



TRAVEL AND TRAINING GUIDELINE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this guideline is to establish acceptable procedures for the payment of travel expenses incurred by approved SNCA representatives, who in the performance of their association duties are traveling outside the city. The term "advance" is defined as a check made out in the name of a representative rather than in the name of a vendor.

II. REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Subject to the requirements and guidelines of this policy, all reasonable, necessary, and ordinary expenses incurred in travel are reimbursable.

A. Transportation - The mode of transportation is left to the judgment of the SNCA Board, who will give due consideration to the time involved, safety, convenience, and cost of such transportation.

1. Air Transportation - Coach class accommodation must be utilized unless circumstances dictate otherwise. When arranging air travel, departments may want to avoid fare restrictions that limit flexibility. However, if there are little likelihoods that travel arrangements will change, airfare should be booked as early as possible, and all discounts should be pursued. Air Transportation requires an advanced purchase to ensure cheaper rates. The approved representative can wait for reimbursement by claiming this expense on the Travel Expense Report along with all of the other trip costs. Another option of payment is to have a travel agency hold the reservation until payment is received. Upon approval by the SNCA Board, this payment can be purchased on a credit card when the representative submits an invoice. No advance for this cost is permitted. When required, the Association will reimburse the amount associated with checking two (2) pieces of luggage on a flight.
2. Personal Vehicle - Should an employee use their personal vehicle, that employee will be reimbursed at the standard mileage allowance based on current IRS rates for actual mileage, up to the cost of a



round trip coach airfare. If the employee departs directly from home, mileage will be determined to be the lessor of miles between the employee's home and the travel destination or the miles between the office and the travel destination. When more than one approved representative is traveling for the same purpose, car-pooling is required unless such will cause undue hardship or time scheduling conflicts to occur. If an approved representative receives an auto allowance from the member agency and the actual miles driven is less than 75, no reimbursement for mileage will be given to the traveling representative. If the actual miles driven exceeds 75, that person will be reimbursed at the standard mileage allowance (current IRS rate) for the total amount of miles driven. Once approved, this cost can be advanced to the representative or reimbursed to the employee with the submission of the Travel Expense Report. When estimating the miles for the purpose of receiving an advance, please attach a printout of the estimated mileage by using Googleor something similar.

3. Member Agency Vehicles - Where an approved representative is assigned a member agency vehicle and more than one approved member agency representative is traveling for the same purpose, use of that member agency vehicle is required unless such will cause undue hardship or time scheduling conflicts to occur. A member agency-furnished vehicle should be used whenever it is reasonably available and a car is required for official travel. Once approved, estimated gas costs can be advanced to the employee or reimbursed with the submission of the Travel Expense Report. In either case, receipts will be required when the Travel Expense Report is submitted.
4. Rental Vehicle - Rental of a vehicle is authorized when it is more practical and/or less expensive than the use of taxi cabs, UBER or other public transportation for official business. The size of the vehicle rented should be dictated by the number of staff traveling. An economy/compact car should be used when available. The cost of gasoline for the rental car is reimbursable. Receipts for gas are required and should indicate the date of purchase, location, and gallons purchased. Once approved, these costs can be advanced to the employee or reimbursed with the submission of the Travel Expense Report. In either case, receipts will be required when the Travel Expense Report is submitted.



5. Other Transportation - The use of hotel courtesy vans or other transportation services such as Super Shuttle should be used whenever available. The use of taxi cabs is reimbursable. Once approved, these costs can be advanced to the employee or reimbursed to the employee with the submission of the Travel Expense Report. In either case, receipts will be required when the Travel Expense Report is submitted.

 6. Parking and Tolls - Actual costs of parking are reimbursable with receipts. If a hotel offers both self-parking and valet parking, the employee may utilize either with a maximum reimbursement of \$30.00 per day, if supported by receipts. Parking meter fees and toll charges do not require receipts, but a log showing the date, amount, and location must be submitted to receive reimbursement. Once approved, these costs can be advanced to the employee or reimbursed to the employee with the submission of the Travel Expense Report. In either case, a record's log will be required when the Travel Expense Report is submitted.
- B. Hotel/Lodging - Reservations should be made at the lowest rate available. If a guest accompanies an approved representative, the incremental difference charged above the single occupancy rate is non-reimbursable. Once approved, this cost can be paid by a check request to the hotel or the employee can be reimbursed with the submission of the Travel Expense Report. Please include support as to the amount of the hotel cost when submitting a check request. In either case, itemized receipts will be required for the submission of the Travel Expense Report. No advance for this cost is permitted.

Lodging provided by family/friends is non-reimbursable. Meals, groceries, or gifts for people providing lodging to approved representatives are non-reimbursable by the Association.



- C. Meals and Incidentals (Overnight Travel) - Meals and Incidentals (personal telephone calls and tips) are reimbursable on a per diem basis. Under the per diem method, travelers will be reimbursed at the maximum Federal guideline rates per day for all meal and meal-related costs including gratuities. Those rates vary depending on the destination of travel. A matrix of the rates are published by the **General Services Administration** ([click on link to GSA website](#)). The rates listed in this table are for a full day and will be allocated between breakfast, lunch and dinner at the following percentages: Breakfast - 20% of the daily rate, Lunch - 30% of the daily rate and Dinner - 50% of the daily rate. The time of departure from or arrival in the **member agency address of record** determines the meals eligible for reimbursement, according to the following schedule (assuming the employee is based in Beaumont):

<u>Leave from SETX</u>	<u>Allowed</u>
Before 7:00 a.m.	Breakfast
Before 11:00 a.m.	Lunch
Before 6:00 p.m.	Dinner

<u>Arrive in SETX</u>	<u>Allowed</u>
After 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
After 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
After 7:00 p.m.	Dinner

Partial per diem will be paid if some meals are not eligible for reimbursement. Meals ineligible for reimbursement are meals included in conference or seminar registration fees paid by the Association. Partial per diem (including incidentals) will be 20% of the daily rate for breakfast, 30% of the daily rate for lunch, and 50% of the daily rate for dinner. Once approved, an advance will be given for meals if requested. If no advance is requested, the meal per diem will be reimbursed with the submission of the Travel Expense Report. No receipts are required for per diem where an overnight stay is required.

Meals and Incidentals (Day Trips- Outside SETX Limits) - Same rules as overnight trips apply except receipts are required for cash reimbursements. Cash reimbursements are limited to the lesser of the actual meal costs or the per diem amount for the meal. If no receipt is submitted, then the per diem applicable to the meals will be added to the approved representative's final check. No advance for the per diem is allowed for day trips.

- D. Registration - Registration fees for local and out-of-town conventions, conferences and workshops are eligible expenses. These must be



supported by receipts which will include the agenda or program identifying all activities that are included in the registration fee. Once approved, these fees can be paid by a check request or reimbursed to the approved representative with the submission of the Travel Expense Report. No advance is permitted for this fee.

- E. Telephone and Other Business Communications - Telephone calls, fax charges, overnight/other mail fees, etc. are reimbursable if they are for the purposes of conducting Association business. The validity of these expenses must be supported by an itemized bill or receipt.
- F. Tips or Gratuities - Gratuities for meals are included in the per diem rates. Tips for incidental purposes such as bellhops, cab drivers and porters may be allowed up to a maximum of \$10 per day. Documentation is required for reimbursement.
- G. Spouse/Companion Attendance - Spouses/Companions travel at their own expense. The incremental difference between a single and double occupancy room rate is reimbursable to the Association. No travel costs, whether for transportation, lodging, meals or cost of attendance to events, for spouses/companions are reimbursable by or chargeable to the Association.

III. ACCOUNTING FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES

- A. Travel Authorization and Advances - All estimated travel and/or training costs should be properly approved before any expenses are incurred. Proper approval is achieved when a completed Travel Authorization and Advance Form is signed off by an Executive Board check signing member with approval of the Board. These completed forms should be submitted to the Executive Board at least ten (10) working days prior to departure. When submitting the Travel Authorization and Advance Form, please include all related check requests and proper support. Proper support should include registration information, conference agendas, hotel information and information relating to travel arrangements. It is very important that an Executive Board member receives all information relating to the travel to help identify all costs. Conference agendas are very important to include as they give information regarding meals that are being provided. All forms that are incomplete or do not have proper support will be returned to the requesting department. If the total cost of travel and training for any employee is less than \$75 AND no expense report will be filed, then it is not necessary to complete a Travel Authorization and Advance Form.

An approved representative may be denied a travel advance if he or she:



- * Requests the advance less than ten (10) working days before the advance is needed;
- * Has not submitted an expense report on previously completed travel;
- * Has not reimbursed the Association for a travel advance which exceeded the actual cost of travel that has been completed;
- * Consistently submits the travel expense report late (more than ten (10) days after travel is completed).

If the trip is cancelled, the advance check must be returned immediately to the Association . The representative must void the check by clearly marking "VOID" on the check in ink and return it to the Executive Board member within five (5)working days. The check should not be held for later use. If the approved representative has cashed the check, that employee should reimburse the Association as soon as possible.

- B. Expense Reporting - Upon returning to the member agency address of record, the employee must personally complete and sign the standard form, "Travel Expense Report". The original report must be submitted to the Executive Board, along with the required documentation, within ten (10) working days from the date of return.

If a refund is due the Association, the representative must submit a copy of the completed expense report along with remittance of the funds to an Executive Board member. The original expense report and a copy of the receipt of funds from the Executive Board member must be submitted to the Secretary/Treasurer and/or treasurer support representative.

If reimbursements of funds are due to the representative, he or she must submit the completed expense report to the Association. A reimbursement check will normally be issued at that time.