

Employee/Student Travel Guidelines 2023-2024



Birdville Independent School District

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Birdville Independent School District

Employee/Student Travel – Guidelines

Travel Guidelines Overview:

School Board Policy DEE Local states: An employee shall be reimbursed for reasonable, allowable expenses incurred in carrying out District business only with the prior approval of the employee's supervisor and in accordance with administrative regulations. For any allowable expense incurred, the employee shall submit a statement, with receipts to the extent feasible, documenting actual expenses.

Note: Travel expenses incurred due to the fault of a traveler, except for extenuating circumstances, such as late registration, canceled flight, etc. are not considered to be reasonable or necessary; therefore, all such expenses shall be paid or reimbursed by the traveler.

All travel expenses shall comply with federal, state and local guidelines. The District shall apply the same travel guidelines and rates for all travel expenses regardless of funding sources, except for the following:

- Tips for meals – shall be allowed only with local funds (Fund 199/461), not to exceed 15% of the meal expense.
- Tips for transportation – shall be allowed only with local funds (Fund 199/461), not to exceed 15% of the transportation expense.
- Excess lodging above the GSA schedule, as applicable only with local funds (Fund 199/461)

Federal guidelines (IRS):

- All travel expenses shall be paid under an Accountable Plan: 1) travel must have a business connection; 2) the traveler shall account for all expenses; 3) excess advances, if any, shall be reimbursed to the district; and 4) meal expenses shall be in conjunction with overnight travel only.
- The meal expenses for the day of departure and return shall be adjusted based on the time of departure and return as noted in the District travel guidelines.
- Travel advances will not be provided to a traveler more than 30 days prior to the travel event.
- If any travel expenses fail to meet the accountable plan guidelines, the payment to (or on behalf of) the traveler shall be taxed through the normal payroll cycle.

Federal Guidelines (EDGAR):

- All travel expenses paid with federal grant funds (typically funds 2XX) shall meet the EDGAR requirements (200.474) such as: 1) all travel costs must be reasonable and necessary; 2) all travel costs must be consistent with the district's travel policy; 3) all travel costs must be directly related to the grant award; and 4) all travel costs must meet the obligation of expenses rules.
- In addition, all federally-funded travel expenses must meet the TEA's Current Travel & Mileage Reimbursement Rates (as published in the most recent TEA Correspondence).

State Guidelines (TEA):

- All mileage, lodging, and meal reimbursement rates published by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts apply to all grants (federal and state, typically funds 2XX, 3XX and 4XX) funded by TEA for individuals on travel status. Refer to GSA rates for the current fiscal year at: <https://fm.x.cpa.state.tx.us/fm/travel/travelrates.php>
- All travel expenses paid with federal and state grant funds shall meet the allowable travel expenses as specified in the TexTravel Guidelines, subject to limits imposed by District travel guidelines.

Employee/Student Travel Instructions

Employee Travel - General Instructions

Advance approval must be obtained for attendance of conventions/conferences on a *Travel Request and Reimbursement* form. This form can be found at:
<https://www.birdvilleschools.net/domain/2870>

Travel expenses are to be reported on a Birdville Independent School District (BISD) *Travel Request and Expense* form. The following rules apply to all employees of BISD with reference to travel expense reports:

Travel expenses must be in compliance with District Policy DEE (Local) and DMD (Local). Employees are expected to select the most economical and practical accommodations, arrangements, and services in accordance with the needs of the trip.

The completed *Travel Request and Reimbursement* form should be submitted to the Accounting Office **within ten (10) days of completion of the travel signed by the traveler.**

Reimbursement will not be made unless all supporting documentation is in order.

Each employee's Expense Report should include only his/her own expenses. Separate bills should be obtained whenever possible.

Receipts for monies expended for railroad, air or bus transportation, hotel accommodations and registration are to be submitted with the Travel Authorization/Expense Report form as evidence of the expenditures.

Travel within a seventy-five (75) mile radius of employee's worksite is considered LOCAL, and overnight lodging is NOT allowed unless a clear need can be established and a Cabinet member approves the request.

Miscellaneous expenses for incidentals, amusements, valet parking (unless self-parking is not available), non-business telephone calls or any other unauthorized expense will not be approved for reimbursement.

The "Other" field on the *Travel Request and Expense Report* is for requesting reimbursement for baggage handling, toll road fees, taxi fares, etc., that are often associated with the conduct of official school business. Receipts are required. Internet fees, if approved by supervisor for business purposes, will need to be included in this field.

Membership dues included as part of the convention/conference registration are allowed and part of the registration fee if the membership dues is less than the non-membership registration rate and it is deemed in the district's interest to have the employee obtain the membership opportunities.

The last day to submit a Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement at the fiscal year end (June 30) is July 31st.

Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement Form

The Travel Request and Reimbursement form must be completely filled out and submitted to traveler's immediate supervisor. Campus Principal is required to approve all travel of campus staff even if being paid by department budget.

Principals/Directors should forward their Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement Form to their Supervisor for approval, who then forwards the request to the Business Office for final approval and processing.

Travel using funds other than budgeted funds or activity funds (i.e. grants/special revenue funds), must have the approval of the administrator with jurisdiction over those funds prior to forwarding to the Business Office for final approval and processing.

The budget number to be charged for travel expenses must be indicated on the Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement Form.

The appropriate administrator must indicate whether the travel request reimbursement is authorized 100% funding or less than 100%. If only limited funds are available, indicate the total amount to be reimbursed.

Travel Advances

Travel advances are only allowed for student meals and gas for District vehicles traveling on student trips.

Registration Only or Registration and Mileage Only Expenses

Receive approval from supervisor on attending the event. Upon return from event, submit the completed Mileage Reimbursement Form attached to the Request for Check in Munis for employee reimbursement. An official road map from the Internet should be used for computing miles and attached in Munis.

For advance registration, submit a Check Request payable to the vendor. Indicate on the Check Request that the registration form should be sent with the check and Mileage only event.

If the employee has personally paid for the conference/workshop, request for registration reimbursement must be submitted on a Check Request after the event. Attach the approved Mileage Reimbursement Form, original paid receipt, and proof of attendance to the Check Request in Munis.

- If the original paid receipt is not provided, proof of payment by a copy of the front and back of the employee's cancelled personal check or a copy of the employee's credit/debit statement showing the expense incurred by the traveler, a copy of the conference flyer (which shows the registration fee) and proof of attendance must be provided.

Meal Allowances

Reimbursement for meals will not be allowed unless there is an overnight stay or if sponsoring students.

Per Diem Amounts:

In-state - rates published by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts located at - <https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/travel/texttravel/rates/current.php> maximum allowable is actual costs not to exceed \$46.00 per day. Receipts are not required for non-federal travel.

Out-of-state - maximum allowable is determined by the guidelines for each state, which can be accessed via the website: <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem>. Since this website is subject to change. A copy of the applicable out-of-state per diem rate per the website must accompany the travel reimbursement form submitted.

The following chart indicates departure and arrival times to and from BISD to calculate meal eligibility. The meal per diem must be adjusted on the 1st and last day of travel. 75% of the per diem amount will be allowed on the 1st day and last day.

The \$46 Per Diem is broken down as \$9.00 for breakfast, \$11.00 for lunch, and \$26.00 for dinner. Out of State Per Diem's are broken down as 20% for breakfast, 24% for lunch and 56% for dinner

If a meal is provided in a function being attended, such as a banquet included in the conference registration, that meal will not be eligible for reimbursement. For example: If the lunch is paid for in conjunction with the registration, the maximum amount eligible for reimbursement for that day would be \$35.00 (breakfast and dinner). The amount paid for the lunch is irrelevant.

Amounts in excess of the above limits and any charges for alcoholic beverages are the responsibility of the participant. Alcoholic beverages may not be consumed during regular business hours when on official school business travel.

Actual Meal Expenses should be recorded on the Travel Authorization/Expense Report form. Any complimentary meals should not be included. **Tips are limited** to 15% of the cost of the meal.

Lodging

Lodging should be limited to a reasonable and economical options. In-State travel is limited to rates established by Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts located at <https://fm.x.cpa.texas.gov/fmx/travel/texttravel/rates/current.php> Out of State travel is limited to rates established by the GSA located at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

Excess lodging above the CPA/GSA schedules, as applicable can only be paid with local funds (Fund 199/461) as approved on the Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement form.

When at least two (2) travelers (district employees) are traveling to the same event, they may share the lodging and each receive the maximum lodging rate on the CPA/GSA schedules. Each traveler shall submit a Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement form for their portion of the lodging costs. District employees shall not be required to share a room with another employee, but may be encouraged to share a room to minimize the lodging costs. Room sharing should be limited to number of beds, i.e. limit of 2 per room with 2 beds, 3 per room with 3 beds, etc.

Employees should try to find accommodation at state-negotiated contract rates when possible. Contract rates are available at this website. https://portal.cpa.state.tx.us/hotel/hotel_directory/index.cfm

Hotel and travel websites such as Hotels.com, Expedia, Travelocity, etc. shall not be used to make hotel reservations if the reservation requires pre-payment of the hotel stay and a district credit card will be used to make the reservation. If the district employee chooses to use one of these sites, the reimbursement for the lodging expenses will be allowed after the travel has been done if submitted on the Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement form.

In Texas, a **Hotel Tax Exemption Certificate and letter from the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts** must accompany payment to the hotel to avoid paying state taxes. BISD will not provide reimbursement for Texas state sales tax. Traveler will be responsible for Texas state sales tax if BISD credit card is used for payment of hotel cost. Travel out of the state may include state tax.

Upon checkout, review the billing to ensure that state sales tax was not charged.

County and municipal hotel occupancy taxes may be reimbursed.

An original itemized receipt is required and should be submitted with the Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement form to the Accounting office within 10 days after the travel event.

The traveler (or campus/department secretary on behalf of the traveler) shall make the hotel reservation and secure with their personal credit card or district credit card as appropriate.

Payment for lodging costs shall be paid with district credit card or district check, as appropriate. If district check is required, sufficient processing time (at least two weeks) shall be allowed for processing the check for pick up.

If traveler chooses to pay for their own lodging expense. Reimbursement is only allowed after the travel has been accomplished and proof of attendance to business event is provided with the Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement form via a Munis check request.

Traveler may, at his or her request, stay with a family member or friend instead of a hotel. If the traveler selects this option, the traveler shall not receive any payment in lieu of lodging costs.

When a traveler shares lodging with a non-district employee or district employee not in travel status, he maximum lodging costs shall be the appropriate CPA/GSA schedule rate for single occupancy. Traveler is responsible for cost above the single occupancy rate.

Transportation

Mileage to a convention/conference Local or Non-Local or other official school business is reimbursed when the employee uses his/her personal vehicle.

The maximum mileage rate for use of privately owned vehicles is the current Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts mileage rate. The rate can be found on this website <https://fm.xcpa.texas.gov/fmx/travel/texttravel/rates/current.php> and current Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement form will be updated as changes are made.

Except for the cost of airport parking incurred while on official business or parking fees required for transaction of school business, no additional expense incidental to the operation of such motor vehicles shall be allowed.

The maximum allowable airline cost for travel to a convention/conference may not exceed the amount of the lowest coach airline fare, no less than 3 weeks out, to that location. First-class airline travel will not be permitted.

Traveler shall travel to their destination location by the most economical means, i.e. either flight or mileage; however, traveler may opt to travel to the event destination via vehicle in lieu of flying for medical or personal comfort reasons. If the traveler opts to travel to an out-of-state destination using a vehicle, the cost/reimbursement for transportation shall be limited to the lesser of the mileage or estimated flight cost.

The maximum travel time allowable is one day prior to and one day following the convention/conference and should be the most cost-effective mode. Any costs associated with traveling outside of these allowed times, will be the responsibility of the traveler.

Airline receipts are required.

Reservations through the Internet are acceptable under the following guidelines:

Since reservations by this method are charged a mandatory processing fee, the total amount must be equivalent to or less than the standard airline rate in order to be reimbursed for the total amount. Documentation of the standard airline rate must also be attached to support the Internet rate is less than or equal to the standard rate.

A "Print Screen" of the reservation is required for reimbursement.

Proof of payment is also required. If the print screen includes the name and last 4 digits of the credit card, this may constitute proof of payment. If it does not, then a copy of the employee's credit card statement showing the employee incurred these charges is necessary for payment.

Receipts are required for monies expended for railroad, air, taxi, toll road, parking fees, etc. Gratuity for taxi/uber services is limited to 15% of fare and only allowed with local funds (199/461).

An official road map from the Internet (Mapquest.com) should be used for computing miles traveled by automobile and attached to the Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement form and any related payment request.

Use of Personal Vehicle for BISD Business (non-overnight and local)

The Mileage Reimbursement Form should be used by employees to claim approved mileage reimbursement. Unless other expenses are incurred, this form may be used for all local travel. This form is found on the Finance Staff Travel website <https://www.birdvilleschools.net/domain/2870>.

The intent of the mileage reimbursement is to reimburse for all **actual business miles driven** in excess of the commuting miles from your home to your primary work location and back. If there are no miles driven in excess of normal commuting miles, no reimbursement is due.

With the exception of items (a) and (b) below, all mileage reported should be based first on the district mileage chart located on the Finance website at <https://www.birdvilleschools.net/cms/lib/TX01000797/Centricity/Domain/2870/2012-2013%20Mileage%20Chart%20Between%20Campuses.pdf> or by attaching a mapquest printout showing the mileage between work locations.

Never report miles driven from home to your primary work location or from your primary work location to home.

If you begin your workday at your primary work location, begin reporting miles from that point using the district chart.

- (a) If you begin your workday at a temporary work location, you may report miles from your home to that location or miles from your primary work location to that location, whichever results in the shortest travel distance reported.

Record the miles from each work location to the next using district mileage chart.

- (b) If you end your workday at a temporary work location, you may report miles from your location to your primary work location or to your home, whichever results in the shortest travel distance reported.

The signature of the supervisor on the mileage report indicates that the report has been verified for the validity of the activity and that payment is authorized.

Employees receiving a travel stipend **will not be reimbursed for in-district travel.**

Travel associated with conference/training within the 75 mile radius does not require a Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement form be submitted. Only requires the Mileage Reimbursement form.

Personal Policy Liability: When a BISD employee drives his/her personally owned vehicle, no matter how many passengers, the primary policy of coverage will be his/her own auto policy. The employee's personal auto policy will be fully utilized for any and all comprehensive, collision, or liability claims. If a lawsuit is brought against the employee and/or the school district, the employee's personal auto policy will settle and/or defend all parties involved. The Texas Tort Law limits the amount of employee's liability to \$100,000.

Rental of Vehicle for BISD Business

For information regarding rentals, go to Purchasing for information on approved vendors.

BISD is exempt from paying state sales tax in Texas when renting a vehicle for business purposes. The Motor Vehicle Rental Exemption Certificate should be provided in order to take this exemption.

Gasoline expense is reimbursable when using a rental car. A receipt is required for reimbursement.

The BISD Automobile Policy (AP) will cover all liability and physical damage if the BISD driver is at fault. If the other driver is at fault, then the other driver's auto policy should be primary.

When renting a car within Texas, an employee should purchase the additional coverage offered by the rental car company (This coverage is for physical damage caused by national disaster, vandalism, or theft and the District's current policy does cover that damage, but not that of the lost time that the vehicle will be out of service).

When renting a vehicle **out-of-state**, please **buy** the additional coverage offered by the rental company to avoid any problems, with the exception of **Enterprise Rent-A-Car**. The additional coverage is already built into our contract for anywhere in the country.

Please follow these steps when renting a vehicle:

- You will need to provide a purchase order number when calling to make a reservation.
- On the rental agreement – Show the employee's name and **“for Birdville ISD.”** For example, “Jane Doe for Birdville ISD.”
- Obtain a BISD Auto ID card from the school principal or department head and carry the card for the duration of the trip.

Spouse/Children Accompanying Traveler

In cases where the spouse/children, who are not on official school business, accompany the school official or employee, no expenses for the spouse/children may be included.

Only single standard rates are to be included in the request for reimbursement. For example, if a double room costs \$85.00 per night, and a single room costs \$75.00

per night, the employee will be reimbursed at the \$75.00 rate if the room is shared with the spouse/children.

- It is not permissible to charge on the district credit card any expenses for the spouse/children to BISD and later reimburse the district.

Student Travel Instructions

Student Travel - General Instructions

All BISD student travel should be in compliance with District Policies FM (Legal) FM (Local), FMG(Local) and Field Trip Administrative regulations.

Overnight Trips by Students

All individuals and groups representing the BISD requiring an overnight trip must receive advance written approval from the superintendent or designee.

Each student and parent/guardian will be required to sign the supporting documents that will include a liability waiver, comments regarding conduct requirements, adequacy of chaperones, and other appropriate data.

It is required that a campus administrator travel with the students for the duration of an overnight field trip. All travel costs for the administrator are the responsibility of the student team/organization.

The principal/director's office should be provided with a list of all students, teacher/sponsors, parents etc. as well as the itinerary.

Parent/guardian expenses cannot be borne by the school district unless there is a financial hardship, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the principal.

Meal Allowance for Student Related Trips (In-State)

Students' meal allowances will be provided at a maximum of \$12/meal, unless otherwise authorized. No receipts will be required if funds are given directly to students. If group meals are purchased, receipts are required. Birdville ISD Travel Cash Log will be required to track the advance money in both situations

Sponsors/coaches (BISD employees) accompanying students on an overnight trip should refer to Budget Manager for rates and process. If the \$12/meal rate is used, the employee has to do nothing further than what is required for student travel. If the employee will receive the Employee Per Diem, the Employee will have to submit a Travel Request and Expense Report form prior to trip. After the trip has been complete, a check request will be processed make payable to the employee with the Travel form attached in Munis.

Meal Allowance for Student Related Trips (Out-of-State)

Students taking a trip requiring an overnight stay out-of-state will be provided a maximum of \$36.00 per day. No receipts are required if funds are given directly to students. If group meals are purchased, receipts are required. Birdville ISD Travel Cash Log will be required to track the advance money in both situations.

Sponsors/coaches (BISD employees) accompanying students on an overnight trip should refer to Budget Manager for rates and process. If the \$12/meal rate is used, the employee has to do nothing further than what is required for student travel. If the employee will receive the Employee Per Diem, the Employee will have to submit a Travel Request and Expense Report form prior to trip. After the trip has been complete, a check request will be processed make payable to the employee with the Travel form attached in Munis.

Approval Required

Approval will be obtained by submission and approval of the Electronic Request for Field Trip. This should be submitted as soon as purpose of travel is known but no less than two weeks prior to departure for in-state travel or 60 days for out of state or 90 days for out of country. The only exceptions being those trips for travel for competition to which they need to submit as soon as possible once trip is known.

Student travel paid from campus budget requires principal's approval only.

Student travel paid from departmental budgets requires the approval of the principal in addition to the administrator having budgetary authority.

Out of State travel requires the approval of the Superintendent Cabinet and should be submitted 60 days out from travel. The Eduphoria Form should be completed to submit for cabinet approval.

Out of Country travel requires the approval of the Board and should be submitted 90 days out from travel.

Advances for Student Travel

Advances for Student Travel should be processed using the Student Travel Expense Report for registration, lodging, meal expenses, rental expense, and miscellaneous expenses by attaching to a Munis Check Request, P-Card or PO as appropriate. Sponsor/coaches should obtain proper original receipts for above items including parking and gasoline and submit to their principal or the appropriate administrator upon return, who will forward to the Business Office for back up of advanced check. Receipts are not required for meals.

Literature showing the amount of registration should accompany the Request for Check Request.

Sales Tax Exemption forms and letter for lodging and vehicle rental will accompany the advance check to the sponsor/coach to avoid being charged the sales tax.

Cash Advance for Meals for Students and Sponsors/Coaches (receiving \$12/meal)

When time allows, a Check Request with proper approval should be sent to the Business Office to process in the regularly scheduled check run. The Student Travel Expense Report must be attached for proper support. The Check Request should be made payable to one of the sponsors/coaches traveling so that the sponsor/coach can go to the bank to cash the check.

Payment for Lodging for Students and Sponsors/Coaches

A Purchase Order requisition with proper approval should be submitted in Munis. The Student Travel Expense Report must be attached for proper support. The PO should be made payable to the hotel. Payment should be made with P-Card when possible. If P-Card is not available, the PO should be received off on and the invoice/quote should be submitted to Accounts Payable with a note of check being needed on a regular check run. Allow up to 2 weeks for a check to be processed.

Payment for Car/Van Rental

A Purchase Order requisition with proper approval should be submitted in Munis. An original invoice from the rental company must be attached for proper support. Payment should be made with P-Card when possible. If P-Card is not available, the PO should be received off on and the invoice/quote should be submitted to Accounts Payable with a note of check being needed on a regular check run. Allow up to 2 weeks for a check to be processed.

NO purchase or lease of a new 15-passenger van if it will be used significantly by, or on behalf of, the school or school system to transport preprimary, primary, or secondary school students to or from school or an event related to school.

BISD is exempt from the Texas state sales tax, sometimes referred to as motor vehicle tax; however, out-of-state tax is not exempt.

BISD is not exempt from property rental tax.

The BISD Automobile Policy (AP) will cover all liability and physical damage if the BISD driver is at fault. If the other driver is at fault, then the other driver's auto policy should be primary.

When renting a car within Texas, an employee **should purchase** the additional coverage offered by the rental car company (This coverage is for physical damage caused by national disaster, vandalism, or theft and the District's current coverage covers these situations, however, it does not cover the time lost while the vehicle is being repaired.)

When renting a vehicle **out-of-state**, please **buy** the additional coverage offered by the rental company to avoid any problems, with the exception of **Enterprise Rent-A-Car**. The additional coverage is already built into our contract for anywhere in the country.

Please follow these steps when renting a vehicle:

You will need to provide a purchase order number when calling to make a reservation.

- On the rental agreement – Show the employee's name and "for Birdville ISD." For example, "Jane Doe for Birdville ISD."
- Obtain a BISD Auto ID card from the school principal or department head and carry the card for the duration of the trip.

Reimbursement to Sponsors/Coaches or Reimbursement to BISD from Sponsors/Coaches from Advances for Student Travel

Submit documentation within 10 days of trip completion. This includes a list of attendees receiving cash, original receipts for lodging, car rental, gasoline and other miscellaneous expenses as backup documentation for money previously advanced. Forward the documentation along with the expense report/student travel request and Birdville ISD Travel Cash Log if applicable to your principal or the appropriate department administrator for approval who will then forward to the Accounting Office.

If the sponsor/coach had expenses exceeding the amount of the advance, a Request for Check must be submitted in Munis with the above documentation for the sponsor/coach to be issued a reimbursement.

If the sponsor/coach is to be reimbursed meals at the Per Diem rate, a Request for Check must be submitted in Munis with the Travel Request and Expense Reimbursement form attached.

If the expenses were less than the money previously advanced, either cash or a personal check from the employee payable to BISD must accompany the above documentation within **ten (10) days** of the trip.