necessity
- ✓ Alcohol
- ✓ Any additional expenses as a result of traveling with spouse/guest
- ✓ Books, magazines, newspapers
- ✓ Childcare, babysitting, house-sitting, pet-sitting/kennel charges
- ✓ Curbside check-ins when a fee is required
- ✓ Expenses for the repairs/damages of privately owned vehicles
- ✓ Expenses related to damages to uninsured rental cars
- ✓ Traffic or parking tickets or fines
- ✓ Gifts/Flowers
- ✓ Haircuts and personal grooming
- ✓ Laundry/dry cleaning (an exception may be made for trips lasting longer than seven (7) days)
- ✓ Lost or stolen items
- ✓ Personal entertainment and/or tours including in-flight/hotel pay-per-view movies, headsets, health club facilities, and/or social activities
- ✓ Personal travel insurance
- ✓ Porter Charges
- ✓ Travel mileage rate reimbursement expenses in a personal vehicle to the airport from home and vice versa
- ✓ Valet parking, where self-parking is available

If you are combining County business with personal trip, the traveler cannot charge any expenses for non-County staff on the County p-card; this includes airfare, additional baggage fees, food, seat upgrades and/or reservations.

It is the responsibility of the traveler to keep all required original receipts for reimbursement purposes and attach scanned document when completing the approved Travel Expense Report in INFORMS. Post-trip reimbursements will be made as a separate check. In no case, should reimbursement exceed 15 calendar days from the date of the submitted travel expense report. Detailed instructions for completing and submitting a Travel Expense Report can be found at this link: [INFORMS Expense Report Guide](#). All Travel Expense Reports are finalized by Support Staff.

Airline tickets purchased more than 30 days in advance, on a personal credit card, may be reimbursed regardless of advance limits, prior to travel.

Important Reminder: If using the County P-card to pay for lodging, receipt must reflect a zero-balance due and no sales taxes applied (if a hotel within the State of Florida). Including balances and sales taxes will cause delays to the traveler's reimbursement process and/or require the traveler to reimburse the County for any charges.

Hints when utilizing INFORMS to complete a travel expense report:

- INFORMS will automatically populate much of the information required for the Travel Expense Report from the Travel Authorization.
- If the expense report exceeds 110 percent of the approved travel authorization, INFORMS will prompt a warning; a justification is required in the Notes section prior to submitting the report
- If a cash advance was distributed, it must be applied to the Expense Report prior to submitting
- A Travel Liaison may submit a Travel Expense Report on behalf of the Traveler.

Travel Management

If an approved trip is cancelled, the Travel Authorization must be cancelled in INFORMS. If an authorized trip has been cancelled after advances have been distributed, monies must be returned to the County within five (5) business days of cancellation.

If a change in the itinerary for the trip occurs PRIOR to the departure of the traveler, changes should be made in INFORMS and reapproved. If the change in itinerary occurs AFTER the departure of the traveler, a description and justification for the change should be included in the Travel Expense Report.

Please feel free to contact Support Staff should you have any questions as you complete your Travel Authorization and Travel Expense reports.