

# TRAVEL POLICY

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## 1.0 GENERAL POLICY

The County's Travel Policy provides for reimbursement to employees for approved expenses that are incurred as part of their responsibilities as County employees which would not be incurred otherwise. It is the intent of the County to encourage meaningful out-of-County travel and to pay for reasonable expenses for County employees attending out-of-County training sessions, conferences, conventions, and other authorized meetings which will, through knowledge gained by those attending, benefit the County. It is also the intent of the County to reimburse County employees for any required in-County travel when using their private vehicle.

These policies apply to all County employees. Exceptions may be authorized by the County Manager at his discretion. The County Commissioners **ARE NOT** required to adhere to these guidelines. All remaining board members are subject to these guidelines, unless exempted by County Commissioners.

### 1.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EMPLOYEE

- a. Attend all pertinent sessions of conferences.
- b. Maintain a receptive attitude.
- c. Be a knowledgeable and credible representative of the County.
- d. Spend allotted travel funds in a reasonable manner.
- e. Submit all required receipts with travel reimbursement report within ten (10) days after the date of travel.

### 1.2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COUNTY

- a. Fund out-of-County travel to those training sessions, conferences, conventions, and other authorized meetings

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which will promote the professional development of the employee, and therefore benefit the County.

- b. Adequately fund authorized out-of-County travel so that the employee will not undergo financial hardship from attending conferences and meetings.
- c. Pay all pertinent registration and conference fees, providing payment for approved and suitable lodging; and paying approved expenses.
- d. Provide reimbursement for food in accordance within established guidelines as outlined.
- e. Provide transportation to and from the conference, and intermediate ground transportation.

### 1.3 TRAVEL OUTSIDE 300 MILE RADIUS - SEE ATTACHED MAP

At least ten (10) days prior to the trip, and before any County funds are committed, the trip **must** be approved on Conference Attendance and Expense Report - Form F0-7 by the County Manager's office and received in the Finance Department.

Sheriff's Office Exception(s) – Travel for the purpose of criminal investigations or extraditions shall not require the County Manager's approval. However, all other travel by Sheriff's Office personnel must follow travel guidelines as stated above.

## 2.0 IN-COUNTY TRAVEL POLICY

In-County mileage reimbursement for use of private vehicle will be paid as follows:

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- 1) Any County employee who receives an automobile allowance is **NOT** eligible for in-county mileage reimbursement.
- 2) Eligible County employees will be paid a rate per mile reimbursement for any **REQUIRED** in-County travel when using their private vehicle. The rate of reimbursement will be at the established IRS rate at the time of travel. The same guidelines for determining allowable mileage as used by IRS will be used by the County.
- 3) Employees are required to use County vehicles when available for in-county travel. If an employee chooses to use a personal vehicle when a County vehicle is available and appropriate for the travel, the employee will **NOT** be reimbursed for their travel expense.
- 4) Travel from home to work is **NOT** allowable mileage, unless the employee is in a call-back status.
- 5) Voluntary travel to the on-site Health Clinic or to a wellness program event for personal benefit is **NOT** allowable mileage.
- 6) In order to process reimbursement, completed mileage sheets or notation of mileage payable with authorized signatures must be included with the employee's time sheet.

### 3.0 OUT-OF-COUNTY TRAVEL POLICY

This policy establishes employee and employer responsibilities related to out-of-County travel for County business and related expenses.

#### 3.1 BASIC OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

##### 3.1.1 Full Reimbursement

If an employee is traveling and the County is receiving a benefit from the travel, the employee is entitled to full

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reimbursement for the approved expenses incurred (within the guidelines established in the County Travel Policy).

### 3.1.2 Availability of Funds

Approval of any travel is contingent upon adequate funding being available to the requesting employee's department.

### 3.1.3 Travel Advance

Travel advances can be requested for any approved travel when the amount involved is anticipated to be more than \$75 for out-of-county travel. Travel advance requests must be received by the Finance Office at least ten (10) days prior to the first date of travel. Travel destinations outside a 300 mile radius of New Hanover County require approval by the County Manager's Office before any County funds are committed. See Attachment A-NHC 300-mile Buffer for details on area(s).

### 3.1.4 Family accompanies employee

If a family member accompanies a County employee on a business trip, none of the family member's expenses will be paid. The hotel/motel bill will be reimbursed at the single rate only.

### 3.1.5 Refund due County

In the event an employee owes the county a refund after completing the travel, the refund should be submitted with a copy of the approved Travel Advance Form noting the actual cost of travel.

If the refund due the County is greater than \$10, the employee should submit a personal check or cashier's check made payable to New Hanover County.

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### 3.1.6 Travel Expense Report

Travel expenses with no issued travel advance funding must be approved by the department head and reported by completing a Travel Expense and Reimbursement Report – Form FO-7A. The completed travel form is to be submitted to the Finance Department within ten (10) working days from the date the employee returns from the trip.

### 3.1.7 Approval of Travel Reimbursement Reports

Individual travel reports should obtain signature(s) noting approval of expenditures as follows before submitting to the Finance Department for reimbursement:

Commissioners	No other approval required
Sheriff	No other approval required
Register of Deeds	No other approval required
Clerk to the Board	No other approval required
County Manager	No other approval required
County Attorney	No other approval required
All others	In accordance with the organization chart (Department Heads)

### 3.2 TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

#### 3.2.1. Determining Mode of Transportation

In determining the mode of transportation to be used, the following procedures apply:

- A) For travel outside a radius of 300 miles from Wilmington, the County will pay the lesser of the amount of the standard mileage cost, cost of air fare at tourist rate, or other similar fare for other modes of transportation (i.e., rail). Any cost such as additional meals or motel expense incurred due to the longer period of travel will not be reimbursed.
- B) When more than one employee is attending a conference, car pooling is strongly encouraged. The Department Head should determine the most suitable travel mode, based upon factors such as convenience and time. When a private vehicle is chosen for travel, only the owner of the private vehicle is to be reimbursed the applicable mileage rate.

#### 3.2.2. Transportation

The predominant modes of transportation recognized by the County for out-of-County travel are:

##### A. Passenger Vehicles

- 1) County Vehicle - County vehicles should be used when available for both in-County and out-of-County travel.

- Receipt for gas purchases for fueling county vehicles with personal funds while out-of-County must be submitted with expense report for reimbursement.

- Any expenses incurred for emergency repairs to County vehicle will be reimbursed. **Receipt is required for reimbursement.**

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- 2) Private Vehicle - Use of an employee's private vehicle for out-of-County travel is only approved if a County vehicle is not available, **and** total distance of out-of-county travel is no more than 100 miles. The rate of reimbursement will be as prescribed by the Internal Revenue Service on a per mile basis. Mileage rates are issued by the IRS on an annual basis.

- Mileage will be measured from the closer of the duty station or the point of departure to the destination and return.

- 3) Passenger Car Rental – The County has contracted with ENTERPRISE RENTAL for passenger car rental through January 21, 2012. A general account has been established, allowing all departments to reserve a vehicle without the use of a credit card and ENTERPRISE will invoice the department after the return of the vehicle. Rental cars are to be used for ALL out-of-county travel with total mileage greater than 100 miles.

- Reservations are to be made by Department Heads or designees only. A purchase order is not required for rental purposes.

- Department Heads must provide the Finance Dept. with the names of two (2) designees who will be authorized to make reservations through ENTERPRISE.

- The classes of cars approved by the County that are available for rent include Economy, Compact, and Intermediate. The current contract provides both daily and weekly rates.

- Do not purchase any additional insurance coverage through rental agency. County insurance provides for hired auto coverage.

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- Rental car is to be returned with the same level of fuel at time of pickup/delivery to avoid additional cost of rental.

B. Airline

Air fare, including accompanying intermediate ground transportation - no first class rates will be paid. Receipt noting payment must be submitted to Finance with final expense report.

C. Discounted Airfare

If a discount air fare is available because travel is on certain weekend days, the employee is still allowed to deduct **up to** the amount of the regular air fare toward personal expenses incurred by early arrival (i.e., hotel and meal expenses). Employee must have prior approval of Department Head in order for this option to be used.

In determining the regular air fare amount, the lowest cost of a coach ticket to arrive at the latest possible time to participate in conference or meeting should be used. Cost comparisons must be made using information from airlines or travel agents attained on the same day. Documentation must be submitted with the expense report.

D. Other Travel

Taxi fare, bus fare, toll costs, etc., will be reimbursed at actual costs incurred. **Receipt is encouraged.**

E. Parking

Actual cost incurred for business related parking. **A receipt is required for parking fees over \$3.**

### 3.2.3 Hotel/Motel Lodging

- The hotel reimbursement rate will be at the discretion of the Department Head. Actual cost to the employee will be reimbursed

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up to the rate (including any taxes) approved by the Department Head.

- A Receipt must be submitted with the completed expense report. **The receipt must show all charges and payments and reflect a zero balance.** A receipt for prepayment of the room is **NOT** acceptable.

- When two (2) or more County employees share a room, all room expenses shall be on one (1) employee's travel report.

### 3.2.4. Tips

Tips for meals are included in the per diem rates and reimbursed as outlined in Section 3.4.6 below. Any tips for doorman, bell hops, etc., are elective and not reimbursable.

### 3.2.5. Registration

Actual cost will be reimbursed. A receipt should accompany the expense report. Documentation should be included to show the meals that are included in registration fee. If meals are included, no additional reimbursement for those meals will be provided as per diem. If registration was prepaid, attach copy of prepayment form to final expense report.

### 3.2.6 Telephone

Any business-related calls will be reimbursed at actual cost, including the telephone connection fee charged by the hotel/motel, with the submission of a detailed listing of calls and associated fees.

### 3.2.7 Meals

- Employees will **not** be reimbursed for alcoholic beverages.
- Employee must be in travel status at the following times to be reimbursed for meals:

1. Breakfast - 7:00 a.m.
2. Lunch - 11:00 a.m.
3. Dinner - 7:00 p.m.

-Travel Status for meals is defined as when an employee is required to travel to a location more than 50 miles from the city limits of Wilmington.

- Meals will be reimbursed at actual cost to the employee up to a maximum of \$33 per day, including any tips. No receipt will be required if the daily maximum amount is not exceeded.

- If the amount spent for meals exceeds the daily maximum allowed, a receipt for the meal exceeding the meal allowance must be attached to report. A receipt does **not** guarantee reimbursement. Approval for reimbursement over the established per-diem amount must be made by the Department Head.

- Meals included in the registration fee(s) as part of a conference or training session should be noted as such and not requested for reimbursement.

- If an employee is not in travel status at the times detailed above, the daily maximum rate will be adjusted based on the following:

Breakfast	\$ 6.75
Lunch	\$ 9.00
Dinner	\$17.25

Individual amounts only apply if employee is in travel status for part of a day.

### 3.2.8 Dry Cleaning

Should an employee be in travel status five (5) days, the County will reimburse up to \$10.00 for dry cleaning services. A receipt must be provided.

### 3.2.9 Miscellaneous

Any other required business related expenditure will be reimbursed at actual cost. Receipt and justification must be submitted.

## 4.0 QUARTERLY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Department Heads shall provide detailed cumulative quarterly travel reports for their department to the County Manager's office. Reports are due within 30 days of the previous quarter ending. The deadlines are as follows:

January - March	Due by April 30
April - June	Due by July 31
July - September	Due by October 31
October - December	Due by January 31

### 4.1 INSTRUCTIONS FOR QUARTERLY TRAVEL REPORT

Log on to Munis System - Go to Financials

From drop-down screen, select **G/L Account Inquiry**

Click **Find** (Binoculars)

Enter Org: Example (11008100) - Enter Object: 700905 (Travel)

Click **OK** (Green Check)

The header page will appear. Print this page by clicking the print icon at the top.

Click the **Detail** button (on left hand side of screen)

Enter the date range of the quarter - Click **OK** (Green Check)

From this screen go to File (top left corner) - Click **Output**

Report Format: Click **Detail**

Under **Output Options**, check **File**

In box under **Report Title** add the Department name to the end –  
(Ex: G/L Account Detail – Finance)

Click **OK** (Green Check)

At the bottom of detail screen, a notification of the spool file name and length of pages will be displayed.

Go back to MUNIS System main page – Go to **Dept**

From drop-down screen, select **Spool File**

Highlight report that was just created

Click Microsoft Word Icon at top to export to Word for printing options.

Change orientation to **Landscape** and paper size to **Legal**

Click OK and Print

Review printed report and sign for approval.

Submit to County Manager by deadline(s) as outlined.