



## OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL POLICY

POLICY NUMBER:  810-01	EFFECTIVE DATE:  01/07/2013	APPOINTING AUTHORITY APPROVAL: 
REPLACES POLICY DATED:  3/01/2008	AUTHORITY:  Ohio Revised Code 126.31, Ohio Revised Code 126.503, Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C) 126-1-02	

### I. PURPOSE

This policy establishes limitations on out-of-state travel for the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) employees, such that time on the job here in Ohio is maximized. The review and approval process steps outlined in this policy are also intended to minimize actual and perceived conflicts of interest related to employee travel and to assist DAS and its employees in complying with federal tax laws, regulations and Ohio ethics laws. In general, out-of-state travel should be rare and occur only when a tangible benefit can be demonstrated.

### II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all DAS employees and all out-of-state travel where a DAS employee represents the State of Ohio or DAS, regardless of whether travel costs are paid by DAS, another state agency, or a third party.

### III. POLICY

#### A. PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIRED

No out-of-state travel arrangements shall be made or travel expenditures incurred by a DAS employee until the notification described in section D of this policy has been provided. All approvals must be obtained prior to incurring any expenses for registration fees, room expense, airline tickets, etc. Financial commitments for travel expenses made before receiving required approvals may result in personal liability for travel expenses incurred.

#### B. PERMISSIBLE OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL PENDING APPROVAL

##### 1. Meets Tangible Benefit Criteria:

- a. Training that is not available in state, and is necessary for the proper completion of tasks assigned to the employee.
- b. Performance of official duties where state or departmental interests require attendance due to direct involvement of the state.

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- c. Attendance at meetings that may not be required (no direct involvement of the state or department), but the meeting is deemed to have a tangible benefit because of significant state or departmental interests.
2. Attendance at Annual Meeting of Designated National Associations:
    - a. Each division is responsible for submitting annually a list of national associations in which it maintains a membership to the DAS Director's Office. This list will include a description of any conference registration fees and travel benefits that are included with the membership fee such as the cost of member travel to the organization's annual conference.
    - b. Lists are subject to approval by the Director of DAS.
    - c. Out-of-state travel to annual conferences of approved national associations is permissible pending approval.
    - d. When the option is available, membership dues paid to national organizations are to exclude pre-payment of member travel expenses such as airline tickets, lodging, mileage reimbursement and parking fees.
  3. Security, Federal Requirements, Support of First Responders:
    - a. Necessary for the purpose of security, meeting federal requirements, and/or to develop and/or maintain support of the First Responders.

**C. OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL REQUESTS**

1. All travel outside of Ohio by DAS employees, where the employee represents the State of Ohio or DAS, must be authorized by the Director of DAS or his/her designee in writing. Out-of-state travel where there is no cost to the state or where the cost is covered by the hosting organization, a third party, or as part of the state's membership fee must receive prior approval of the Director or his/her designee.
2. Each employee requesting approval to travel out-of-state shall complete and submit a DAS Out-of-State Travel Request Form. The DAS Out-of-State Travel Request Form should be obtained from DAS's website to ensure the most current form is used.  
  
<http://www.das.ohio.gov/Divisions/AdministrativeSupport/EmployeesServices/DASPolicies.aspx>  
  
Questions concerning completion of the form and reimbursed or pre-paid expenses should be addressed to the traveler's division business office.
3. A copy of the agenda, program, course description, or letter of invitation must be submitted along with the DAS travel request form.

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4. A brief statement and any supporting documentation indicating why the travel meets the requirements of this policy must also be included when submitting the DAS travel request form.
5. Out-of-state travel should be limited to one employee per event, unless authorized by the director in writing through the out-of-state travel approval process. If more than one DAS employee will be traveling to the same out-of-state event, each employee's travel request must include the names of all proposed travelers and an explanation of the benefit derived by DAS from multiple attendees at the same event. All travel requests related to a single event should be submitted to the Office of Finance at one time.
6. Unless specifically addressed by an existing contractual agreement that requires third party payment of travel expenses, DAS employees are expected to make all travel transportation arrangements through DAS division business offices and receive travel expense reimbursement through the State of Ohio's travel expense module. Any terms in existing DAS contracts that require payment of DAS employee travel expenses by a vendor or contractor are to sunset with the end of the current contract and be removed from future contract renewals.
7. In accordance with the general intent of OBM's travel rule (O.A.C. 126-1-02), only the most economical mode of travel will be approved. Exceptions to this standard will be granted only if it is in the best interest of the agency to authorize a less economical mode of transportation.
8. Requests for approval of personal travel occurring in conjunction with travel for official state business, such as an extended stay for personal reasons, must be included with the employee's out-of-state travel request.

### **D. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL REQUESTS**

1. The DAS Out-of-State Travel Request Form and all necessary documentation shall be submitted to the DAS Office of Finance Budget Unit no later than one (1) month in advance of travel. Divisions are responsible for setting internal time lines to ensure out-of-state travel requests are submitted timely.
2. All out-of-state travel requests are to be submitted to the employee's immediate manager/supervisor.
3. Manager/supervisor must determine if the out-of-state travel is allowable in accordance with provisions in section III-B: "Permissible Out-of-State Travel Pending Approval." If training is the reason for the travel, assurance must be made that it is directly related to functions that are currently or planned to be a part of the employee's job responsibilities. Manager/supervisor will review request for timeliness, completeness, correctness and inclusion of all necessary documentation. Employee's manager/supervisor shall approve the request after aforementioned requirements are met.
4. Manager/supervisor forwards request form and all documentation to the division business manager.

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5. Division business manager reviews material for technical and substantive compliance with the OBM Travel Rule (O.A.C. 126-1-02) and this DAS Out-of-State Travel policy (#810-01) and forwards request and all documentation to the division deputy director for division approval.
6. Once approved by the deputy director, the division business manager forwards the request and all documentation to the DAS Finance Budget Unit for review. The budget unit reviews material for technical and substantive compliance with the OBM Travel Rule (O.A.C. 126-1-02) and this DAS Out-of-State Travel policy (#810-01) and forwards request and all documentation to DAS' Chief Financial Officer for approval.
7. Once approved by the Chief Financial Officer, the DAS Finance Budget Unit forwards the request to the DAS Director's Office for final agency approval.
8. Out-of-State travel requests may be denied for operational reasons, budget constraints or for other administrative or management concerns.

### E. NOTIFICATION OF APPROVAL/DENIAL OF REQUESTS

1. Upon approval/denial of a request, the director's office returns the out-of-state travel form indicating the decision to the DAS Finance Budget Unit which will notify the requesting division business office.
2. The business office will return the approval/denial to the supervisor and requesting employee.
3. If the request has been approved and the travel will involve the reimbursement of any expenses to the traveler, then the traveler must enter a travel authorization request in the OAKS Travel & Expense Module. (See Section III F.) Supervisors should not approve employee travel authorization requests in the OAKS Travel & Expense Module until the DAS Out-of-State Travel Request has been approved.

### F. REIMBURSEMENT FOR OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL EXPENSES

1. Refer to OBM policies and procedures for obtaining reimbursement of approved travel expenses. The OBM Travel Rule and instructions for using OBM's Ohio Shared Services Travel & Expense Module are located on OBM's website.

<http://ohiosharedservices.ohio.gov/TravelandExpense.aspx>

2. An increase in travel transportation cost, such as roundtrip airfare, that is related to personal travel conducted in conjunction with travel for official state business must be reimbursed to DAS by the employee by personal check made out to the Treasurer of State and submitted to the employee's division business office within 30 days of travel.

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### G. COST INCREASES

1. The Director delegates authority to the division business manager to approve travel cost increases, after the Director's approval of the originally submitted request, up to \$250.00. The division business manager is responsible for notifying the DAS Finance Budget Unit of any cost increase below \$250 in writing via email. The written notification will be attached to the original request on file in DAS Finance.
2. For cost increases that are new or exceed \$250, a memorandum signed by the Division Deputy Director must be submitted to the DAS Finance Budget Unit for approval. The memorandum should reference the agency request number and provide a justification for the following:
  - a. Increases over \$250.00
  - b. All new items of expense not included in the originally approved request.

### H. FILING AND RECORDS RETENTION

Original copies of approved requests will be filed with the Office of Finance and maintained in that office for audit purposes.

## IV. COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

### A. TRAVEL- RELATED COMPENSATION

DAS Directive #HR-D-07, Compensation for Employee Travel and Training addresses the human resources policy on employee travel. If there are additional questions, please contact your supervisor or the DAS Office of Employee Services.

### B. REPORTING

DAS employees are responsible for tracking travel expense reimbursement data for purposes of reporting on annual financial disclosure statements filed with the Ohio Ethics Commission per Section 102.02 of the Ohio Revised Code. The DAS Office of Finance and DAS division business offices will provide queries of available data from the OAKS travel and expense module, however, final responsibility for the accuracy of financial disclosure statements rests with the employee. DAS employees who receive travel reimbursement from third party organizations are responsible for tracking and reporting these amounts on annual financial disclosure statements as necessary. It is recommended that employees who receive reimbursement from third party organizations observe the limitations in the OBM travel rule and be mindful of the appearance of receiving something of value from third parties.

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**V. INQUIRIES**

Direct inquires about this policy to:

Finance Policy Manager  
DAS Office of Finance  
30 E. Broad Street, 40<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Telephone: 614.644.1724  
FAX: 614-728.2541

**VI. REVISION HISTORY**

Date	Description of Change
3/1/2008	Original Policy Effective
12/21/2012	Revised Policy to reflect OAKS Travel & Expense Module, to incorporate changes in OBM Travel Rule, and to make changes in internal DAS Travel Policies & Procedures.

# Out-of-State Travel Request Form

Name of Traveler/Title:		Agency Request Number:	
Division:	Unit:	Date of Request:	
Proposed trip (city, state)			
From:		To:	
Inclusive dates of departure and return:	Month/Day/Year		Inclusive dates of attendees:
	From	To	
			Number of previous out-of-state trips by traveler this fiscal year:
			Number of persons making this trip:

Detailed explanation of request. (Explain purpose of trip and how it meets the tangible benefit criteria defined in DAS out-of-state travel policy 810-01. If more than one person is traveling, indicate why. Attach a copy of the agenda, course description or invitation.)

TRANSPORTATION / HOTEL / MEALS			COST TO AGENCY	COST REIMBURSABLE TO INDIVIDUAL
<input type="checkbox"/>	State auto	_____ days @ _____ per day	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	State/Personal auto	_____ miles @ _____ per mile	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Airfare		\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hotel	_____ nights @ _____ night	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Meals	First day @ _____ per day	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Meals	_____ days @ _____ per day	\$	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Meals	Last day @ _____ per day	\$	\$
MISCELLANEOUS			Total of All Miscellaneous	
Registration/Tuition Fee \$	Shuttle/Taxi/Bus \$	Other (specify) \$	\$	\$
Signature of Traveler:		Date:	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	\$

**DIVISION BUSINESS OFFICE USE**

Source of funds:  Federal  State  Personal  Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Fund Code	Appropriation Line Item Number	Department	Program	Agency Use
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**IN-HOUSE APPROVALS**

Signature of Supervisor/Manager	Date	Signature of Business Manager	Date
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Signature of Division Deputy Director	Date
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DAS Finance Comments

Signature of Chief Financial Officer or Designee	Date	Signature of Director or Designee	Date
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