

MEETINGS, TRAINING, AND CONFERENCES POLICY

100.1 General Provisions

It is the objective of Gloucester County to provide for necessary Board-related travel within the guidelines set forth in this document. All reasonable meal, mileage, lodging, and other costs associated with Board-related travel for meetings, training, and conferences will be reimbursed or paid by the County. Expenditures must be within the department's budget and may be subject to additional reimbursement guidelines as approved by the County Administrator.

100.2 Use of Vehicles for Out-of-Town Travel

Members of the Board of Supervisors may use a County vehicle or their personal vehicle for necessary travel. If a member of the Board uses a personal vehicle, then the Board member will be reimbursed for work-related mileage at the mileage rate established by the County Administrator. A County vehicle may not be used when combining work related travel and personal travel. The use of a County vehicle is regulated by any County vehicle policy.

100.3 Travel and Overnight Expenses

The County will pay or reimburse Board members for travel associated with Board membership, including but not limited to training, association meetings, conferences, and committee meetings associated with the National Association of Counties (NACo), the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo), and various regional and local organizations. These expenses may include travel, meals, lodging, and other related expenses. Such expenses may be arranged and paid for directly by County staff (such as lodging and conference registration fees) or reimbursed by County staff to Board members upon submission of a request for reimbursement, accompanied by appropriate receipts and documents per County policy. Travel to these meetings by Board members does not require preapproval by any staff member nor by the Board of Supervisors. Such expenses shall be paid by staff out of the lump sum funds appropriated by the Board during the annual budget process, subject to any Board action taken at budget adoption to govern such funds. (E.g., the Board may, at adoption of the annual budget, provide guidance by resolution as to how those funds may be allocated amongst themselves.) Absent any such guidance by the Board, staff will pay all submitted expenses by Board members on a first-come, first-served basis, and notify the Board once these funds have been depleted so that appropriate provisions may be made for additional travel expenses expected by Board members during the fiscal year.

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In the event that individuals not on county business accompany the Board member, the single occupancy rate for lodging, if different from the double occupancy rate, shall be paid by the County. Additionally, all meals, transportation, or other charges for individuals not on County business who accompany the Board member are the responsibility of the Board member. County funds will not be used to pay for alcoholic beverages under any circumstances.

100.4 Political Events

Members of the Board of Supervisors may not be reimbursed by the County for events which are political in nature (e.g., meetings or conventions associated with a political party).

100.5 Expenses for Cancelled Attendance

In the event that a Board member cancels attendance at a conference or official event for which the County has paid expenses in advance for the Board member (such as registration fees or hotel reservations), the Board member shall reimburse the County for expenses incurred, except in the event that the cancellation is due to an emergency. In the case of an emergency, the Board member shall submit a statement in writing (e-mail or other written document) to the County Administrator and copied to the Chair of the Board stating that the cancellation is due to an emergency and stating the reason. Such emergencies may include, but are not necessarily limited to, personal illness, illness of a child, spouse, or other family member, a business emergency, a local emergency (such as a weather event for which an emergency is declared or which would make travel unsafe or impossible), a death in the family, or other reasonable emergency event. In the event that the County Administrator requires review of the reason submitted, the County Administrator shall bring the matter before the Board of Supervisors for review. In the absence of notification to County officials to cancel any registration or reservations or upon the failure of the Board member to cancel the registration or reservations, the expense shall be the responsibility of the Board member except in such case as the emergency would have made it impossible to do so. County staff and/or the Board member shall make all reasonable effort to obtain reimbursement from the event organizers or hotel for expenses incurred due to cancellation. Upon a determination, the document shall be submitted to Finance for inclusion with the documentation associated with the expenses in the County's public records.

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100.6 Distribution of Policy to Board Members

A copy of the Meetings, Training, and Conferences Policy shall be distributed to each member of the Board of Supervisors by the County Administrator upon taking office or at such time as there is a change in the policy by the Board of Supervisors.