

RESOLUTION NO. 2004 - 123

REPEALING RESOLUTION NOS. 1988-94, 1989-11, 1990-87, AND 1996-185 AMENDING THE GUIDELINES, RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT, AND ADOPTING THE TRAVEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THE GREATER CLEVELAND REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority established guidelines, rules and regulations governing travel expense reimbursement pursuant to Resolution No. 1988-94, adopted May 10, 1988; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees subsequently approved changes to the guidelines, rules and regulations governing expense reimbursement for travel and meetings pursuant to Resolution No. 1989-11, adopted February 21, 1989, Resolution No. 1990-87, adopted May 15, 1990, and Resolution No. 1996-185, adopted December 17, 1996; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has determined that it is in the best interest of the Authority to update its policy pertaining to travel.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, Cuyahoga County, Ohio:

Section 1. That Resolution Nos. 1988-94, 1989-11, 1990-87, and 1996-185, Amending the Guidelines, Rules and Regulations Governing Travel and Meeting Expense Reimbursement, are hereby repealed.

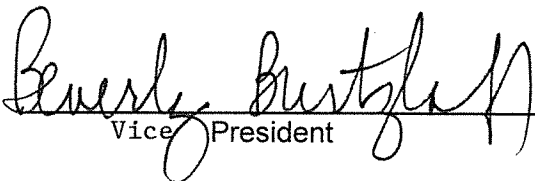
Section 2. That the travel policy and procedures, a copy of which is attached hereto and fully incorporated herein and made a part of this resolution, are hereby adopted as the policy of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority.

Section 3. That the Board of Trustees may periodically review and amend the travel policy and procedures in order to keep them current.

Section 4. That this Resolution shall become effective as of January 1, 2005.

Attachment: Travel Policy and Procedures

Adopted: September 21 2004


Vice President

Attest: 
CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

**GREATER CLEVELAND REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
TRAVEL POLICY & PROCEDURES**

1. PURPOSE/SCOPE

- 1.1 The Travel Policy and Procedures established herein concerns travel on official Authority Business to attend and participate in conferences, seminars, meetings and other events or field visits, which are in the Authority's best interest. It is designed to assure the accurate and efficient handling of travel and other related expenses incurred by members of the Board of Trustees and the staff of the Authority consistent with applicable laws and the public interest.
- 1.2 These Travel Policies and Procedures provide guidance to those traveling on Authority business that will permit low cost, convenience, ease of administration, overall cost-effectiveness, consistency of reimbursement, and compliance with federal, state and local law and RTA policy.

2. LEGAL AUTHORITY

- 2.1 306.33 Ohio Revised Code provides that a member of the Board of Trustees is permitted to be reimbursed for reasonable expenses in the performance of his duties.
- 2.2 306.34 Ohio Revised Code authorizes a Board of Trustees to manage and conduct the affairs of a regional transit authority.
- 2.3 306.35 Ohio Revised Code authorizes a Board of Trustees, among other things, to adopt rules for the administration and operation of transit facilities under its jurisdiction.
- 2.4 Article IV, Section 8 of the GCRTA Bylaws, adopted February 16, 1988, provides that any member of the Board of Trustees and officers and employees of the GCRTA may be reimbursed for properly incurred expenses.
- 2.5 In accordance with Ohio Ethics Commission Opinion No. 91-010, airline frequent flyer miles accumulated on travel for a public agency shall not be used for personal travel or benefit.

3. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 3.1 All travelers are required to be fully knowledgeable regarding GCRTA's travel policies and procedures.
- 3.2 Use of public transportation during Authority travel, including travel to and from the airport, is strongly encouraged.
- 3.3 Employees with disabilities will be accommodated pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- 3.4 Airline frequent flyer miles accumulated on travel for the GCRTA shall not be used for personal travel or benefit. These miles can only be used for future Authority travel, including upgrades to First Class when appropriate.
- 3.5 Travelers will be reimbursed for hotel expenses up to CONUS index plus 25% for each evening in the destination city. Up to CONUS index plus 25% for hotel does NOT include taxes. The hotel receipt must be submitted with the final travel and expense report.
- 3.6 Travelers will be reimbursed for actual expenses up to a daily per diem based on the destination city's CONUS index (located at <http://policyworks.gov>) plus 25%, for meals and other incidental expenses for each day of travel. Incidental expenses include ground transportation, telephone calls, and any expenses other than travel or hotel incurred on the trip. Receipts do not need to be submitted with the final travel and expense report, however, a copy of the CONUS index for the respective city must be attached.
- 3.7 Travel to locations outside the United States will be reimbursed by the International CONUS index plus 25% located at <http://policyworks.gov> (click on dark blue box at the top of the page where it indicates foreign rates). Reimbursement will be made at the published daily average exchange rate for each individual day of travel.
- 3.8 All employees traveling on behalf of the Authority, are reminded of the following non-allowable type of expenses:
 - Travel, lodging or other expenses for spouses, families and friends of RTA personnel
 - Valet service (except for extended trips of one week or more)
 - Alcoholic beverages
 - Entertainment (including movie rentals)
 - Contributions and donations with Authority funds
- 3.9 The CEO/General Manager has the authority to make modifications to particular provisions of this policy when it is in the best interests of the Authority.
- 3.10 The CEO/General Manager has the ability to issue administrative procedures to implement this policy.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Responsibility of Authorizing Department and/or Division

- 4.1.1 It is the responsibility of the Authorizing Department or Division to determine the necessity for travel and ensure that it is in the best interest of the Authority; the purpose is lawful, reasonable and for a proper public purpose; and the purpose of the trip could not be adequately accomplished by correspondence, telephone, or through other contact, or is not available from local sources.
- 4.1.2 All travel that is for the purpose of an employee's professional development should be coordinated with the Department of Training and Employee Development and reflected on the travel request form.

4.1.3 Because they are more familiar with need for travel and subsequent expenses incurred on behalf of their department(s), the approver(s) have primary responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy. The approver(s) must verify that expenses and expense reports meet the following criteria:

- The information contained on the expense report and in the attached documentation is consistent with this policy.
- The funds for travel have been appropriated in the current budget.
- The expenditure is charged to the proper account(s)

4.2 Responsibility of Traveler

4.2.1 Authority travelers are expected to spend the Authority's funds prudently. Business travel expenses will be paid if they are within the parameters of the Authority's policies and procedures.

4.2.2 Since frequent flyer miles earned by Authority travel cannot be used for personal use and should be used for subsequent business travel, it is the responsibility of the traveler to keep track of these miles.

4.3 Responsibility of the Authority

It is the Authority's responsibility to ensure the reasonableness of travel related expenses and to process timely reimbursements. The expenses will be subject to final approval by the Internal Audit Department.

5. AUTHORIZATION OF TRAVEL

5.1 Insofar as practical, travel by the CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer and the Board of Trustees should receive prior approval by the President of the Board of Trustees, or the Vice-President of the Board of Trustees in the absence of the President.

5.2 Travel by all other staff requires prior approval of his/her department director. It is the responsibility of the department director to determine the business necessity for travel and that all appropriate procedures are followed.

The CEO, General Manager or designee must also approve staff travel.

5.3 Travel request should be submitted at least 30 days prior to travel, excluding emergency and unforeseen travel. The request must be made using the appropriate travel forms.

5.4 Travel request forms must include an estimate of the cost to the Authority. The cost estimate should include all expenses and be based on the appropriate total of the hotel cap (Up to CONUS plus 25% does NOT include taxes) and per day per diem for meal and other incidental expenses, for the applicable city of destination. It is the responsibility of the traveler to obtain the estimates and per diems and attach them to the request form. (Per diem is based on CONUS index plus 25% and can be obtained at <http://policyworks.gov>. "Maximum lodging" is the maximum amount to be reimbursed for daily hotel expenses, plus 25%, excluding taxes. "Meals and incidentals rate" is the amount to be reimbursed for the daily per diem.)

- 5.5 Cancellations are the responsibility of the traveler. If changes or cancellations are required, the traveler must make all arrangements for such. The traveler must furthermore ensure that deposits or other Authority expenses are refunded to the maximum extent possible. Should a cancellation or change result in costs to Authority, the traveler must justify the change. The traveler may be liable for cancellation and changes not of a business nature or those not pursued in a timely manner. A travel expense account should be processed reflecting any and all prepayments and deposits and a memo explaining why the trip was cancelled. A traveler will be reimbursed for any expenses he/she paid and lost as a result of a justified cancellation of the trip. Reimbursement should be requested by processing the receipts with the travel and expense form and a memo explaining why the trip was cancelled.

6. TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Pre-Payment of Expenses

- 6.1.1 Prepayment by the Authority of travel expenses, i.e. conference fees or registration fees, travel, hotel deposit, hotel, etc., is permitted. Prepayment by RTA can be utilized by an approved RTA procurement method (i.e. purchase order, purchasing card, etc.) Prepayments by check may be requested by submitting a memo/appropriate form with a copy of the approved travel request form, to the Accounting Department for processing. The copy of the travel request form must have the appropriate sections completed for the requested prepayment(s).
- 6.1.2 Personal credit cards may be used for prepayment of travel expenses, however, employees will still be accountable for these expenses. A traveler may request reimbursement of expenses incurred 30 or more days before the date of travel, by submitting a memo/appropriate form with documentation of prepayment, and a copy of the approved travel request form, to the Accounting Department for processing. Any "bonuses" or "perks" earned by use of personal credit cards used for business of Authority can be used for the personal benefit of the traveler. The copy of the travel request form must have the appropriate sections completed for the requested reimbursement.
- 6.1.3 These procedures apply to all GCRTA employees, officers and Board Members while traveling on approved Authority business. Travelers should familiarize themselves with these procedures prior to travel to facilitate the Authority travel experience.

6.2 Transportation

For travel on Authority business, transportation by the most economical means is recommended.

Traveling on weekends may be allowable if it results in lower overall travel expenditures to the Authority (i.e. Extra days, the additional hotel expense, daily per diem and difference in air travel). Travel expenditures include airfare, hotel, and per diem expenses.

6.2.1 Air Travel/Train Travel

Airline or train reservations are to be made by the designated Department/Division Travel Coordinator or by the Traveler.

Air or train travel should be guided by the following:

- Lowest Logical Fare
- Itinerary changes – justified by business necessity or no adverse cost to the Authority
- A combination of plane and train tickets should be considered, and will be reimbursed, when scheduled to save money.

Airline ticket purchased must include documentation of the three lowest ticket prices and be submitted with the travel expense report.

6.2.2 Authority Owned Automobiles

Authority-owned automobiles may be used for travel with the approval of the CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer or designee. Expenses incurred in operating such vehicles must be itemized and original receipts submitted for all gasoline, parking, emergency repairs and similar out-of-pocket expenses.

Parking fees and tolls while traveling will be reimbursed as part of the total transportation expense for the trip.

6.2.3 Private Automobile

When travel by private automobile is desirable to save time or to transport equipment or to reduce costs, reimbursement is at the prevailing rate established by the Internal Revenue Service. This mileage allowance is intended to cover all transportation and operating costs. No reimbursement is made for the cost of repairs to the vehicle whether they result from the traveler's acts or the acts of others. When more than one person travels in the same automobile, the reimbursement for mileage shall be allowed on only one expense report. Ferry, bridge, tunnel, toll road and reasonable parking charges are allowed in addition to the mileage allowance.

The reimbursement for private automobile travel will not exceed the cost of the most economical round trip airfare.

Use of a RTA vehicle, including Authority pool cars, should be used whenever possible.

6.2.4 Car Rental

In general, the use of rental cars is not reimbursed and is considered a personal expense. However, prior to travel, the CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer or designee may authorize the use of rental cars where other transportation is not available or when the cost of a rental car and parking is less than the lowest coach air fare available. The traveler should choose the economy class car; however, a larger car may be chosen in the event that there is a group of more than two Authority persons traveling. Travelers using rental cars should not purchase the optional collision insurance coverage offered, except in countries other than the U.S. and Canada.

Parking fees and tolls while traveling will be reimbursed as part of the total transportation expense for the trip.

6.2.5 Ground Transportation Expenses

Ground transportation expenses, including shuttle services, taxi fares, and public transportation will be included in the traveler's daily per diem allowance and will not be reimbursed separately. Under special circumstances, where ground transportation is excessive due to unavailability of public transportation or airport shuttles, exceptions will be considered for approval by the CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer or designee.

6.2.6 Lodging Guidelines

Traveler will be compensated for lodging expenses for each night stayed in the destination city at the rate of up to CONUS plus 25%. Up to CONUS plus 25% for hotel does NOT include taxes. Prepayment by RTA of hotel deposits or hotel expenses is not encouraged but may be made in special circumstances if approved by the Division Head.

6.2.7 Conference Fees

Request for payment of conference fees should be processed in a timely fashion to ensure the lowest possible conference fee or no late registration penalties. Prepayment may be made by use of RTA procurement/purchase order process or by personal credit card.

7. REIMBURSEMENT

7.1 Responsibilities of the Traveler

- 7.1.1 Upon return from the trip, the employee is to complete the Employee Travel and Expense Form and verify the mathematical accuracy of the form.
- 7.1.2 Ensure that all applicable documents that are listed below are attached to the Employee Travel and Expense form:
 - A Trip Report Memorandum, which briefly summarizes where the employee went, the purpose of the trip and what benefits can the GCRTA expect as a result of the employee's trip.

- Documentation that supports all allowable expenses that are incurred by the employee, as well as any expenses that were pre-paid by the GCRTA that are identified on the Employee Travel and Expense form. Documentation for items such as, lodging, airfare, registration or conference fees, mileage report, parking, tolls, fuel, and rental car receipt if applicable.
- A copy of the CONUS Index for the respective city.

7.1.3 Sign/date and submit the form and attachments within 5 business days of the return date to the Approver - Director.

7.2 Responsibilities of the Authority

7.2.1 Responsibility of the Authority

It is the responsibility of the Authority to process all travel requests forms within 12 days of receipt from the employee.

7.2.2 Responsibility of the Approver – Director

Upon receiving of the employee's travel and expense form, the approver performs a cursory review to ensure the following:

- The appropriate documentation is attached
- Travel expenses are in accordance with travel policies and procedures
- The mathematical accuracy of the form
- Expenses are being posted against the proper account code distribution (fund-mode-cost center-function-object class).

The approver signs/dates and submits the reimbursement request to Internal Audit Department within 3 business days of receipt from the employee.

7.2.3 Responsibility of Internal Audit

Internal Audit will review the reimbursement form for compliance, date, and submit the reimbursement form to the CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer (or designee) for signature within 3 business days of receipt from the Approver.

7.2.4 Responsibility of the CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer (or designee)

The CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer (or designee) shall sign/date and submit the reimbursement request to the Accounting Department within 3 business days of receipt from the Internal Audit Department.

7.2.5 Responsibility of Accounting

The form is then released to the Accounting Department for processing and payment of reimbursement to the employee within 3 business days of receipt from CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer (or designee).



Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority
STAFF SUMMARY AND COMMENTS

J-9

TITLE/DESCRIPTION: REPEALING RESOLUTION NOS. 1988-94, 1989-11, 1990-87, AND 1996-185 AMENDING THE GUIDELINES, RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT, AND ADOPTING THE TRAVEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THE GREATER CLEVELAND REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY	Resolution No.: 2004-123
	Date: September 16, 2004
	Initiator: Office of Mgmt. And Budget
ACTION REQUEST: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Review/Comment <input type="checkbox"/> Information Only <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

1.0 PURPOSE/SCOPE: This action will amend guidelines, rules and regulations governing travel and meeting expense reimbursement for members of the Board of Trustees and employees of the GCRTA.

2.0 DESCRIPTION/JUSTIFICATION: The guidelines governing travel and meeting expense reimbursement previously approved by the Board are subject to periodic review and revision. The Board last reviewed and amended the GCRTA Travel Policy in 1996.

Several changes were made to the 1996 policy, the most major change involving a change to a daily per diem for general travel expenses, which will save the Authority money by reduced administrative time of staff to review travel expense reports, and cap the daily expenses for the travelers. Other changes include changing from the Runzheimer index, to up to CONUS index plus 25%, for a hotel cap; changing from the Runzheimer index for daily expenses (meals and incidentals) to a daily per diem up to of CONUS plus 25%; addressing that frequent flyer miles accumulated for Authority travel shall not be used for personal travel or benefit; but can be used for other Authority travel; clarifying prepayment of expenses by the Authority; and setting a schedule for processing of expense reports after the conclusion of the trip.

These revisions will save money and time as stated above, and improve the internal administrative processes for travel.

3.0 PROCUREMENT BACKGROUND: Does not apply.

4.0 DBE/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION BACKGROUND: Does not apply.

5.0 POLICY IMPACT: This resolution will amend the current policy governing expense reimbursements.

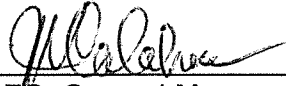
6.0 ECONOMIC IMPACT: It is expected that this amended policy will result in actual cost savings from reduced travel expenses and reduced administrative costs.

7.0 ALTERNATIVES: Rejection of the resolution would mean the policy governing expense reimbursement would remain unchanged.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION: This policy change was reviewed by the Board of Trustees Finance Committee at their June 1, 2004 meeting and recommended to the Board of Trustees for approval. This resolution was previously submitted to the Board on July 15, and subsequently tabled. It has been rewritten to address the Board's concerns.

9.0 ATTACHMENTS: None.

Recommended and certified as appropriate to the availability of funds, legal form and conformance with the Procurement requirements.



CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer