



# TOWN OF JOHNSTON

## Out of State Travel Policy

*Effective October 1, 2009*

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### **General Policy**

- All town personnel traveling under these procedures are expected to exercise prudent responsibility when committing town funds. Travel on business should be conducted at minimum cost for achieving the success of the mission. The traveler is expected to exercise the same care in incurring travel expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling at his/her own expense.

### **Procedures**

- The Mayor, Chief of Staff, and/or Department Directors shall approve all personnel for all out-of-state travel.
- Emergency travel demands that arise outside of normal business hours may be necessary. Department directors must submit documentation affixed to the travel expense voucher detailing the events necessitating the emergency travel.
- In addition to these travel regulations, Department Directors may prescribe their own department procedures to strengthen control and accountability of out-of-state travel requirements.

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### Guidelines

- **Planning:** Travel request form should be completed and sent to the Finance Department as far in advance as possible. Travel Request Forms must arrive in the Finance Department no later than twenty-one (21) days prior to the date of travel. Travel Request Forms, as well as Travel Expense Forms are available on the Town of Johnston web site: [www.johnston-ri.us/](http://www.johnston-ri.us/).
- **Transportation:** Transportation arrangements shall be made in coordination of the traveler and the purchasing department to include air, rail, bus, and automobile. Allowable accommodations will include coach fares, utilizing the most economical fares possible. The town will pay fees/charges assessed by travel carriers if the reason for the change is a business related emergency. The traveler will have to explain in writing the business reason for the change. Personally owned automobiles may be used for out-of-state travel when it is economical to the town. Reimbursement will be made on the basis of miles traveled at the current mileage rate or the common carrier fare, which ever is lower. When reimbursement for auto mileage is requested in lieu of common carrier fares, the travel request should contain documentation as to the lower cost.
- **Meal Allowance:** Town personnel who are engaged in town approved travel shall received reimbursement for meals as indicated below. **Receipts for meals purchased must be submitted to receive reimbursement.** Breakfast is **not** allowed on the initial day the traveler leaves Rhode Island unless the carrier departure is scheduled to occur **prior** to 6:00am. Dinner is **not** reimbursable if the carrier arrival back to Rhode Island is scheduled to occur **prior** to 6:00pm. Meals provided by carrier, lodging facility, or conference as part of fees or provided free of charge should not be requested for reimbursement. No reimbursement shall be made for alcoholic beverages.

Breakfast.....	\$10.00
Lunch.....	\$15.00
<u>Dinner.....</u>	<u>\$25.00</u>
Total maximum per diem meal allowance.....	\$50.00

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- **Lodging**: Lodging will be secured by the town purchasing department in order to obtain the lowest government rate. If the purpose of travel is to attend a conference held at a lodging facility, if available, lodging will be arranged for that facility, if the costs are within reason for the event and location. Overnight accommodations will not be allowed within a 50 mile radius of the Town of Johnston (including the City of Boston). Distance from home cannot be used in calculating the 50 mile radius. Lodging will be secured by the town purchasing department at the nearest possible site to the point of destination. Cost will be a factor in the determination of a site. Lodging will be provided on a single room basis, or the lowest rate available, if a single room is not available. In the event of an overcharge for lodging, or the traveler returns earlier than planned, which results in a credit due to the town, the traveler is responsible for obtaining reimbursement from the facility.
  
- **Automobile Rental**: Travelers shall avail themselves of shuttle buses and all other means of public transportation to the extent practical. The use of automobile rentals will be allowed when economically feasible and/or necessary to accomplish the travel mission. Automobile rentals must be approved by the purchasing department before the rental is obtained. A memo from the traveler must be attached to the travel request form addressing how the rental, in lieu of public transportation, would save the town money. Please note, should it be necessary to rent an automobile, the traveler is required to obtain the necessary insurance coverage so as to limit the town from liability. Car rental collision or personal injury insurance is not reimbursable. The following are obligations of the traveler when renting a vehicle to conduct town business:
  1. Possess a proper license to operate the vehicle being rented,
  2. Wear seat belts, unless expressly excused in writing for medical reasons by a physician,
  3. Obey all laws,
  4. Transporting hitchhikers is prohibited,
  5. Consuming drugs or alcohol before or while operating the vehicle is prohibited,
  6. Complete a report of any vehicle damage and inform the purchasing department immediately.

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- **Personal Vehicles**: Personally owned vehicles may be used for travel. Reimbursement will equal the mileage from their place of work to and from the destination. The mileage rate as of February 2009 is \$0.55 per mile. Requests for mileage reimbursements must be approved by the Department Director before submitted to the Purchasing Department.
  
- **Miscellaneous Expenses**: The following items are reimbursable to the traveler when supported by actual receipts:
  1. Bus, taxi, airport shuttle transportation, or rental car fuel refill,
  2. Parking, toll expenses, and
  3. Conference/Registration fees.

### **Reimbursement**

A Travel Request Form must be completed at least twenty one (21) days prior to the planned travel. This form must be signed by the Department Director and submitted to the Purchasing Department. The Purchasing Department will then verify that the department's budget has adequate funds to support the travel mission. The Mayor, Chief of Staff, and/or Finance Department retains the right to deny travel authorization. Upon approval of the travel request, the Purchasing Department will then coordinate with the Traveler to initiate the booking of accommodations, both travel method and lodging, if necessary. If reimbursable expenses were incurred, an Out-of-State Travel Expense Form must be completed by the traveler and signed by the Department Director within five (5) business days of his/her return, along with detailed receipts and/or invoices. The Purchasing Department will review the expense form and timely reimburse employees for allowable expenses described in this document.

**PLEASE NOTE: Noncompliance with the Town of Johnston's Travel Policy may cause future travel approval to be jeopardized.**