

Travel Claim Guidelines

It is the practice of the Office of the Kern County Superintendent of Schools to reimburse employees the necessary and reasonable travel expenses incurred in the performance of assigned and approved duties, subject to the following criteria and procedures:

I. Definitions

- A. "Employees" shall mean members of the Board, members of the Personnel Commission, the Superintendent, and any employee or officially designated representative of the Superintendent traveling at office expense as a part of their assigned duties and responsibilities.
- B. "Headquarters" shall mean the central office of the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent may establish an alternate headquarters for personnel not working at the central office.
- C. "Travel expenses" shall mean the costs incurred by employees, subject to criteria listed, for transportation, meals, lodging, and other specified incidental expenses while traveling on office business or in the performance of their duties and responsibilities.

II. Travel Authorizations

- A. Requests for out-of-state travel must first be authorized by the Superintendent. Please use the Approval to Attend Educational Activity form. Out-of-state travel is subject to approval by the Board of Education or County Superintendent. (School organization functions and related conferences, workshops and meetings held in Nevada, shall be considered in state.)
 - 1. The Superintendent may authorize any emergency out-of-state travel, subject to subsequent ratification by the Board of Education, at the next regular meeting of the Board.
 - 2. Requests for out-of-state travel must be approved by the senior cabinet member prior to being submitted to the Superintendent.
- B. No travel reimbursements will be made in excess of the amount budgeted for such travel. Directors of programs have the responsibility to review records on travel and are responsible for giving initial approval for claims within the budget limits.

III. Automobile

- A. Employees who utilize private vehicles in the course of their official duties shall have in their possession a valid California driver's license and carry current automobile insurance with at least minimum coverage for public liability and property damage as specified by the State of California.
- B. An employee who operates a private vehicle in violation of the above insurance requirement is subject to disciplinary action.
- C. Mid-size automobiles are available from the Transportation Department vehicle pool for use when an automobile is required for office travel. Contact the Transportation Department well in advance to ensure availability. Please use the office gas card for fuel purchased for these vehicles.
- D. The lease or rental of automobiles by employees may be authorized for office business purposes but must be approved by the senior cabinet member in advance. Authorization is contingent upon fee being less than what would be incurred at the current IRS approved rate per mile when using one's own private vehicle. Reimbursement will be for the actual cost of the car rental plus gas. Itemized receipts are required.

IV. Submission of Travel Requests

Travel requests requiring Board of Education approval shall be submitted to the Superintendent through the senior cabinet member. Requests for approval must be received in the Superintendent's office no later than the last Friday of the month preceding the Board meeting.

V. Codes for Mileage Allowance and Travel Reimbursement

Claims for travel reimbursement must reference the object code 5200.00.

VI. Emergency Travel

Emergency travel may be approved verbally or in writing by the Superintendent or senior cabinet member prior to departure.

VII. Mileage Rate

- A. Mileage for use of a private car on official business will be computed at the current approved Internal Revenue Service rate on the date of travel. Effective January 1, 2026, the mileage reimbursement rate will be 72.5 cents per mile, which is within the guidelines of the Internal Revenue Service and will not be reported as revenue on the claimant's W-2 form at the end of the year. Mileage from home to work is not reimbursable.
- B. Carpools are to be arranged when two (2) or more employees are being transported in privately owned automobiles to the same destination unless other official business circumstances make such pooling impractical and more costly.

VIII. Travel not Requiring Overnight Stay

Meals are not reimbursable for travel not requiring an overnight stay in accordance with IRS guidelines.

IX. Travel Requiring Overnight Stay

Due to insurance liability, Airbnb's and VRBOs for overnight accommodations are not allowed. Meal and lodging per diem expenses for overnight travel will be reimbursed, based on zip code, at the rates established by the U.S General Services Administration.

To be eligible to claim per diem for breakfast, employees must leave before 6:30AM on day of departure/return by 6:30AM on day of return.

To be eligible to claim per diem for lunch employees must leave prior to 11:30AM on day of departure and/or return after 1:30PM on day of return.

To be eligible to claim per diem for dinner employees must leave before 6:30PM on day of departure/return after 6:30PM on day of return.

Please use the [Travel Claims Lookup Tool](#) to determine the breakfast, lunch and dinner per diem amounts.

Reimbursements for expenses at the above rates can be made without submitting receipts. Itemized receipts must be submitted for amounts exceeding per diem rates; however, reimbursement may never exceed 200% of the per diem rates. Gratuity may not exceed 20%. Lodging in excess of \$300.00 (excluding room tax and mandatory additional charges) must have the senior cabinet member advance approval and should only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Request advance approval on the Advance Approval for Lodging form.

X. Trade or Professional Association Meetings

Employees may be reimbursed for meal expenses directly related to and necessary for attending professional association meetings or conferences.

XI. Other Expenses

A. Other expenses incurred in connection with the assigned duties and responsibilities of the employee are reimbursed at the actual cost. Expenses incurred must be identified. All individual costs in excess of \$5.00 will require receipts. Examples of other expenses are necessary transportation, telephone, registrations, and parking. For toll roads and bridges, when a receipt is not practical (and the amount is in excess of \$5.00), list the amount and identify the road/bridge.

Personal expenses such as laundry, valet service, personal telephone, entertainment, etc., are not reimbursable. Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

Office of John G. Mendiburu, Ed.D.
Kern County Superintendent of Schools
Advocates for Children

B. Payment of a gratuity must be reasonable and customary and shall not exceed 20%. Per diem amounts for meals is considered to be inclusive of the gratuity.

XII. Receipts

Itemized receipts are to be submitted for common carrier transportation, registration fees, lodging and meals in excess of the amount allowed in Section X.

XIII. Emergency Travel Expense Advance

- A. Advances of travel expenses up to 75% of the estimated reimbursable costs may be obtained upon approval by the senior cabinet member and the Associate Superintendent – Fiscal Support. No registration expense can be added.
- B. The revolving fund is limited and should only be used for an emergency or for more than two (2) days of traveling.
- C. Allow at least two weeks for an Advance to be processed.

XIV. Reimbursement from Other Agencies

Employees who travel for the office but are to be reimbursed through another agency may submit a regular reimbursement claim. Ask the agency to reimburse the office. This procedure will permit reimbursement without undue delay.

XV. Signature Criteria

- A. All signatures on KCSOS Travel Claims must be original (and legible). Initials are not allowed.
- B. A director, chief administrator or senior cabinet member must approve the claim.

XVI. Submission of Travel Claim

Please request reimbursement of travel expenses on the Staff Member Travel Expense Claim form. Correctly completed claims received in Accounts Payable by the 5th of the month will be reimbursed by the 20th of the same month. Claims received by the 15th of the month will be reimbursed by the last day of the same month. Please print or type legibly and do not use initials. A fillable form is available on the KCSOS Internal website – KCSOS Forms/Documents – Internal Business/Operations. Incomplete or illegible information will delay the processing of your claim.