

## POLICY FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL AND EXPENSES FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

The City Council of the City of Pasadena believes that it is important that elected officials protect public resources and foster public trust in the use of those resources. Further, the City Council believes that the public is best served by officials that remain informed and trained in issues affecting the affairs of the City and that attendance at institutes, hearings, meetings, conferences, or other gatherings is of value to the City and its citizens. The benefits include:

1. The opportunity to discuss the community's concerns with state and federal officials;
2. Participation in regional, state and national organizations whose activities affect the City;
3. Attending educational seminars improve officials' skill and information levels; and
4. Promoting public service and morale by recognizing such service.

In order to promote these endeavors and comply with the spirit of state law requirements regarding reimbursement of expenses, the City Council of the City of Pasadena hereby sets forth the travel and expense reimbursement policies for the Mayor and each member of the City Council of the City of Pasadena.

### A. AUTHORIZED EXPENSES

City funds, equipment, supplies (including letterhead), titles, and staff time must only be used for authorized City business. Pasadena Municipal Code Section 2.05.220 (as may be amended in the future) provides that each member of the City Council shall be eligible for the following reimbursable allowances:

#### 1. General Expense Reimbursable Allowance

Provides for reimbursement of up to \$6,000 annually for Councilmembers and \$11,000 annually for the Mayor for the reimbursement of expenses related to the office holder's work as a member of the City Council. The General Expense Reimbursable Allowance may be used to augment expenses eligible for reimbursement in the Family Care and Office Setup, Operations, and Security Allowance categories after available funds in those allowances have been exhausted.

#### 2. Family Care Reimbursable Allowance

Provides for reimbursement of up to \$18,000 annually for each Councilmember and the Mayor to support family care needs while performing official duties in the interest of the City. Family, for purposes of this Policy, is defined as qualified children or dependents pursuant to Internal Revenue Service Publication 503.

#### 3. Office Setup, Operations, and Security Reimbursable Allowance

Provides for reimbursement of up to \$20,000 per term for the Mayor and each Councilmember to support expenses reasonably necessary to establish and operate a home office, maintain cellular connectivity, and provide for the security of the Councilmember at their residence in their district.

~~a monthly general expense reimbursement allowance of up to \$300 for the general expenses of office including child care expenses and a monthly telecommunications expense reimbursement allowance of up to \$150 for telecommunications and internet related expenses; and provides that the Mayor shall be eligible for a monthly general expense reimbursement allowance of up to \$500 for the general expenses of office including child care expenses and a monthly telecommunications expense reimbursement allowance of up to \$300. The Mayor and each member of the City Council shall be allowed a one-time reimbursement per election of up to \$5,000 for the purchase of computer equipment and a one-time reimbursement allowance of up to \$300 for the purchase of a mobile phone.~~ Expenses incurred in excess of the reimbursement amounts provided for by Pasadena Municipal Code Section 2.05.220 must be included in the adopted operating budget.

Expenses incurred in connection with the following types of activities generally constitute authorized expenses, as long as the other requirements of this Policy are met:

1. Communicating with representatives of local, regional, state and national government on City adopted policy positions;
2. Attending educational seminars and training (including ethics training) designed to improve officials' skill and information levels;
3. Participating in regional, state and national organizations whose activities affect the City's interests;
4. Attending City events;
- ~~5.~~ Attending community events on behalf of the City;
- ~~5.6.~~ The performance of other such official duties in the interest of the City; and -
- ~~7.~~ The purchase of:
  - Office equipment and supplies (3,1)
  - Refreshments and supplies for constituent meetings (1)
  - Office furniture (3,1)
  - Computer equipment, including laptops and/or desktop computers, monitors, printers, and related peripherals (3,1)
  - Cellular telephone and peripherals (3,1)
  - Home and mobile internet connection (3,1)
  - Home security system hardware, installation, and monitoring costs (3,1)
  - Council business meeting expenses (1)
  - Parking, tolls, transportation and rideshare services not related to conference travel (1)

All other expenditures require prior approval by the City Council.

## B. EXPENSES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Examples of personal expenses that the City will not reimburse include, but are not limited to:

1. The personal portion of any trip;
2. Political or charitable contributions or events;
3. Family expenses, including partner's expenses, when accompanying official on agency-related business, as well as child- or pet-related expenses;
4. Entertainment expenses, including theater, movies (either in-room or at the theater), sporting events (including gym, spa and/or golf related expenses), or other cultural events;
5. Alcohol expenses;
6. Gift card purchases;
7. Security animals, pets, or pet care;
8. Home improvements not reasonably related to the performance of the duties of office;
9. Purchase of firearms or private armed security;
10. Non-mileage personal automobile expenses, including repairs, traffic citations, insurance or gasoline;
- 5-11. Personal losses incurred while on City business. Any questions regarding the propriety of a particular type of expense should be resolved by the City Council before the expense is incurred; and
6. Any other expense not reasonably related to the performance of the duties of office.
- 12.

## C. TRANSPORTATION

All travel on City business shall be planned to provide for the most economical mode of transportation reasonably available. Reasonable travel modes may include:

1. **Airfare.** Airfares that are reasonable and economical shall be eligible for purposes of reimbursement. Government or group rates shall be used when available.
2. **Automobile.** Automobile mileage is reimbursed at Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") rates in effect at the time of travel. These rates are designed to compensate the driver for gasoline, insurance, maintenance, and other expenses associated with operating the vehicle. This amount does not include bridge and road tolls, which are also reimbursable.
3. **Car Rental.** Rental rates that are reasonable and economical shall be eligible for purposes of reimbursement.
4. **Taxis/Shuttles.** Taxis or shuttles fares may be reimbursed, including a 15 percent gratuity per fare, when the cost of such fares is equal or less than the cost of car rentals, gasoline and parking combined, or when such transportation is necessary for time efficiency.

## D. LODGING

Reimbursement for lodging expenses will be provided when travel on official City business reasonably requires an overnight stay. If such lodging is in connection with a conference,

lodging reimbursements must not exceed the group rate published by the conference sponsor for the meeting in question if such rates are available at the time of booking. Travelers must request government rates, when available. In the event conference or government rates are not available, reimbursement for lodging expenses shall be subject to a maximum of not more than 1.75 times the IRS maximum, exclusive of state and local taxes, per night.

#### **E. MEALS**

Reimbursement for actual expenses for daily meals and incidentals shall be subject to a daily maximum of not more than 1.5 times the IRS maximum, exclusive of state and local taxes. The City will not pay for alcohol expenses. Receipts for expenses shall be required for reimbursement.

#### **F. MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES**

Officials will be reimbursed for actual telephone, fax, and parking expenses incurred while traveling on City business. Telephone bills should identify which calls were made on City business.

#### **G. CASH ADVANCE POLICY**

From time to time, it may be necessary for an official to request a cash advance to cover anticipated expenses while traveling or doing business on the City's behalf. Such request for an advance should be submitted to the City Council office ten (10) working days prior to the need for the advance with the following information:

1. The purpose of the expenditure(s);
2. The anticipated amount of the expenditure(s) (for example, hotel rates, meal costs, and transportation expenses); and
3. The dates of the expenditure(s).

Any unused advance must be returned to the City within ten (10) working days of the official's return, along with an expense report and receipts documenting how the advance was used. In the event the Mayor is uncertain as to whether a request complies with this policy, such individual must seek resolution from the City Council.

#### **~~H.~~ EXPENSE REPORT CONTENT AND SUBMISSION DEADLINES**

##### **H.**

All cash advance expenditures and expense reimbursement requests must be submitted on an expense report form provided by the city, for all general expenses incurred under Pasadena Municipal Code Section 2.05.220 and for any additional expenses approved by the City Council. Expense reports must document that the expense in question met the requirements of this Policy. Officials must submit their expense reports within ninety (90) calendar days of an expense being incurred, accompanied by receipts documenting each expense. All documents related to reimbursement under this policy, except as redacted to maintain the privacy of certain personal financial data (such as credit card numbers), shall be subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

## **I. REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS**

1. Reimbursements for expenses provided through the Family Care Reimbursable Allowance will be processed by the City's third-party administrator for dependent care reimbursement programs, subject to the same process and criteria established by the third-party administrator that is applicable to City employees.
2. Reimbursements for expenses provided through the General Expense Reimbursable Allowance; and the Office Setup, Operations, and Security Reimbursable Allowance will be processed pursuant to PMC 2.05.220(A)(4).

## **J. I. —REPORTS TO CITY COUNCIL**

At the next regular City Council meeting, each official shall give an oral or written report regarding any meeting attended for which the official is reimbursed in excess of the amounts provided for in Pasadena Municipal Code Section 2.05.220. If multiple officials attended, a report may be made jointly. For the purposes of this section, "meeting" is defined as any seminar, conference or other meeting for which an official is reimbursed for travel, lodging, expenses and/or conference fees above an incidental amount of \$50 (fifty dollars) or less.

## **J.K. PRINTING AND MAILING**

Reasonable costs for City provided printing and mailing expenses for the Mayor and Councilmembers, in compliance with Fair Political Practices Commission rules, will be funded by the City Council's departmental budget, subject to the availability of funds.

## **L. HOME SECURITY ASSESSMENTS**

Councilmembers are encouraged to request a home security assessment from the Pasadena Police Department upon appointment to City Council office, when selecting a new home security system, and at any other time where the Councilmember feels circumstances warrant an assessment.

## **M. PURCHASE AND REIMBURSEMENT FOR HOME SECURITY SYSTEMS AND SERVICES**

Councilmembers Councilmembers who have existing home security systems and monitoring services at the time of appointment to City Council office may elect to keep such systems and be reimbursed for ongoing monitoring expenses.

Councilmembers who elect to purchase and install new home security systems shall do so through a City provided vendor. The City Council Department shall maintain a list of three home security system vendors from which Councilmembers may select the system that best suits their needs and be reimbursed by the City for the purchase and subsequent monitoring of the system, consistent with the parameters established in this Policy.

~~J.~~  
**K.N. AVAILABILITY OF ALLOWANCES FOR PARTIAL TERMS**

The Mayor and members of the City Council who are appointed or elected to office during a partial unexpired term of office shall be entitled to the remaining allowance in each expense category, subject to the parameters established in this Policy.

**L.O. EXCEPTIONAL OR UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES**

Councilmembers may request reconsideration by the Director of Finance of reimbursement requests that have been denied on the basis that they fall outside of the parameters established in the City Council Expense Reimbursement Policy. If the matter remains unresolved in the assessment of the Councilmember, the Councilmember may request that the City Council consider an amendment to the Policy.

**P. RETURN OF CITY FUNDED ASSETS UPON DEPARTURE FROM OFFICE**

When a City Council office is vacated pursuant to Section 403 of the City Charter, the Mayor or City Councilmember vacating office shall have the option of:

1. Purchasing any assets of material value for which they received reimbursement from the City at their present-day depreciated value; or
2. Returning to the City any assets of material value for which they received reimbursement from the City.

**M.Q. COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS; VIOLATION**

It should be noted by officeholders that some expenditures may be subject to reporting under the Political Reform Act and other laws. All agency expenditures are public records subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act and other applicable laws. Use of public resources or falsifying expense reports in violation of this policy may result in any or all of the following: 1) loss of reimbursement privileges, 2) a demand for restitution to the City, 3) the agency's reporting the expenses as income to the elected official to state and federal tax authorities, 4) civil penalties of up to \$1,000 per day and three times the value of the resources used, and 5) prosecution for misuse of public resources.