

Aitkin County Board of Commissioners
Request for County Board Action/Agenda Item Cover Sheet



To: Chairperson, Aitkin County Board of Commissioners

Date: 12/21/12

Via: Patrick Wussow, County Administrator

From: Bobbie Danielson, Human Resources Manager

Title of Item:

Re-affirm Travel Policy

Requested Meeting Date: 1/8/13

Estimated Presentation Time: NA

Presenter: Bobbie Danielson, Human Resources Manager

Type of Action Requested (check all that apply)

- For info only, no action requested
- Approve under Consent Agenda
- For discussion only with possible future action
- Adopt Ordinance Revision
- Let/Award Bid or Quote (attach copy of basic bid/quote specs or summary of complex specs, each bid/quote received & bid/quote comparison)
- Approve/adopt proposal by motion
- Approve/adopt proposal by resolution (attach draft resolution)
- Authorize filling vacant staff position
- Request to schedule public hearing or sale
- Other (please list) _____
- Request by member of the public to be heard
- Item should be addressed in closed session under MN Statute _____

Fiscal Impact (check all that apply)

- Is this item in the current approved budget? Yes No (attach explanation)
- What type of expenditure is this? Operating Capital Other (attach explanation)
- Revenue line account # that funds this item is: _____
- Expenditure line account # for this item is: _____

Staffing Impact (Any yes answer requires a review by Human Resources Manager before going to the board)

- Duties of a department employee(s) may be materially affected. Yes No
- Applicable job description(s) may require revision. Yes No
- Item may impact a bargaining unit agreement or county work policy. Yes No
- Item may change the department's authorized staffing level. Yes No



Supporting Attachment(s)

- Memorandum Summary of Item
- Copy of applicable county policy and/or ordinance (excerpts acceptable)
- Copy of applicable state/federal statute/regulation (excerpts acceptable)
- Copy of applicable contract and/or agreement
- Original bid spec or quote request (excluding complex construction projects)
- Bids/quotes received (excluding complex construction projects, provide comparison worksheet)
- Bid/quote comparison worksheet
- Draft County Board resolution
- Plat approval check-list and supporting documents
- Copy of previous minutes related to this issue
- Other supporting document(s) (please list) Memo & Policy

Provide eleven (11) copies of supporting documentation NO LATER THAN Wednesday at 12:00 pm to make the Board's agenda for the following Tuesday. Items WILL NOT be placed on the Board agenda unless complete documentation is provided for mailing in the Board packets. (see reverse side for details)

AITKIN COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES

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To: County Commissioners
From: Bobbie Danielson, HR Manager
Date: December 21, 2012
Subject: Reaffirm Out-of-State Travel Policy



Minnesota statute 471.661 requires the county to have a policy that controls travel outside the state of Minnesota for elected officials. Annually, the County Board has been requested to review and reaffirm this policy.

There are provisions in three different Aitkin County policies that cover the requirements of the statute. Copies are attached for your review. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Action Requested

Motion to reaffirm county policies (attached) concerning out-of-state travel for elected officials.

471.661 OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL.

The governing body of each statutory or home rule charter city, county, school district, regional agency, or other political subdivision, except a town, must have on record a policy that controls travel outside the state of Minnesota for the applicable elected officials of the relevant unit of government. The policy must be approved by a recorded vote and specify:

- (1) when travel outside the state is appropriate;
- (2) applicable expense limits; and
- (3) procedures for approval of the travel.

The policy must be made available for public inspection upon request. Subsequent changes to the policy must be approved by a recorded vote.

History: 2005 c 156 art 2 s 38; 2009 c 152 s 21

ARTICLE 8 ORGANIZATION STANDARD AND RULES

SUBJECT: 8.7 TRAVEL POLICY

Effective: 11/28/00, revised 8/10/04 Board reaffirmed 1/3/2012

PURPOSE:

This policy conforms with Minnesota Statutes 471.38, 471.96(1), and 471.97 governing expenses incurred by employees in the conduct of County business. This policy is designed to provide the basis for determining whether there is authority for County expenditure, the expenditure serves a public purpose, and the expenditure is necessary and directly related to the betterment of the County.

A. APPLICATION AND ADMINISTRATION:

This policy applies to all employees and elected officials of Aitkin County. In the event that this policy conflicts with an applicable collective bargaining agreement, the latter controls. Should there be any conflict between this policy and State or Federal law, the latter controls.

B. TRAVEL REQUESTS AND APPROVAL:

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners shall approve all travel costs through the annual budget process.

All travel for personnel requires the approval of the Department Head.

Furthermore, all travel that is not budgeted requires the approval of the County Board.

Additionally, all out-of-state travel requiring County Board approval, shall be through the consent agenda prior to attendance and payment.

C. FUNDS AVAILABLE:

The Department Head is responsible to see that funds are available to pay for all expenses that they approve.

D. BILLING:

Whenever possible, employees will make travel and accommodation arrangements in advance and request that the County be billed. All authorized travel expenses, which are not billed directly to the County, are paid by the employee subject to reimbursement upon approval of a

travel expense claim. All employee claims subject to reimbursement should not reflect personal account numbers.

In the event of an extreme emergency situation, cash advances may be issued with the approval of the Department Head. Such requests are the exception to normal practice and are documented in detail as to the nature of the emergency, purpose of travel, and amount needed. Any money not used must be returned to the County immediately. Receipts will be required.

E. TRAVEL GUIDELINES:

County vehicles are for the exclusive use of employees and other individuals involved in County business. Transportation of individuals, who are not involved in County business, in County vehicles is prohibited.

The County Board reimburses employees for traveling on official County business with a private automobile at the set mileage rate. Mileage is paid on the most reasonable direct route.

County vehicles and equipment are to be used for County related business only. However, assigned County vehicles may be used to a limited extent for the conduct of personal business when traveling out of town.

When traveling from the normal work location and then returning to it, the mileage allowance is the actual miles traveled.

When traveling to an alternate work site (client, meeting, conference, training) the County will reimburse mileage at the current rate per mile for actual miles incurred between the employee's residence and the alternate work site or from the normal work site to the alternate work site, whichever is the lesser of the two.

The normal work location for employees assigned to multiple work locations is the work location scheduled for the day on which the expense was incurred.

When an employee is required to attend a County approved work-related training session or conference during regular working hours, the employee shall be compensated for all hours of actual participation in the training session or conference, except meal periods and rest or sleep periods. The employee shall also be compensated for travel time and mileage to and from the conference or training session in excess of time and mileage to the employee's usual work site. If an employee uses a County vehicle or car pools with another conference participant, actual travel compensation shall exclude mileage.

When using a County vehicle, seat belts will be worn at all times and all laws followed.

No operation of County vehicles after consumption of alcohol.

No smoking is allowed in any County vehicle.

F. REIMBURSEMENTS:

The amount of compensation to be paid for mileage reimbursement shall be consistent with the current rate set by the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners.

Reimbursement for extended travel is paid on the basis of the prevailing mileage allowance rate or tourist air fares, whichever is less. When personal vehicles are used for extended travel not available by commercial transportation, travel reimbursement is made on an actual mileage basis. This excludes mileage for personal use. When two or more employees are traveling in one car, reimbursement is made to one employee.

Reimbursement for out-of-County meals, lodging, parking and other related County expenses will occur only upon submittal of receipts. Non-overnight meal expense reimbursement will be subject to Internal Revenue Service tax deduction.

Employees using private automobiles are reimbursed on the actual expense basis for parking when that parking is related to County business at other than your normal location. Receipts for such payments must be submitted with the expense reimbursement request.

When an employee chooses to use his or her own vehicle for travel instead of an available vehicle from the Motor Pool, the mileage reimbursement will be made at \$0.10 less than the current mileage rate.

G. AIRLINE TRAVEL:

Any Aitkin County employee or elected official who uses airline travel for County business must report the receipt of any credits or other benefits to the County by notifying the Auditor's Office within 30 days of receipt of any such benefits or credit. Any employee or elected official may accrue credits or other benefits to be used by the individual for additional airline travel for County business only. Credits or other benefits accrued to an employee or elected official who uses airline travel for County business cannot be used for personal gain.

H. TRAVEL TIME:

County employees may be authorized time for travel the day prior to and/or the day following the convention or meeting date(s) when extended travel is required by the Department Head.

If an employee's family members accompany them on County business trips, the portion of the expenses attributable to the family member(s) is not reimbursable.

I. TRAVEL EXPENSES:

Expense claim sheets must be prepared after return from travel and presented to the responsible authority for approval within a reasonable period of time. The claims shall be presented to the County Board for approval at County Board meetings in a manner and form as approved by the County Board.

J. LIABILITY INSURANCE/DRIVER'S LICENSE:

Employees shall not drive vehicles on County business without a valid Minnesota driver's license of the appropriate classification. Driving records of County employees who use vehicles for County business may be checked on an annual basis.

It is the employee's responsibility to notify his/her supervisor if their license has been revoked or if there is any other reason why they cannot drive a vehicle.

Employees are required to have liability insurance in effect on all personal vehicles used for County purposes or while performing County business. The County may at any time require proof of such insurance.

K. CAR POOLING:

Definition: When two or more County employees attend the same meeting, workshop, training or conference and ride together in an employee's personal vehicle or County vehicle.

Car pooling and the use of the County Motor Pool/Department vehicle is required to save on travel related expenses.

When car pooling and the use of the County Motor Pool/Department vehicle is not feasible, the use of personal vehicles to travel for the performance of job duties will be reimbursed at the County approved rate. Documentation will include date, function, site traveled to and a portal to portal mileage total.

L. SITUATIONS NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED:

Situations periodically arise which require flexibility and common sense. Department Heads are authorized to make decisions on situations not specifically covered by this policy, provided the decisions are made within the general intent of this policy.

M. HOW AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY COVERAGE APPLIES:

It is a fundamental rule of automobile liability coverage that the primary responsibility to respond falls first upon the coverage in effect on the vehicle involved in the accident. The second priority is any coverage in effect covering the operator of the vehicle. Other coverages respond after these first two.

There are three scenarios of vehicle ownership to evaluate:

- Member-owned vehicle
- Personal vehicle
- Short term lease (rental) vehicle

Member-owned vehicle - In this instance, since the vehicle is owned by the member, the primary responsibility to respond rests with MCIT. The operator's personal coverage may come into play as excess insurance if the MCIT limits prove insufficient to cover all the damages caused.

Personal vehicle - The personal vehicle being used could be a vehicle owned by the operator, a vehicle leased to the operator on a long term basis, or a vehicle owned by someone else and loaned to the operator. In this instance, the primary responsibility to respond rests with the policy applicable to the vehicle. A vehicle on a long-term lease is treated as though the leasee owns it. The second priority would be the policy applicable to the operator (if different). The MCIT coverage document would respond last.

Short-term leased (rental) vehicle - Travelers frequently need to rent cars. Uniformly, rental agreements provide state minimum coverages that will be primary over all other applicable coverages. The second priority for coverage will be the renter/operator's personal automobile policy. The MCIT coverage would be in excess.

Under a vehicle rental contract, the renter becomes responsible for any damage occurring to the rented vehicle. In Minnesota, automobile policies automatically include coverage for damage to rental cars. It is not necessary to purchase additional collision damage coverage from the rental company.