



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

FINANCE DIVISION

TRIAL COURT FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL 7th EDITION

Policy No., FIN 8.03, Travel Expense Reimbursement for Trial Court Judges and Employees

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF UPDATE

POLICY ISSUE(S)

There are several significant updates of this policy. The changes were made to: clarify the coverage and liability for use of automobiles for business; correct the policy to note that reimbursement of an insurance deductible for an accident while using a personal automobile on business is no longer reimbursable since insurance is included in the federal vehicle mileage reimbursement rate (the judiciary uses the federal mileage reimbursement rate statewide); (clarify business travel by a contractor; more clearly define the term “incidentals”; and note that some travel expenses reimbursed within 50 miles of headquarters are taxable income to an employee or judicial officer traveler.

Significant Revisions

1. Section 3.0, Policy Statement, clarified wording so that the trial courts should reimburse its judges and employees for reasonable and necessary travel expenses incurred while traveling on court business within the limits of the trial court's maximum reimbursement guidelines.
2. Sub-section 6.1.3, Paragraph 1, Item a, add item detailing personal responsibility for all fines and tickets while driving on court business. Furthermore, no traveler is permitted, under any circumstances to operate a rental car or court owned vehicle when any impairment causes the traveler to not be able to drive safely. This policy applies as well to judges and subordinate judicial officers.
3. Sub-section 6.1.4, Paragraph 1, website included to locate the current State car rental contract providers and the American Express BTA account contact.

4. Sub-section 6.1.4, Paragraph 2, Item b, notes that contractors or temporary agency employees must not drive court owned, leased, or rented vehicles.
5. Sub-section 6.1.4, Paragraph 7, Item c, removed the DGS card from an acceptable method of paying for rental cars per the statewide notice from DGS that they abolishing the cards.
6. Sub-section 6.1.4, Paragraph 9, clarifies the liability coverage provided by the state on rental cars rented through the state program.
7. Sub-section 6.1.8 clarifies business-related travel restrictions by a contractor.
8. Section 6.2, Paragraph 1, notes that a court can obtain auto physical damage insurance from ORIM at additional cost.
9. Sub-section 6.2.5, corrects the policy to note that reimbursement of an insurance deductible for an accident while using a personal automobile on business is no longer reimbursable since insurance (which includes deductible choices) is included in the federal vehicle mileage reimbursement rate. This change should have been changed in policy when the statewide reimbursement rate was changed to float with the federal mileage reimbursement rate.
10. Section 6.2, Paragraph 7, expands on the explanation of the Annual Certification for Driving on Court Business and employee responsibilities when driving a personal automobile on court business.
11. Section 6.3, Paragraph 1, Item c, removes the requirement for receipts for bridge and road tolls. The travel expense claim example instructions in the Associated Documents section also reflect this change.
12. Section 6.3, Paragraph 1, Item i, added "Agenda materials distributed at the conference will suffice as proof of attendance".
13. Sub-section 6.4.2, Paragraph 1, Item c, notes that mileage reimbursement floats with the federal vehicle mileage rate (which was announced and has been updated via AOC Finance Memos).
14. Sub-section 6.4.2, Paragraph 1, Item f, gives a more thorough definition of incidentals. Travelers often ask what "incidentals" include. The definition is from IRS.

15. The Judicial Branch Travel Rate Policies in the Associated Documents Section clarifies and updates current travel policy. The significant change is to note that some travel expenses reimbursed within 50 miles of headquarters are taxable income to an employee or judicial officer traveler. This does NOT change the ability to reimburse lodging, incidentals, and meals in excess of 25 miles from headquarters.

16. The State of California Annual Certification for Driving on Official Court Business to Use Privately Owned Vehicles in 7.0, Associated Documents was revised.