

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT TRAVEL

OVERVIEW FOR COUNCILMEMBER TRAVEL



OVERVIEW

- **WHEN YOU USE YOUR OWN MONEY TO TRAVEL FOR WORK, YOU CAN BE REIMBURSED FOR MOST OF YOUR EXPENSES**
- **AS A COUNCILMEMBER, YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET PRE-APPROVED FOR TRAVEL BY THE ADMINISTRATION**
- **TO BE REIMBURSED, YOU NEED TO KEEP RECEIPTS FOR THINGS LIKE FLIGHTS, REGISTRATION, HOTELS, AND UBERS**
- **YOU HAVE TO FILL OUT A TRAVEL FORM AFTER YOU TRAVEL TO REQUEST THE REIMBURSEMENT**

THE BASIC PROCESS

- **YOU TRAVEL (BONUS POINTS IF YOU GIVE THE ACCOUNTANT A HEADS UP BEFOREHAND)**
- **YOU FILL OUT THE TRAVEL FORM AND TURN IN RECEIPTS TO THE OFFICE ACCOUNTANT**
- **THE ACCOUNTANT FILLS OUT THE REMAINDER OF THE FORM, PROCESSES THE REQUEST, AND GETS APPROPRIATE SIGNATURES**
- **THE ACCOUNTANT SUBMITS THE REQUEST TO FINANCE**
- **YOU GET PAID BACK IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS FROM TIME OF SUBMITTAL TO FINANCE**

SOME POLICIES TO KNOW

- **ALL THE POLICIES ARE ON INSIDE WHATCOM, AND IF YOU TRAVEL, YOU SHOULD MAKE YOURSELF FAMILIAR WITH THOSE. EXAMPLE:**
- **TRAVELERS MAY REQUEST REIMBURSEMENT BY COMPLETING TRAVEL EXPENSE FORM AND WHEN APPLICABLE, SUBMIT RECEIPTS FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**
 - **TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING**
 - **REGISTRATION FEES**
 - **MEALS AT THE PER DIEM RATE AS PER POLICY AD 134002Z**
 - **LODGING**
 - **WI-FI AND/OR INTERNET SERVICE**
 - **ACTUAL COSTS OF MEALS AT BUSINESS BANQUETS/MEETINGS EXCEEDING PER DIEM AND NOT INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION FEE(S)**
 - **MATERIAL NEEDED AT TRAINING SEMINARS OR MEETINGS WHILE ON TRAVEL STATUS.**
- **TIPS ARE NOT REIMBURSABLE**

2026 Employee Travel Expense Form (may be used to track non-employee travel expenses)

Additional Information:

Attach approved preauthorization forms when applicable (e.g. advance, overnight, out of state travel)

Only GSA lunch rate will be reimbursed for travel less than 12 hours (same day travel lunch per diem is included in taxable income)

Meals provided at conferences will not be reimbursed (on the form, select specific meals you want to be reimbursed for)

Meals and incidental expenses on the first and last day of travel will be reimbursed at 75% of the GSA rate (the form will auto calculate)

[Go to GSA website](#)

Name: _____

Employee No: _____

GSA Rate: \$ 68.00 ▼

Department: County Council ▼Miles Traveled: 0.0

GSA Breakfast Rate: \$ 16.00

Destination: _____

Departure Date: _____

GSA Lunch Rate: \$ 19.00

Purpose: _____

Return Date: _____

GSA Dinner Rate: \$ 28.00

Description						Amount	Paid To	Payment Method
All Meals	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidental Expenses				
Less than 12 hours away					\$ 0.00		▼	
First Day (75%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 0.00		▼	
Day 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 0.00		▼	
Day 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 0.00		▼	
Day 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 0.00		▼	
Day 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 0.00		▼	
Day 6	<input type="checkbox"/>	or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 0.00		▼	
Day 7	<input type="checkbox"/>	or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 0.00		▼	
Day 8	<input type="checkbox"/>	or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 0.00		▼	
Day 9	<input type="checkbox"/>	or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 0.00		▼	
Last Day (75%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 0.00		▼	
Total Meal Allowance					\$ 0.00		▼	
Mileage					\$ 0.00		▼	
							▼	
							▼	
							▼	

Example

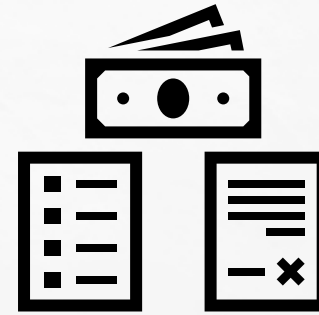
I will make a form that has your unique employee number so Finance knows who to pay

The GSA rate link is in the very top paragraph. That's how you find out how much each meal is worth for the location you traveled to. Then you choose that amount in the GSA Rate dropdown field.

Check which meals you purchased and add other related expenses, like registration, flight, and hotel

Note who you paid and how you paid for it

Recap....



Keep travel, registration and hotel receipts

AFTER
TRAVEL...

Invoice No. 0

2026 Employee Travel Expense Form (may be used to track non-employee travel expenses)

Additional information:
Attach approved preauthorization forms when applicable (e.g. advance, overnight, out of state travel)
Only GSA lunch rate will be reimbursed for travel less than 12 hours (same day travel lunch per diem is included in taxable income)
Meals provided at conferences will not be reimbursed (on the form, select specific meals you want to be reimbursed for)
Meals and incidental expenses on the first and last day of travel will be reimbursed at 75% of the GSA rate (the form will auto calculate)
[Go to GSA website](#)

Name: _____ Employee No: _____ GSA Rate: \$ 68.00
Department: County Council Miles Traveled: 0.0 GSA Breakfast Rate: \$ 16.00
Destination: _____ Departure Date: _____ GSA Lunch Rate: \$ 19.00
Purpose: _____ Return Date: _____ GSA Dinner Rate: \$ 28.00

Description	Amount	Paid To	Payment Method
All Meals			
Less than 12 hours away	\$ 0.00		
First Day (75%)	\$ 0.00		
Day 2	\$ 0.00		
Day 3	\$ 0.00		
Day 4	\$ 0.00		
Day 5	\$ 0.00		
Day 6	\$ 0.00		
Day 7	\$ 0.00		
Day 8	\$ 0.00		
Day 9	\$ 0.00		
Last Day (75%)	\$ 0.00		
Total Meal Allowance	\$ 0.00		
Mileage	\$ 0.00		



Add travel, registration, hotel and other expenses and add food and mileage for your car



Turn it all in to
Your Friendly
Office Accountant

**Process... signatures... more process... submission to finance...
Then you get paid back in two to three weeks after submission**