



New Hanover County Health Department Policies and Procedures



Subject:	Travel and County Vehicle Usage
Date of Origin:	11/2004
Policy Number:	GS-ADM-010

PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

It is the intent of the department to support meaningful travel that will benefit the organization through knowledge gained from staff attendance. Travel may be approved to attend training sessions, conferences, conventions and other authorized meetings. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for requesting travel approval, travel reimbursement, and for the use of county vehicles for approved travel.

The scope of this policy applies to all members of the New Hanover County Health Department (NHCHD) workforce.

POLICY:

The NHCHD Travel Policy provides guidelines for payment of approved travel and training expenses. Consideration for approval of travel will be with priority given (in order listed) to:

- a) Acquisition and maintenance of required professional certifications and licensing.
- b) Technical training required for job performance.
- c) Other workshops and conferences.

The NHCHD Travel Policy requires prior approval from the health director, assistant, county manager and/or county manager before funds may be expended. Employees shall adhere to travel policy and procedures in order to receive reimbursement for travel expenses.

PROCEDURE:

1. Employee shall submit, via email, a request for travel approval, including an attachment with the completed Authorization for Travel Expenditures Form ADM-002 for travel/training, including total estimated cost, to their supervisor for consideration. Supervisor may request copy of workshop agenda and/or itinerary for review. Employee and supervisor shall review County Travel Policy for guidelines, each time, to ensure projected expenditures fall within travel policy guidelines. Supervisor shall approve date and time for which travel status shall be in effect. The use of a county vehicle is encouraged when available. Estimates of travel with County vehicle shall be based on \$0.20/mile, plus gas refill, if needed due to distance.
 - a. An employee may choose to use their personal vehicle instead of utilizing a county vehicle. The use of a personal vehicle will be reimbursed at the rate of \$0.20/mile. No other vehicle reimbursements will be made (i.e. fuel, wear and tear, maintenance, and emergency repairs). Employee shall specify this at the time the travel request is made.
 - b. If the employee elects to use a county vehicle, and a county vehicle is not available at the time of travel, the employee will be reimbursed at the current county reimbursement rate for personal vehicle use. No other vehicle reimbursements will be made (i.e. fuel, wear and tear, maintenance, and emergency repairs).

- c. If the employee does not specify their preference when requesting travel, a county vehicle will be reserved and shall be the option used.
2. Exceptions shall be specified in the initial request for approval, with cost of exception clearly stated to ensure encumbrance of funds is adequate (this includes expenses that may be incurred in excess of the approved County per diem rate). Deadlines for registration must be specified, and request must be made with ample time to obtain approvals and process payment.
3. Supervisor shall evaluate request and, if determined to be appropriate, contact fiscal staff to verify fund availability. Fiscal staff will encumber funds and reserve County vehicle, pending approval.
4. Supervisor shall submit request, with justification for travel, to division manager for consideration, specifying type of transportation, total cost and budget in which funds have been encumbered by fiscal staff. If for any reason travel is not approved, the fiscal staff will remove the encumbrance from the appropriate budget and cancel the County vehicle reservation.
 - a. Requests for travel in excess of 300 miles or more (one way) away from New Hanover County shall be submitted for approval by the division manager to the health director who shall submit his approved request to the assistant county manager or county manager for final approval. The health director shall forward approval notification to division manager, supervisor and fiscal staff. These requests shall be submitted in writing on form FO-7, *Conference Attendance and Expense Report* and must be approved by the division manager, health director and county manager.
 - b. Requests for travel less than 300 miles (one way) away from New Hanover County shall be approved by the health director who shall forward approval notification to the division manager. The division manager shall forward approval notification to the supervisor and the fiscal staff. The health director shall prepare a quarterly MUNIS travel approvals report within 30 days of the end the quarter and submit to the assistant county manager or county manager.
5. Employee shall complete *Authorization to Use County Vehicle form* (Attachment 2) and submit form to supervisor for processing. Supervisor shall review to verify form is complete, including correct budget code. Supervisor may sign form as authorized representative. Supervisor shall then submit form to fiscal staff for processing through Vehicle Management.
6. For registrations requiring fee payment, employee shall submit registration (with attached copy of e-mail approval) to supervisor. Supervisor shall initial form and forward to fiscal staff for processing. Employees may pre-register online, via fax, mail or phone. If this is necessary to reserve a spot while awaiting payment, please immediately forward confirmation of registration to fiscal staff. If no fee is required, and travel approval has been obtained, employee and/or supervisor may submit registration directly.
7. Travel arrangements shall be coordinated by fiscal support staff. Arrival after 6:00 pm may require use of traveling employee's personal credit card to guarantee room reservation.
8. If airline travel is required, employee shall contact fiscal staff for assistance obtaining ticket.
9. If cash advance is desired (travel expenses must be at least \$75 to qualify for advance), form FO-7, *Conference Attendance and Expense Report* (~~Attachment 4~~) must be submitted to supervisor, with Section I completed and e-mail approval attached. Supervisor shall initial form and forward to Division Manager for approval and submission to fiscal staff for processing at least 15 business days prior to travel.
10. Once travel is completed, expense report must be submitted to supervisor within 3 business days. Out of state travel, or travel for which a cash advance was received, is reported on the same for FO-7 used for initial approval. Both the pink and gold copies of the form must be completed so that both copies are legible (NCR Carbonless forms) and submitted with actual expenditures and receipts. In-state travel without cash advance is reported on form ADM017,

Travel Expense and Reimbursement Report. A copy of the e-mail travel approval must be attached to all travel expense reports. Employee shall submit expense report and documentation to supervisor. Supervisor shall review the report for accuracy, initial report and forward to division manager for approval and submission to fiscal staff within 5 business days of completed travel for processing.

- a. Employees in Travel Status for full day (7 a.m. through 7 p.m.):
Meals will be reimbursed at actual cost up to maximum of \$33 per day including tips. Reimbursement will not exceed the daily maximum rate for NHCHD employees. If meals are included or provided as part of the meeting/event being attended, the maximum reimbursable amount for that meal will be subtracted from the \$33 total. The daily maximum rate for individual meals will be adjusted based on the following amounts.

- i. Breakfast \$6.75
- ii. Lunch \$9.00
- iii. Dinner \$17.25

- b. Employees in Travel Status for partial day:
An employee in travel status shall reference the individual meal reimbursement amounts listed in Section 10a. Reimbursement may not exceed the maximum combined per-meal rate for the meals being reimbursed. If in travel status for part of the day in any combination of breakfast, lunch, or dinner, the employee may use the allowable amounts in any combination.

- i. Breakfast – reimbursable if in travel status before 7:00 a.m.
- ii. Lunch – reimbursable if in travel status before 11:00 a.m.
- iii. Dinner – reimbursable if in travel status after 7:00 p.m.

- c. Include all receipts:
Receipts are required for meal reimbursement, and will be submitted to supervisor with *Travel Expense and Reimbursement Report*. Supervisors shall review receipts during expense report approval process. Receipts shall be retained by the employee through end of fiscal year, and will not be submitted with *Travel Expense and Reimbursement Report*.

- 10. Cancellation of travel/training commitments is the responsibility of the employee, with approval of supervisor. Employee is responsible for immediately notifying fiscal staff of canceled travel/training commitments, along with documentation of cancellation and reimbursement of any travel advance. If a travel advance was received, one of the following procedures apply:

- a. If travel advance check was not cashed, voided check shall be submitted to fiscal staff for processing.
- b. If travel advance check was cashed, a reimbursement check or money order made payable to New Hanover County in the full amount of the advance shall be submitted to fiscal staff for processing.

OTHER INFORMATION (attached): N/A

REFERENCES:

New Hanover County Administrative Policies and Procedures: Travel Policy
Authorization for Travel Expenses ADM-002
Travel Expense and Reimbursement Report ADM017
Conference Attendance and Expense Report, County Form FO-7

CHANGE HISTORY:

Version	Date	Comments
A	11/2004	Original Document
B	2/2006	Revisions include combining policy with County Vehicle Usage Policy, and inclusion of per diem amounts and meal receipts. Revisions also include changes in county approval process for travel exceeding and/or not exceeding 300 miles from New Hanover County.
C	09/2006	Revisions include option to use personal vehicle, and "Authorization for Travel Expenditures" request.
D	11/2006	Revisions include change to "Authorization for Travel Expenditures" request form. Submission deadline was changed from five to ten working days prior to registration deadline.
Annual Review		03/2009