



Board Policy: #3350  
Section: Business and  
Non-Instructional Operation  
Adopted: 03/22/2023  
Revised: None

## **TRAVEL EXPENSE POLICY**

### **Eligibility Criteria for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses:**

All employees may be eligible for reimbursement of receipted lodging and per diem for pre approved business travel. The circumstances of travel will determine eligibility and the rate allowed. Blue Oak Charter School (BOCS) shall determine the necessity for and the mode of travel to be reimbursed. In accordance with the BOCS policy, reimbursement shall be for actual, necessary, and appropriate business and travel expenses incurred fifty (50) miles or more from home and the school site.

### **Business and Travel Policy:**

The Blue Oak School Fiscal Policy provides information on reimbursement for approved travel less than 50 miles from home and the school site. Lodging less than 50 miles from home and/or meals including hotel expenses, conference and registration fees, transportation costs such as airline tickets, or otherwise provided shall not be claimed for reimbursement. Employees who are unable to consume meal(s) provided during training as noted above due to time constraints or other considerations, such as reasonable accommodation, may be reimbursed in accordance with the rates established in policy, provided an alternate meal was purchased. Snacks and continental breakfasts such as rolls, juice, and coffee are not considered to be meals.

When employees are required to obtain lodging due to school business, reimbursement will be for actual receipted lodging plus applicable mandatory taxes and fees, in accordance with policy and the published lodging maximums. Employees shall only use commercial lodging establishments such as hotels, motels, bed and breakfast inns, public campgrounds, or short-term rentals (such as Airbnb) that cater to the general public. Lodging will not be reimbursed without a valid receipt.

Reimbursement of lodging expenses in excess of specified amounts, excluding taxes, requires advance written approval from Blue Oak School Executive Director. Employees may not claim lodging, meal, or incidental expenses within 50 miles of his/her home or headquarters.

### **Airline Rewards Credits:**

School employees shall not receive reimbursement for using airline rewards credits (credits, points, etc.) while conducting approved school business. Airline rewards credits do not translate to a cash value to be reimbursed by the school.

### **Hotel Rewards Credits:**

School employees shall not receive reimbursement for using hotel rewards credits (credits, points, etc.) while conducting approved school business. Hotel rewards credits do not translate to a cash value to be reimbursed by the state.



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### **Alcoholic Beverages:**

School employees shall not receive reimbursement for purchasing alcoholic beverages while conducting approved school business.

### **Receipt Policy:**

Reimbursement will be claimed only for pre approved, actual and necessary business, and travel expenses. Regardless of any exceptions to receipt policy, the approving officer may require additional certification and/or explanation from an employee to determine expenses were actually and reasonably incurred. In the absence of a satisfactory explanation, the expense shall not be allowed.

Receipts shall be submitted for every item of expense. Receipts are required to be submitted with a travel expense claim, it is the employee's responsibility to maintain receipts and records of their actual expenses. Receipts must be made available for audit upon request by the business office. Receipts are required for every item of transportation and business expense incurred as a result of conducting school business.

### **Reimbursements for Meals, Incidentals, and Lodging:**

Employees on authorized travel status may be reimbursed for receipted lodging and per diem. Reimbursement rates for meals and incidentals are as follows:

Breakfast - up to \$20

Lunch - up to \$25

Dinner - up to \$25

### **Tips Allowable for Meal Expenses:**

Employees may receive reimbursement for tips related to allowable meal expenses incurred while conducting approved school business as follows:

- Up to \$2.00 or 20%, whichever amount is greater.

A meal expense may be an allowable expense if the employee is eligible to claim a meal in accordance with school policy.

School employees submitting claims for tips associated with allowable meal expenses shall only receive reimbursement up to the maximum amount allowed for meal expenses. Expenses in excess of the maximum amount allowed for meal expenses are not reimbursable. For example, if the maximum allowable reimbursement for dinner is \$25.00, then the maximum allowable reimbursement for a \$25.00 dinner plus tip is \$25.00.

### **Tips Allowable for Travel Expenses:**



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School employees may receive reimbursement for tips related to allowable transportation expenses incurred while conducting approved state business as follows:

- Up to \$2.00 or 20%, whichever amount is greater.
- For example, for an allowable \$20.00 transportation expense, such as a transportation network company (such as Uber or Lyft) or taxi expense, the maximum allowable tip is the greater of \$2.00 or 20% [\$4.00].

Employees must maintain receipts to substantiate the amounts claimed were not in excess of the amount of the actual expense.

BOCS must comply with current IRS policy. The term “incidentals” includes fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, and hotel staff. No other items may be claimed as Incidentals.

### **Travel Time Frames:**

For travel lasting 24 hours or more, employees may claim meals (at the rates noted above), based on the following timeframes:

- First day of travel:
  - Trip begins at or before 6AM - Breakfast may be claimed
  - Trip begins at or before 11AM - Lunch may be claimed
  - Trip begins at or before 5PM - Dinner may be claimed
- Continuing travel after 24 hours:
  - Trip ends at or after 8AM - Breakfast may be claimed
  - Trip ends at or after 2PM - Lunch may be claimed
  - Trip ends at or after 7PM - Dinner may be claimed
- Fractional day travel (trips less than 24 hours):
  - Trip begins at or before 6AM and ends at or after 9AM - Breakfast may be claimed
  - Trip begins at or before 4PM and ends at or after 7PM - Dinner may be claimed
  - If the fractional day includes an overnight stay, receipted lodging may be claimed. No meal or lodging expenses may be claimed or reimbursed more than once on any given date or during any twenty-four (24)-hour period.



**BLUE OAK SCHOOL**  
A WALDORF-INSPIRED PUBLIC CHARTER (K-8)

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- Employees may not claim lunch on one-day trips. However, mileage reimbursement for 1 day trips of 50 miles round trip minimum will be reimbursed.
- When trips are less than 24 hours and there is no overnight stay, meals claimed are taxable.

**Short-Term Lodging Reimbursement Rates:**

<b>County</b>	<b>Maximum Lodging Reimbursement Rate</b>
All counties except those listed below	\$90
Marin, Sacramento, Napa, Riverside	\$110
Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura & Edwards AFB, excluding the city of Santa Monica	\$120
San Diego, Monterey	\$125
Alameda, San Mateo, Santa Clara	\$140
City of Santa Monica	\$150
San Francisco	\$250