

80. TRAVEL & TRAINING POLICY

Adopted by the City Council of Saco: May 7, 2001
Amended by the City Council of Saco: May 3, 2004

A. PURPOSE

1. The City recognizes the need to attract and retain qualified, productive and motivated employees who will provide effective services to the citizens. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to ensure that all employees of the City of Saco receive the training required of their position, for career enhancement deemed to be of value to the City and for training geared to career goals tied to annual employee evaluations. Employees will also be rewarded for attaining skills that make them more flexible and useful in helping departments meet their goals. It is the policy of the City to provide to its employees adequate training and counseling to enable them to successfully perform their duties and enhance their professional growth. Employees will receive clear and timely communication on issues, which affect their work life and will have a reasonable opportunity for input into decisions on these issues.
2. This policy also provides for the payment of travel, training and vehicle use expenses for City officials and/or employees while on official City business.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. Mandatory Training: All training that is mandated by City, State, or Federal agencies.
2. Career Attainment Training: All training designed to enable employee's to reach career goals.
3. Certified Training; Training needed to maintain or acquire certifications required for the position.
4. Health and Safety Training: Training needed for employee to perform duties in a safe manner.

C. TRAINING PROGRAMS

1. Employees, as well as the City, benefit from the continuing education opportunities provided by the City. All educational training programs authorized by the City shall be designed to improve performance or meet technical requirements of the employee's current position.
2. The City shall bear the cost of all mandatory training classes necessary to fulfill certification requirements. It is the responsibility of the department head to

determine the cost of such certification and to make the appropriate budget request.

3. Employees wishing to enroll in educational or vocational course work that is directly related to their present position must secure prior approval from the City Administrator. In cases where the approval is granted, the City will reimburse the employee for the cost of tuition, provided that the employee completes the course and makes a passing grade of C or better. Employees are encouraged to attend classes offered after normal working hours. The City Administrator on a case-by-case basis may grant exceptions.

4. Miscellaneous training sessions that are not mandatory and do not issue grades, do not need the approval of the City Administrator if the specific department has money in the budget for training. Department Head approval would be needed for this miscellaneous training.

D. ELIGIBILITY FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES

1. All elected and appointed officials and employees of the City by reason of membership in professional organizations, attendance at meetings, enrollment in training sessions or as otherwise required by their official duties to travel, are eligible for travel reimbursements as defined by this policy.

E. SCOPE OF ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

1. The following expenses qualify for reimbursement as hereinafter defined:

a) Mileage Allowance - The city will reimburse an employee for the use of a personal vehicle at the IRS mileage rate for job related travel. In addition, the employee may submit toll road receipts and parking lot charges for reimbursement.

b) Nothing contained herein shall prohibit the use of a privately owned vehicle for out-of-state travel. Whenever private transportation is authorized for out-of-state City business, the total transportation expenses paid may not exceed the cost of the transportation, if approved commercial transportation had been used.

2. Insurance Coverage - All employees who drive either private or City-owned vehicles to conduct City business shall ensure that they are properly licensed and that any private vehicle used for City business is properly registered and insured. If an employee is involved in a vehicle accident while driving or traveling in their private vehicle and conducting City business within the scope of their employment, the insurance policy for that private vehicle will provide insurance protection for the employee. Therefore, it is essential that the employee consult with their insurance agent to determine adequate insurance coverage. The City will reimburse the employee for the amount of insurance deductible paid by the employee up to a maximum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

3. Plane Fare - Air travel will be reimbursed at the coach rate only. If the employee desires to arrange first-class travel, the employee will pay the difference between the coach rate and first-class travel. If less than first class accommodations are not available and is so documented, the City Administrator may authorize first-class travel. The employee will pay airfare for the employee's spouse or guest.

4. Rail Transportation - Rail transportation may be approved if there is no significant difference in fare and time between rail and other forms of commercial travel.

5. Ground Transportation - Expense to and from airports, such as airport limousine, taxicab or bus transportation are qualified expenses. Road tolls and parking fees are also included. Vehicle rental, after reaching destination by commercial transportation, is permissible when it is necessary and is the most economical and practical means of transportation. Vehicle rental should be limited to subcompact, compact or intermediate sizes.

6. Registration and Banquet Fees - Registration fees and banquet fees as stated by the registration program of the convention are allowable. The employee will pay for the banquet tickets for his/her spouse or guest.

7. Lodging Expenses - City employees who anticipate incurring lodging and meal expenses at workshops, seminars and conferences shall request reimbursement approval from the City Administrator prior to incurring the expenses at the event. The City Administrator may grant approval of such reasonable requests on a case-by-case basis.

8. Hotel Rooms - The City pays only the single-room rate. If a double room is required, the employee will pay the difference between the single and double room rate, if any. If two employees share a double room, the double room rate is allowable. At the time of registration, the employee should state that he/she is a City employee in order to ascertain whether or not a government rate is available.

9. Suites - Under certain circumstances when the City is a host to other jurisdictions or when special facilities are required, the cost of a suite is an allowable expense with the City Administrator's prior approval. Full justification is required in order to qualify for such reimbursement.

10. Meal Per Diem - Meal reimbursement shall be on a per diem daily basis, which shall not exceed forty-five dollars (\$45.00) per day. Meal reimbursement shall be for the actual cost of meals incurred for that day including tax and tip. The cost of meals, excluding alcohol, paid by an employee while on a business-related travel will be reimbursed when an employee provides receipts for each meal.

11. Business Meals - Business meetings where officials or employees are actually conducting City business during mealtime are reimbursable expenses. The meals of guests or other individuals may be paid if business related, upon

authorization of the Department Head or City Administrator. Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable. Employees are encouraged to use discretion and provide proper justification before requesting reimbursement.

12. Telephone Calls - Business related telephone calls are an allowable reimbursement when receipts of such calls are submitted to the City. One long distance telephone call to the employee's home (not exceeding ten minutes in length) will be allowed when the employee is away on an overnight trip. Employees are encouraged to use calling cards whenever possible.

13. Tips - Tips are reimbursable expenses, provided they are reasonable (not to exceed one dollar (\$1.00) per suitcase or fifteen percent (15%) of meal costs).

14. Cleaning Expenses - Laundry and dry cleaning expenses are not normally reimbursable. In order to be reimbursed, the travel time must exceed seven (7) days.

15. Miscellaneous - Miscellaneous charges are reimbursable provided that they are directly related to the trip and approved by the City Administrator.

16. Voluntary Travel - If an employee desires to attend an optional conference, meeting or class, the Department Head may approve an employee's travel reimbursement expenses.

F. VEHICLE ASSIGNMENTS

1. This policy is intended to provide a consistent standard for the use of city-owned vehicles. The City recognizes that certain employees are required to be "on-call" during off-duty hours. This policy is intended to assure that these employees are able to have the vehicles at their disposal necessary to fulfill the duties of their positions while at the same time ensuring only those uses authorized by the City are permitted. Further, the City recognizes that an employee responding to a call for service outside of regular hours from their place of residence will decrease response time for the call.

2. Marked Vehicles - Employees whose positions require that they are available during off-duty hours to respond to stakeouts, surveillance sites, fire or emergency calls, may with the prior approval of the City Council, use the City's marked vehicles while "on-call" during off-duty hours. The following positions are authorized to take home a marked City vehicle: Police Chief, Fire Chief, Treatment Plant Operator, Deputy Wastewater Director, Director of Public Works, and Deputy Public Works Director. This policy allows the City Administrator to temporarily authorize other employees to take home a marked vehicle as work assignments warrant. Any personal use of the City's vehicles during off-duty hours is strictly prohibited.

3. Unmarked Vehicles - Employees whose positions require that they are available during off-duty hours to respond to stakeouts, surveillance sites, fires or to emergency calls may use the City's unmarked vehicles while "on-call" during off-duty hours. The City Administrator and Detectives are provided with

an unmarked City vehicle. Any personal use of the City's vehicle during off-duty hours is strictly prohibited with the exception of the City Administrator in accordance with a provision of an Employment Agreement.

4. Pool Vehicles - The City will provide a vehicle, except as stated in this policy, the use of which, while off-duty, is strictly prohibited.

G. LIMITATIONS

1. Travel expenses will be reimbursed only when travel occurs within the continental United States, unless specifically approved by the City Administrator.

2. The City will not reimburse expenses of the official or employee's spouse or guests.

3. The employee shall use the most economical and practical mode of travel both from the standpoint of time and cost.

4. Two or more employees attending the same event shall share one (1) vehicle unless the supervisor gives prior approval.

H. PREPAYMENT OF TUITION AND EXPENSES TO EDUCATIONAL COURSES

Two (2) college credit courses per fiscal year are allowed subject to approval and funding.

1. Prior to Taking a Course - In order to be eligible for prepayment of tuition, registration fees and attendant expenses for educational courses, seminars, workshops and job pertinent course offerings, an employee must:

a) File, in a reasonable manner with the City Administrator, a request in advance of the course offering being taken.

b) Submit with the request details such as costs, tuition, course content, textbook needs and attendant expenses.

c) Receive written approval from the City Administrator to take said course(s) before City money is advanced to take said education offering.

2. Upon Completion of Course - Upon completion of the course(s) (or failure to complete the course), the employee must file with the City Administrator as follows:

a) Proof of passing, completing, or attending the educational offering or the reasons for not passing or completing the offering.

b) Return all textbooks or course material, which may be utilized for in-house purposes.

c) Return all monies advanced if the employee fails to complete or pass the educational offering.

I. TRAINING PLAN

1. The City of Saco, through its department heads, as funds are available, will make available/provide the opportunity for all employees to receive the proper the amount of mandated training necessary to maintain the certification for his/her position, and to document such training in the individual employee's training file. Each employee is responsible for acquiring the minimum number of hours necessary to accomplish the re-certification.
2. In addition to the above mandatory training, the City of Saco as part of its yearly employee evaluation process shall include career development discussions between supervisors and employees to aid employees in career development and identifying the areas of specialization of most interest to the employee.
3. Each Department Head shall be responsible for assessing the overall training requirements of their department. They shall develop, prior to March 1st of each year, a comprehensive plan to address training needs and deficiencies noted during the assessment process. This plan shall take into account department goals of encouraging career enhancement and specialization, to the extent that it is consistent with department training needs and budgetary feasibility. This plan should include a probable timetable and every effort will be made to ensure adherence to the schedule established.
4. On or before April 1st, each Department Head shall meet with the Personnel Officer to discuss implementation of the training plans previously developed. Department Heads are responsible for researching and locating training venues and opportunities that will enable the attainment of the training goals selected.
5. Employees, due to their own interests, can often be used as a resource to locate suitable training. Employees who wish to apply for training opportunities that interest them or are of value to the Department shall submit a "Request for Training" form to their supervisor for consideration. These requests will be forwarded through the chain of command to the Department Head, who will evaluate the request to determine whether it meets Department and/or employee needs. The request shall be acknowledged to the employee by the Department Head in writing within two (2) weeks of its submission, and if denied, a reason provided.
6. Each employee's training file will contain, in addition to certificates, a career development form outlining previous training, prospective training interests, and career interests.