

WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TRAVEL POLICY

Section 1. General

1.1 Scope – This Travel Policy governs travel by all of West Virginia Department of Agriculture officers, board members, employees, consultants, contractors and anyone authorized to be reimbursed travel expenses by or on behalf of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, except where otherwise specified in the State Code, and includes all in-state, out-of-state and international travel

1.2 Authority – West Virginia Code §12-3-11.

1.3 Effective Date April 1, 2015

1.4 Definitions:

For purposes of this Policy, the following terms are defined:

1.4.1 “Commissioner” means the head of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture and Affiliates as provided in State Code.

1.4.2 “Department” means the West Virginia Department of Agriculture and Affiliates.

1.4.3 “Director” means a “Division Director” or “Executive Director” of a sub-set of the Department who has the authority to issue final approval of Travel Authorization and Travel Expense Account Settlement Forms.

1.4.4 “Division” means a sub-set of the Department of Agriculture or Affiliate.

1.4.5 “Duty Station” (also referred to as “Official Headquarters”) is the city/town, county, and state in which the employee works. For most employees, this will be the location of the employee's work site.

1.4.6 “e-Travel System” means the electronic tool approved for planning, authorizing and submitting reimbursement requests for business-related travel expenses.

1.4.7 “Meal Reimbursement Rate” means the total amount allowable for meal reimbursement(s) per day under this policy.

1.4.8 “Official Meeting” means a meeting held to conduct State business that fulfills IRS requirements as non-taxable expense.

1.4.9 "Policy" means this Travel Policy.

- 1.4.10 The State's "Purchasing Card" also referred to as the "P-Card" is a card-based method of payment issued to an individual for state business expenses and administered by the West Virginia State Auditor's Office. Use of a P-Card for travel expenses is contingent upon approval by the West Virginia State Auditor's Office and implementation of an e-Travel system. Cards will be issued as a "One Card" to allow for both business-related purchases and travel expenses, or a "Travel P-Card" which will be restricted for use for travel expenses only, depending on job duties of the employee.
- 1.4.11 "State" means the State of West Virginia.
- 1.4.12 "State-Owned Vehicle" is a vehicle registered to the State of West Virginia, either owned outright by the Department of Agriculture or Affiliate or leased by the Department from the State Fleet Management Office.
- 1.4.13 "Third Party Booking" means using an internet travel site such as Expedia, Travelocity, Orbitz, Kayak, Hotels.com and the like, where a traveler may research and book travel reservations.
- 1.4.14 "Travel Authorization" means the form/format approved by the West Virginia Department of Agriculture that is to be used for approving travel under this Policy whether in an electronic travel management solution or on paper.
- 1.4.15 "Traveler" means anyone authorized to be reimbursed travel expenses by or on behalf of the Department.
- 1.4.16 "Travel Expense Report" means the form/format approved by the West Virginia Department of Agriculture that is to be used for settling all travel related expenses incurred pursuant to this Policy, whether in an electronic travel management solution or on paper.
- 1.4.17 "Travel Ghost Account" also referred to as the "Ghost Card" is a card issued to a Division custodian as a payment method for travel expenses for multiple employees.
- 1.4.18 "Travel Status" is defined as the authorized period of travel time away from the official workstation commencing with the time of departure and ending with the time of return.
- 1.4.19 "United Bank Travel Card" also referred to as a "Travel Card" is a card-based method of payment issued to an individual for state business expenses and administered by the West Virginia State Travel Management Office.

Section 2. General Information

- 2.1 The Department has an "accountable plan" for reimbursement of travel expenses and will only reimburse for actual expenses or in an amount deemed appropriate and substantiated.

- 2.2 Authority, and the associated responsibility, to manage, approve, or disapprove travel and travel-related expense is delegated exclusively to the Director. Authority may be revoked at any time by the Commissioner or his Designee.
- 2.3 Travel may be authorized only for official business and only if the Division has the financial resources to reimburse the traveler for travel expenses.
- 2.4 Travel expenses will be reimbursed for legitimate and reasonable expenses considered necessary for the proper conduct of Department business in accordance with this Policy.
- 2.5 A Traveler is considered in "travel status" for mileage reimbursement when he or she is traveling on behalf of the Department, which includes leaving his/her assigned official work location to perform duties at other locations.
 - 2.5.1 Travelers who work multiple stations which necessitate automobile travel are in travel status from the moment of departure from their official headquarters until return to official headquarters. If a Traveler does not return to the headquarters station at the end of a day or a trip, the Traveler shall not be eligible for mileage on their personal car in excess of the mileage to return to official headquarters.
 - 2.5.2 When an employee's official headquarters is changed to a location that requires additional travel of a distance at least fifty (50) miles greater than their previous commute and requires the relocation of the employee's residence, the employee may be allowed up to thirty (30) calendar days travel expenses to commute, for purposes of conducting the business of the Department, from their old residence location to their new headquarters location or a state vehicle may be provided for the commute upon written approval of the Commissioner or his Designee. This provision does not apply to voluntary relocation. If the employee elects not to change their residence, the employee shall not be allowed expenses related to the change in headquarters after the 30 calendar day period.
- 2.6 Approval to travel must be secured in advance by the Traveler from their Director which includes leaving his/her Official Headquarters to perform duties at other locations.
- 2.7 The Divisions shall audit and submit an accurate Travel Expense Report for reimbursement to the Administrative Services Division within ten (10) days after submission by the traveler. Final approval of a Traveler's expense report by the Director means that the Travel Expense Report meets all criteria established by this Policy for reimbursement.
 - 2.7.1 Travelers should submit an expense report at least once a month. It is the responsibility of the Director to review and approve employee's expense accounts within ten (10) business days of receipt and forward to the

Administrative Services Division.

- 2.7.2 Travel expenses incurred during the month of June must be submitted within ten (10) business days of the last date of travel or the end of the month, whichever comes first.
 - 2.7.3. The Administrative Services Division shall submit the documents to the appropriate executive agencies of State government within five (5) business days to complete the process.
- 2.8 Travelers may use established statewide contracts for travel services, deal directly with the service vendor, or Third Party Booking sites to make hotel and airfare reservations.
- 2.9 Cash Advances
- 2.9.1 Pursuant to the regulatory compliance duties of the Department, those employees charged by law or regulations to purchase at fair market value agriculture products for the purpose of specimens for inspection may request, on a quarterly basis, an inspection advance not to exceed three hundred dollars (\$300). Those employees so authorized shall be responsible for a daily accounting of expenditures on daily activity reports to their Director and shall submit a settlement of the inspection advance within fifteen (15) calendar days of the last date of the advance. Example: An advance received for the period of January 1 through March 31, must be settled by April 15.
 - 2.9.2 A Traveler may request a cash advance for meals and/or mileage through the existing paper request form or the e-Travel System after implementation, if approved by the Director.
 - 2.9.3 Outstanding Cash Advance Report
 - 2.9.3.1 Employees cannot have more than a total of two (2) outstanding cash advances, either travel or inspection or a combination of travel and inspection advances, at any time. The employee has primary responsibility for compliance with reconciliation and reporting requirements. The Director will be responsible for ensuring that each allowance is submitted to the Administrative Services Division within fifteen (15) calendar days to be cleared through the Auditor's Office process within thirty (30) calendar days of the last date of the advance.

Section 3. Reimbursement

- 3.1 Reimbursement of travel expenses incurred by consultants, contractors and non-employees will be in accordance with this Policy, unless otherwise specified in the purchase order or contract with the Department.
- 3.2 Travel Expense Reports must be completed by the Traveler using current paper

forms until implementation of the State's e-Travel system. Travel Expense Reports, regardless of the media used for submission, must have all required receipts and forms attached before submitting to Administrative Services.

3.3 Divisions are responsible for auditing Travel Expense Reports regardless of the medium used for submission.

3.3.1 The Traveler has the primary responsibility to comply with this Policy. The act of approving Travel Expense Reports to authorize payment attaches equal responsibility to the Director for compliance with this Policy.

3.4 Itemized receipts are required for expenses claimed in excess of \$75 unless otherwise specifically addressed in this Policy.

3.5 When a receipt is required, the receipt must be the original, valid, itemized receipt issued by the vendor or service provider documenting the transaction.

3.5.1 Travelers shall sign the receipt to verify that it is an original, valid, itemized receipt issued by the vendor or service provider.

3.6 When an acceptable form of receipt is not available, a Traveler shall create, in paper or electronic form, an itemized list reflecting the goods or services purchased, vendor name, date of purchase, and price. The physical or electronic signatures of the Traveler and the Director are required, along with whatever receipt or other documentation is available.

3.6.1 If the required original documents are not available, the itemized list created in accordance with 3.6 must be certified as an original to be submitted for payment. This certification must be completed by the Traveler, and at a minimum, by the Director, and the Chief Financial Officer or the Commissioner.

Section 4. Meals

4.1 Meal expense maximum daily rates and the Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner increments for both In-State and Out-of-State travel will be reviewed annually and established by memo issued by the Commissioner or his Designee. Alcohol and entertainment expenses are specifically excluded. Meal reimbursement is allowed when lodging is listed as "gratis" or "no charge."

4.1.1 In-State or Out-of-State Meal Allowances

4.1.1.1 Reimbursement will be made for meals while absent from official headquarters on overnight status based upon the WVDA rates for in-state travel in effect at the time of travel.

4.1.2 First and Last Day of Travel Meal Allowances

4.1.2.1 Meal reimbursement for the first and last day of travel while absent from official headquarters on overnight status will be at the rate of 75% of the total daily reimbursement rate in effect at the time of travel.

4.1.3 Official Meeting Meals

4.1.3.1 Written approval must be obtained from the Commissioner or his Designee when meals are an integral part of an official meeting, and/or in excess of the allowable reimbursement. A meal is considered an integral part of a meeting when any of the following are met:

- a. The meeting continues throughout mealtime(s) or has no scheduled break for a meal in its agenda; or
- b. There are lectures, presentations, or other activities directly related to the purpose of the meeting carried out during the mealtime(s); or
- c. The employee's duties or participation in the meeting require the employee to be present, participating in the meeting throughout mealtime(s); or
- d. The location of the meeting, length of mealtime break, or other factors make it extremely difficult or prohibitive to find meals at an alternate location away from the meeting location.

Documentation, including the Commissioner's or Designee's written approval and the cost and necessity of the meeting meal, must be provided with other reimbursement documentation.

4.2 Tips are included in the meal reimbursement rate and are, therefore, not separately reimbursable.

4.3 Adjustments to Meal Reimbursement Rates

4.3.1 Exceptions may be granted to meal reimbursement rates when necessitated by unusual situations. These exceptions require prior written authorization by the Commissioner or his Designee.

4.3.2 A meal provided by a common carrier or as a *complimentary* meal provided by a hotel/motel does not reduce the maximum reimbursable rate.

4.3.3 Travelers may be required to provide a copy of the Meeting Agenda that includes if meals are on your own or are provided – paperwork included with expense request as part of backup doc for expenses claimed.

4.3.4 Travelers are to adjust meal reimbursement requests for meals that are

included in the registration fee or are otherwise provided.

4.4 Extraordinary Meal Expense Reimbursement

4.4.1 Meal expenses for single day travel are not reimbursable unless the Traveler is in travel status for more than 12 continuous hours in a 24 hour period and reimbursement has been approved by the Commissioner or his Designee. The maximum reimbursement allowable is the currently effective Dinner increment. Date and time of departure and return must be clearly noted on the Travel Expense Report. Documentation of hours worked as recorded in the timekeeping system must be attached to the travel reimbursement request.

Section 5. Transportation

5.1 Air Transportation

5.1.1 Commercial Airlines

5.1.1.1 Allowable reimbursement for commercial airline travel shall include the actual cost for the least expensive logical fare via the most direct route, or a reasonable alternative route if it results in a lower fare.

5.1.1.2 Travelers should make air travel bookings through the State's e-Travel System to utilize the statewide contract. However, EEs are encouraged to check other options to document lower rates. Reimbursement for tickets where reservations were not made through the State's e-Travel System requires prior authorization from the Commissioner or his Designee.

5.1.1.3 Electronic tickets (e-tickets) are the industry standard and are issued automatically unless a paper ticket is specifically requested by the traveler. Costs for obtaining paper tickets are not reimbursable, as e-tickets are deemed sufficient for traveling and reimbursement.

5.1.1.4 Airfare should be paid by a Purchasing Card or United Bank Travel Card Ghost Account. Itemized receipts are required.

5.1.1.5 Inappropriate Actions

5.1.1.5.1 Travelers may not deliberately cause increased costs or delays to obtain personal gratuities, such as denied boarding compensation, frequent flier points or mileage or other benefits. Conversion of airline tickets for personal benefit, such as downgrading tickets,

returning unused tickets for cash, credit or personal airline tickets or other similar action is prohibited.

5.1.1.5.2 Travelers may not specify a particular airline to accumulate mileage or promotional plans such as frequent flyer programs if it results in a higher fare. Travelers may retain frequent flyer points properly accumulated.

5.1.1.5.3 If an increase in airfare is caused by the Traveler without legitimate excuse, the increased costs of the airfare are a personal expense of the Traveler and will not be reimbursed. If an increase in airfare is incurred through no fault of the Traveler and the Commissioner or his Designee has approved the increase, the increased cost is reimbursable.

5.1.1.6 The Administrative Services Division must be notified immediately if airline tickets are unused or refundable for proper credit or refund.

5.1.2 Non-Commercial Aircraft Service

5.1.2.1 For any state-owned or private aircraft services to be used, Travelers should notify the Administrative Services Division of any necessary arrangements with the Aviation Division of the Department of Administration.

5.2 Ground Transportation

5.2.1 Generally

5.2.1.1 A Traveler may use a state-owned, commercial rental or privately-owned vehicle for travel that is not a routine part of the employee's official duties. In order of preference, the traveler should first seek to use a state-owned vehicle if one is available, followed by commercial rental and then privately-owned. Regardless of transportation type, travelers must seek prior approval from their Director.

5.2.1.2 Employees will be reimbursed for costs incurred to wash a vehicle, whether a State-owned, rental or personal vehicle, as required for strict adherence to bio-security rules.

5.2.1.2 A Traveler must possess a valid operator's license to drive a vehicle while traveling on behalf of the Department.

- 5.2.1.3 The Traveler is responsible for following all applicable laws and requirements while driving and for any fines and/or penalties resulting from citations, charges or warrants attributable to the operator. Such fines and/or penalties are not reimbursable expenses.
- 5.2.1.4 When a Traveler requests to drive his/her personal vehicle rather than fly for business, reimbursement should be based on actual in-transit expenses (mileage and other costs incurred while in-transit, such as lodging, meals, parking, tolls, etc.), not to exceed the least expensive logical commercial airline cost plus local transportation to and from the airport and parking (where required). It is the responsibility of the Director to ensure that the employee is choosing the most cost-efficient method.
- 5.2.1.5 Travel between the place of residence and the official workstation is not reimbursable. A manager may authorize an employee to start their travel from the employee's place of residence rather than from the workstation when the miles from the place of residence to the destination would be less than the miles from the workstation to the destination.

5.2.2 State-Owned Vehicles

- 5.2.2.1 A Traveler must successfully complete the driver training course provided through BRIM or another comparable training provided gratis for State agencies before they will be allowed to operate a State-owned vehicle, rental or personally owned vehicle.
- 5.2.2.2 Use of cell phones without a hands-free device while operating a vehicle on State business is prohibited.
- 5.2.2.3 Expenses incurred for the use of a state-owned vehicle, such as gasoline, parking and tolls, not chargeable to the vehicle's fuel card are reimbursable upon the Traveler providing a valid itemized receipt for expenses.
- 5.2.2.4 Use of tobacco products in State-owned vehicles is prohibited.

5.2.3 Commercial Rental Vehicles

- 5.2.3.1 A commercial rental vehicle should only be used when a state vehicle is unavailable and the cost will be less than the reimbursement associated with a privately-owned vehicle. Travelers shall obtain prior approval from their Director to rent a vehicle.

- 5.2.3.2 A Ghost Account, on either a Travel P-Card or a United Bank Travel Card, are the only acceptable methods of payment when renting a vehicle. Reimbursement for rentals made outside of the statewide car rental contract requires prior authorization from the Commissioner or his Designee. Itemized receipts are required.
- 5.2.3.3 Travelers must use the statewide contract for car rental services, unless the State contracts for car rental services do not have:
 - a. A location in the specific area,
 - b. The type of vehicle needed, or
 - c. The vehicle for the duration needed.

All contracted rates are accessible through the e-Travel System. If the State contract for car rental services is not used, then the Traveler must note the reason on the Travel Expense Report.
- 5.2.3.4 For travel of more than a few days in duration, weekly rental rates may be reimbursed if they result in a lower total cost than the daily rate, at the discretion of the Director.
- 5.2.3.5 Reimbursement for commercial rental vehicles will be made at actual cost for the daily rental charge for a mid-size or smaller vehicle, plus mileage fees and fuel costs.
- 5.2.3.6 Reimbursement may be made for a full-size vehicle if more than three (3) people are traveling together on business and for larger vehicles if a group of five (5) or more is traveling together.
- 5.2.3.7 Larger vehicles may be rented when situations warrant (i.e. negotiating rough terrain, transporting large groups of people or equipment or other extenuating circumstances) as approved by the Commissioner or his Designee.

5.2.4 Privately-Owned Vehicles

- 5.2.4.1 Privately-owned vehicles may be used for state travel when a state-owned vehicle is not available and a rental vehicle would exceed the expected mileage reimbursement cost. A rental vehicle should be used when personal vehicle reimbursement costs are expected to exceed \$50.00 per day.
- 5.2.4.2 Mileage allowance for privately owned vehicles engaged in Department business will be reviewed annually and established by memo issued by the Commissioner.

5.2.4.2.1 There will be no reimbursement of expense for commuting

between the Traveler's home and established headquarters.

5.2.4.3 The mileage allowance should be based on the shortest practical route to and from the destination, based upon travel conditions at the time of travel. Map Quest will be used to verify accuracy of mileage claimed.

5.2.4.3.1 Travel for which mileage is claimed shall normally begin and end at the Traveler's official headquarters. Exception to this is only if the cost to the Department is less than if the employee departed from or returned to their official headquarters.

5.2.4.3.2 Travel commencing before or after the normal work day for which mileage is claimed shall begin from either the Traveler's official headquarters or the Traveler's home, whichever is closer to the destination.

5.2.4.4 Tenths of a mile (.x) are to be rounded using standard rounding, i.e., one through four-tenths (.1 - .4) are rounded down and five through nine-tenths (.5 - .9) are rounded up to the nearest whole number.

5.2.4.5 Receipts are not required for mileage reimbursement when using privately-owned vehicles. Map Quest will be used to verify accuracy of mileage claimed.

5.2.4.6 Insurance

5.2.4.6.1 Owner's personal automobile insurance shall be primary for liability and collision coverage. Owner should contact their automobile insurer to discuss coverage available/required when using their personal vehicle on Department business.

5.2.4.6.2. The Department's insurer, BRIM (Board of Risk & Insurance Management) will provide excess liability coverage for additional protection of the Department when an employee is using their personal vehicle in the course of Department business.

5.2.4.6.3 BRIM does not provide collision coverage for a personal automobile regardless of the cause. Further, BRIM will not pay the owner's deductible.

5.2.4.6.4 Collision Damage Insurance (CDW)

5.2.4.6.5 The State contract(s) for car rental services may provide CDW insurance for some vehicles that are excluded by the Purchasing Card.

5.2.4.6.6 The Purchasing Card provides CDW coverage at no cost for rentals up to thirty-one (31) days.

5.2.4.6.7 No other insurance or insurance-like product is reimbursable for rental vehicles used in the United States, unless required by law. Full coverage insurance is a reimbursable expense for any approved rental vehicle used outside the United States.

5.2.4.7 The State Purchasing Card does not cover the rental of trucks, campers, off-road vehicles, trailers, motorized bikes, motorcycles and motorized scooters, antique cars, high value, special interest and exotic cars, or vans that seat more than eight (8) occupants.

5.2.4.8 Itemized receipts or other documentation is required for reimbursement of vehicle rental and mileage charges or fees.

5.2.4.9 Reimbursement may be made for actual fuel costs, supported by valid, itemized receipts.

5.2.4.10 Vehicles shall be returned to the rental agency with a full tank of fuel.

5.2.5 Rail Service

5.2.5.1 Travelers shall make advance bookings for rail service through the Statewide Contract for Travel Services, using the least expensive logical fare via the most direct route or other reasonable route that results in a lower fare.

5.2.5.2 The cost of rail service should be paid by a Purchasing Card or United Bank Travel Card Ghost account. Itemized receipts are required.

5.2.6 Other Ground Transportation

5.2.6.1 When courtesy transportation is provided by a hotel, motel, or other service facility, the Traveler is encouraged to use such service.

5.2.6.2 Travelers may be reimbursed for taxi, bus, and other forms of public transportation. Receipts are not required if under the limit authorized by the Department, currently \$75.

Section 6. Lodging

- 6.1 Lodging for a Traveler is reimbursable where the distance is more than fifty (50) miles from his or her official work location or home, whichever is the shorter distance, and an overnight stay is required.
- 6.2 Travelers should use the e-Travel system to secure the lowest rate available at a reasonably priced facility. Most hotels and motels offer special reduced rates to State Travelers which are stored in the system.
 - 6.2.1 Travelers should not book lodging through a Third Party booking vendor unless they can verify that the vendor will provide an itemized invoice or folio for reimbursement. The traveler may not receive reimbursement without an itemized invoice or folio. Service fees charged by Third Party booking vendors are not reimbursable.
- 6.3 The lodging facility location should be as convenient as possible to the location where business is being conducted.
- 6.4 Allowable reimbursement for lodging shall include the actual expense for overnight accommodations and all applicable taxes and surcharges.
 - 6.4.1. Reimbursement for baggage handling charges for the Traveler's baggage will be on an incurred basis for the date of arrival and the date of departure, not to exceed a total of 5% of the daily room rate, i.e., if the room rate charged is \$100 per day, the maximum amount reimbursable for that stay, regardless of duration, is \$5.
- 6.5 Sales tax is to be paid if the lodging facility is located outside the State of West Virginia. When using the Purchasing Card or Travel Ghost Card for travel, purchases made with this card for in-state travel are exempt from any form of taxation.
- 6.6 If more than one Traveler shares a room, one of the Travelers may claim the total charge at the rate charged for the number of persons in one room; each Traveler will need to be referenced on the other Travel Expense Account Settlement Forms. They may also request the total charge be split between them accordingly and each issued their own separate folio or receipt.
- 6.7 Original receipts signed by the traveler are required for lodging reimbursement. A valid, itemized invoice or folio shall be the official document utilized for reimbursement to the Traveler. Reference 3.6.1 for certified document procedures.
- 6.8 If an increase in the lodging charge is incurred due to the Traveler being directed to change travel plans or due to extenuating circumstances arising beyond the control of the Traveler, then the increase is reimbursable. Increased charges incurred due to the Traveler's negligence to notify the lodging facility are the personal expense of the Traveler and are not reimbursable.

6.9 Lodging should be paid on a P-Card or United Bank Card Travel Ghost account.

Section 7. Registration Fees

- 7.1 Registration fees and event-related materials for meetings, conferences, seminars, and/or workshops are reimbursable.
- 7.2 Receipts with accompanying documentation provided by the event sponsor shall be sufficient for reimbursement and include, at a minimum, date(s), time(s), location and cost of the event.
- 7.3 If a cancellation charge is incurred, the charge is reimbursable if the Traveler is directed to change his/her travel plans, or if other extenuating circumstances beyond the Traveler's control arise. Charges incurred due to the negligence of the Traveler to notify the event sponsor are considered a personal expense.

Section 8. Other Expenses

8.1 Travelers may incur miscellaneous business-related expenses for which reimbursement may be made, if appropriate. Receipts are required for any individual expenditure in excess of \$75.

Such expenses and reimbursement may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Baggage storage between appointments and between hotels and meeting places;
 - b. Tolls, garage, and parking fees - excluding valet parking for personal convenience;
 - c. Communication expenses such as phone calls or internet connectivity fees;
 - d. Currency conversion;
 - e. Guides, interpreters, and visa fees; and
 - f. Laundry and dry cleaning when an employee is in travel status in excess of seven days without returning home
- 8.2 Valet charges will only be reimbursed where self-parking is not available; where self-parking costs more than valet parking; or where the safety of the Traveler may be jeopardized.
- 8.3 Expenses for travel in foreign countries are to be reported in United States dollars. Expenditures in foreign currencies must be converted into United States dollars at the rate or rates at which the foreign currency was obtained. The rates of conversion and commissions must be shown on an attachment to the Travel Expense Report.
- 8.4 When a non-employee who is not traveling as a participant in the business reason for the trip accompanies a Traveler on an official business trip, the State shall in

no way be responsible or liable for any expenses, actions or inaction of the non-employee.

Section 9. Purchasing Card

- 9.1 Travelers must use the State of West Virginia Travel P-Card or United Bank Travel Card for approved business-related travel expenses whenever it is accepted. Neither of the State Travel Cards shall be used for personal expenses.
 - 9.1.1. Upon acceptance of any form of the State of West Virginia Purchasing Card or United Bank Travel Card, the Traveler agrees to abide by the terms and conditions of the contract negotiated by the State of West Virginia for use of the Cards.
- 9.2 Personal expenses, including food charges, shall not be charged to hotel folios when any form of a Purchasing Card or United Bank Travel Card is used.
- 9.3 Travelers may request cash advances for meals and mileage expenses through the e-Travel System (after implementation) that cannot be charged to a Purchasing Card or United Bank Travel Card.
- 9.4 Travelers are personally responsible for submitting all required, valid receipts for travel to his/her Purchasing Card Coordinator for expenses paid by a Purchasing Card.
- 9.5 The provision of a State of West Virginia Purchasing Card or United Bank Travel Card is a privilege. Inappropriate use may result in the revocation of the card on either a temporary or permanent basis, disciplinary action, termination and/or criminal prosecution, depending upon the nature of the incident. As with any credit card, the Traveler who has been issued the card is responsible for safeguarding it from inappropriate use by others. The employee is personally liable for all charges to the United Bank Travel Card and may be subject to legal action by the card issuing company for any late or non-payment of the debt. Misuse of a State of West Virginia Purchasing Travel Card is prosecutable as a criminal offense with penalties including fines and imprisonment and may also be subject to civil action by the credit card company for personal liability.

Section 10. Travel Forms

- 10.1 The WVDA approved format is to be used when seeking prior approval for reimbursement for travel expenses or submitting a request for reimbursement.
- 10.2 Out-of-State Travel Requests
 - 10.2.1 Each instance of out-of-state travel requires that the employee file an Out-of-State Travel Request form issued by the Administrative Services Division to obtain the necessary approvals of the Director and the Commissioner or his Designee. The request should be processed at least fifteen (15) working

days in advance of the planned trip when possible. If more than one Department employee is requesting to attend the same out-of-state training, conference or event, it is the responsibility of the Director to submit all requests as a package to the Commissioner or his Designee for consideration.

- 10.3 After implementation of the State's e-Travel system, any Department employee seeking approval for reimbursement of travel expenses must use the electronic media to submit the request according to this Policy.
- 10.4 Any non-employee seeking approval or reimbursement for travel expenses must use a WVDA approved form to submit the request according to this Policy. The form must contain the Traveler's original signature, in blue ink.
 - 10.4.1 Any invoice or receipt requiring original certification must be certified by the non-employee Traveler, and at a minimum by the Director, and the Chief Financial Officer of the Department or Commissioner, or as approved by the State Auditor in emergency situations.

Section 11. Restrictions, Exceptions or Waivers

- 11.1 Travel Expense Reports submitted for which an exception, waiver or deviation from this Policy has been made shall be processed separately from reports without exceptions, waivers or deviations. The need for specialized audit review may result in longer processing times.
- 11.2 This Policy may be revoked, suspended, rescinded, or amended at any time by the Commissioner or his Designee.