



TITLE Conference and Non-Routine Training Attendance	POLICY NUMBER DCS 03-14	
RESPONSIBLE AREA Office of Accounting	EFFECTIVE DATE 10/14/16	REVISION 4

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Department of Child Safety (DCS) is committed to the prudent use of resources to pay for travel to conferences and training that enhance agency expertise in the delivery of child welfare services.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all employees of the Department (including contracted employees and volunteers). This policy also applies to individuals who have an Employee Identification Number (EIN) and serve on Department-sponsored boards, commissions, councils, and committees. This policy does not cover travel that occurs when a DCS employee is escorting a child in care (see [DCS-03-15, Travel: Children in Care and DCS Escorts.](#))

III. AUTHORITY

[A.R.S. §§ 38-621 – 38-627](#) Reimbursement of Expenses

[State of Arizona Accounting Manual \(SAAM\), Topic 50, Travel](#)

[DCS 03-11](#) Travel: Approved Expenses and Employee Reimbursement

IV. DEFINITIONS

ADOA: Arizona Department of Administration.

Conference: A meeting, colloquium, convention, symposium, seminar, assembly, gathering, convocation, course, class, workshop, lecture or forum held by any association or organization involving discussion, research, or the exchange or dissemination of information.

Conference Designated Lodging: The hotel where a conference occurs or that is identified as “recommended lodging” in the conference brochure. When no vacancies exist at the recommended hotel, accommodations at alternate hotels in the immediate vicinity of the conference may be considered conference designated lodging.

DCS Employee: All DCS employees, volunteers, interns, and trainees, and other persons who are part of the DCS workforce.

DCS Traveler: All DCS employees, contractors, and members of Department-sponsored boards, commissions, councils, and committees who complete approved Department travel.

DCS Travel Booking Desk: The unit in the Office of Accounting that manages DCS Traveler lodging and transportation reservations.

Department: The Department of Child Safety.

Director: The Director of the Arizona Department of Child Safety.

Duty Post (Regular):

1. Employee: The regular duty post of an employee is the place the employee spends the largest portion of regular working time or the place to which the employee returns on completion of a temporary assignment. An employee has multiple duty posts if he or she has more than one place of work on a regular basis (i.e. a weekly basis) for the same employer.
2. Others: The regular duty post of members of boards, commissions, authorities, councils, and committees who are not full-time employees of the agency served by the board, commission, authority, council, or committee is the member's personal residence.

JLBC: Joint Legislative Budget Committee.

Lodging: A commercial facility where a traveler sleeps while traveling overnight on State business. The temporary use of such a facility, while traveling on behalf of the State of Arizona.

Personal Residence: The actual dwelling place of a DCS traveler, without regard to any other legal or mailing address. A DCS traveler on travel status or field assignment away from the traveler's personal residence may continue to claim the traveler's actual dwelling place as personal residence, when the traveler's actual dwelling place is:

1. Inhabited by the traveler's dependents; or
2. Held vacant and represents an expense to the traveler.

In the event a DCS traveler is on travel status or field assignment away from the traveler's regular duty post in a location in which the individual maintains a second residence, the Department may designate the second residence as the traveler's personal residence for the period of the travel or assignment.

SAAM: The State of Arizona Accounting Manual.

State Approved Rate: Spending limits set by the Joint Legislative Budget Committee for various reimbursable travel expenses. Expenses incurred in excess of the state approved rate shall not be reimbursed to the DCS traveler without an exception from the Arizona Department of Administration.

Travel Status: A DCS traveler on official State business. Travel status begins when the traveler leaves the traveler's personal residence or duty post, whichever occurs last, and ends when the traveler returns to the traveler's personal residence or duty post, whichever occurs first.

V. POLICY

A. Roles and Responsibilities

1. It is the responsibility of each DCS supervisor/administrator to ensure that all employees who are required to travel to conferences or non-routine trainings in support of their work for the state receive accurate travel

information.

2. DCS employees who staff the operations of any Department boards, commissions, authorities, councils, or committees are responsible for:
 - a. making available to members the Department's travel policy and procedures; and
 - b. informing the members that there are additional State policies and procedures for travel.
3. DCS conference/training travelers must seek out the most reasonable transportation arrangements, meals, and accommodations.
4. DCS employees are responsible for ensuring all forms required for travel pre-approvals are complete as identified in V (B). Travel must be pre-approved by the DCS employee's supervisor, administrator, and a deputy director.
5. The DCS Travel Booking Desk shall work with the DCS traveler to make the most reasonable transportation and accommodation arrangements.

B. Pre-approval for Attending Conferences and Out-of-State Trainings

1. All DCS travelers requesting pre-approval shall complete a conference attendance request packet that includes the following:
 - a. [Application for Conference Attendance & Training Request \(DCS-1163A\)](#);
 - b. announcement, e-mail or brochure describing the conference or training;
 - c. agenda, that includes conference or training date, schedule and content;
 - d. location of conference or training;
 - e. flight/transportation information; potential itineraries;
 - f. lodging information, including a completed [Hotel Request Form](#)

[\(DCS-1212A\)](#);

- g. justification;
 - h. estimates of travel expenses, as required on the [Application for Conference Attendance/Training Request](#) form;
 - i. approval of the supervisor or administrator; and
 - j. approval of a deputy director.
2. The DCS traveler shall sign the statement on the [Application for Conference Attendance/Training Request](#) form affirming that:
- a. the traveler will reimburse the Department for all conference or training costs if the traveler fails to attend the conference or training without prior approval;
 - b. any materials purchased or provided with DCS funds at a conference or training are the property of DCS.
3. Timeframes:
- a. The complete request package for out-of-state conferences or trainings detailed in V (B) (1) of this document shall be submitted to the employee's supervisor/administrator at least 60 days prior to the conference or training registration deadline.
 - b. Upon pre-approval by a deputy director, the conference attendance packet shall be submitted to the DCS Travel Booking Desk at ConferenceRegistrations@azdcs.gov within 45 days of departure.

C. Lodging: Accommodations and Reservations

- 1. All lodging requests must be for a commercial establishment.
- 2. The individual making lodging arrangements is required to request the lowest available rate and shall not exceed the state approved rates for lodging.
 - a. Reimbursement for lodging is governed by state approved rates.

The state approved rates for lodging are proposed by the ADOA Director, reviewed and approved by the JLBC, and published by the ADOA.

- b. DCS employees are required to be aware of the state approved lodging rate that applies to their destination.
- c. Lodging will not be reimbursed in excess of the limits approved by the JLBC. For further information, refer to [SAAM 5095, Maximum Mileage, Lodging, Meal, Parking and Incidental Expense Reimbursement Rates](#).
- d. Lodging reimbursements may not exceed the least expensive negotiated single room rate published in the conference brochure (or other official publication of the event, such as its website or solicitation correspondence) for the conference-designated lodging; this may not necessarily be the host hotel. In the event there are no negotiated conference rates, the State rates approved by the JLBC apply.
 - i. Other rates, such as government rates, that are lower than the published conference rate, may be available. Those arranging travel related to conferences should always inquire as to the availability of lower rates.
 - ii. If lower cost accommodations commensurate with the hotels listed in the conference brochure are conveniently located within reasonable walking distance of the conference or training, those making arrangements should investigate such opportunities to reduce cost. Reasonable walking distance is generally one-half (1/2) mile, unless the participant suffers some physical handicap or must deliver bulky or heavy materials or equipment to the event site. For further information, refer to [SAAM 5040, Conferences, Conventions, and Meetings](#).
- e. The allowable rate for lodging includes the base room rate before non-discretionary, non-elective charges, any unavoidable surcharges and applicable taxes imposed by any authority with jurisdiction, such as state and local sales tax.

- f. This policy applies to the DCS Travel Booking Desk and to DCS travelers who make their own reservations.
3. If the DCS Travel Booking Desk makes a reservation for DCS travelers who will share a room and request separate reimbursement, the DCS travelers must request separate receipts from the lodging showing each traveler's portion of the cost. If the lodging establishment cannot or will not provide original, separate lodging receipts, one traveler may submit the original lodging receipt and the other traveler(s) may submit photocopies. For further guidance on this issue refer to [SAAM 5030 \(13.2\), Hotels, Motels and Lodging](#).
 4. When a DCS traveler shares a room with a family member who is not traveling on State business, the amount of the lodging paid by the State shall not exceed the total single room rate allowed for a DCS traveler lodging alone.
 5. The State will never pay for the following expenses:
 - a. mini-bar charges for alcoholic beverages;
 - b. entertainment charges such as movies, online gaming, or chats;
 - c. late checkout fees.
 6. Conferences sponsored by the Department or events staffed and managed by Department boards, commissions, or councils, which require attendees to stay overnight:
 - a. may only be held at commercial establishments that provide lodging at or below the maximum lodging rate, including tax;
 - b. exceptions must be obtained in advance by the DCS Office of the Director and ADOA.
- D. ADOA Pre-Authorization Required: Out-of-State Travel; Conferences

All exceptions to State travel policy require written pre-authorization from ADOA. The following are examples of exceptions:

1. request to use a privately-owned aircraft for State business;
2. requests for out-of-state, long-term lodging and meal payment or reimbursement rates;
3. conference lodging expenses that exceed the:
 - a. least expensive single occupancy lodging rate listed in the conference brochure; or
 - b. reimbursement rate for the area of travel.
4. authorization to arrange a conference hosted by DCS or another State agency when these arrangements involve the provision of refreshments, meals or lodging in excess of State reimbursement rates;
5. in-state long-term subsistence expense exceeding the maximum reimbursement rates;
6. meals or lodging expenses that exceed maximum daily rates;
7. any blanket exception: for example, an exception applying to more than a single trip, traveler, or to the State travel policy.

Generally, blanket exceptions expire and must be renewed within thirty days of the end of each fiscal year.

E. Additional Out-of-State Travel Requirements

Unless stated otherwise within this, or any other Department policy, all provisions for in-state travel also apply to out-of-state travel. U.S. travel within 100 miles of the Arizona border is considered in-state travel.

The following are additional rules that apply only to out-of-state travel:

1. Reservations and payment will be made by the DCS Travel Booking Desk only for the method of transportation that is in the best interest of the state, considering the travel expense as well as the DCS traveler's time.
2. With prior approval by the Department, a DCS traveler may use a personal

vehicle for out-of-state travel even though travel by common carrier would be the more economical and efficient.

- a. Justification must be submitted with the [Application for Conference Attendance & Training Request](#) form along with a price quote from the state travel vendor showing the current roundtrip airfare to the traveler's destination.
 - b. The cost of meals, lodging, parking, tolls, taxis and ferries incurred while traveling may be reimbursed
 - c. The DCS traveler must:
 - i. acknowledge in writing that the traveler understands and accepts this level of reimbursement; and
 - ii. include the current quoted round-trip airfare to the traveler's destination in the request.
3. If the DCS traveler chooses to use a personal vehicle for out-of-state travel, the traveler's time in travel status will be calculated as though the traveler had traveled by air.
- a. The traveler will not be reimbursed for meals, incidental or lodging expenses exceeding those allowed for travel by air; and
 - b. The traveler will receive mileage reimbursement that shall not exceed the cost of the lowest regular coach airfare, plus transportation costs to and from the airport terminals.
4. When a traveler is in a common carrier terminal, the traveler is in travel status and is qualified for meal reimbursements even though he or she may not be 50 miles away from home or duty post.

F. Travel Reimbursements

For reimbursement of travel expenses not pre-paid by the DCS Travel Booking Desk, please refer to [Travel: Approved Expenses and Employee Reimbursement \(DCS 03-11\)](#).

VI. PROCEDURES

The purpose of these procedures is to delineate the pre-approval process for attending a conference or non-routine training and the process for making travel reservations for transportation and lodging.

A. Pre-approval for Attending a Conference or Non-routine Training

1. A DCS traveler submits the request package (see V (B) (1) in this document) to the employee's supervisor or administrator at least 45 days prior to registration deadline.
2. If the employee's supervisor or administrator approves the request, he or she forwards the request to their Deputy Director.
3. If the Deputy Director approves the request, he or she forwards the request package to the DCS Travel Booking Desk at ConferenceRegistrations@azdcs.gov for review. If not all required documents are included, the request will be returned to the sender; if all required documents are included, the DCS Travel Booking Desk will review and submit the package to the DCS Budget Office for funding review and final CFO approval.

Note: If travel expenses have not been estimated on the [Application for Conference Attendance & Training Request](#) form, the Budget Office will not approve the request.

4. If approved by the Budget Office, the DCS Travel Booking Desk initiates the registration and travel accommodation process.
5. The DCS Travel Booking Desk will notify the DCS traveler of approval and will begin working with the traveler to get their registration and travel accommodations confirmed.

VII. FORMS INDEX

[Application for Conference Attendance & Training Request \(DCS-1163A\)](#)

Hotel Request Form (DCS-1212A)