

**City of Rock Springs**  
**Travel Policy**  
First Adopted: July 12, 2001  
Revised: November 5th, 2019

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>100.00</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>100.05</b>	<b>GENERAL TRAVEL GUIDELINES</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>100.10</b>	<b>DEPARTURE AND RETURN TIME</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>100.35</b>	<b>REIMBURSEMENT FOR PERSONAL VEHICLES USE</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>100.40</b>	<b>MEAL ALLOWANCES GENERALLY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>100.50</b>	<b>MEAL ALLOWANCES--TIME RANGES AND RATES</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>100.55</b>	<b>REIMBURSEMENT FOR RECEIPTABLE LODGING</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>100.60</b>	<b>LODGING REIMBURSEMENT AT ACTUAL COST</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>100.65</b>	<b>MISCELLANEOUS REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>100.70</b>	<b>CREDIT CARD</b>	<b>5</b>

## **100.00 INTRODUCTION**

Traveling is a necessary operation of government. However, you and your department should always remember that travel expense can be a major budget consideration. You must always be aware of the need for efficiency and economy in travel. The responsibility for adhering to the rules and providing effective managerial control rests with you and your department.

This policy is applicable for all City of Rock Springs employees and officials while traveling in connection with city business. If you have any questions concerning implementation of these policies or employee travel in general, please call the Finance Department at 352-1500.

## **100.05 GENERAL TRAVEL GUIDELINES**

When considering travel, you and your department must follow these guidelines:

1. The Mayor, the Director of Administrative Services, and your Department Head or designated approving authority must approve all travel using the official travel authorization form.
2. Each department shall hold to the absolute minimum the number of personnel attending a function requiring travel.
3. You should keep lodging expenses as low as possible. You may try to receive a government rate. However, you can only ask for lower rates, not demand them.
4. You will not be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred by or in behalf of another city employee. In addition, the city shall not incur expenses for non-employees, unless pre-authorized by the Mayor.
5. You should keep transportation costs as low as possible and minimize your time away from the office. Travelers are expected to obtain the lowest available airfare that reasonably meets business travel needs.. You should schedule trips to avoid unnecessary backtracking and overlapping.
6. When traveling by car, you should adhere to speed limits.
7. No department shall pay an employee's travel cost to attend a function that does not benefit the city.
8. The department head will not allow reimbursement for lodging and meals of employees and officials when it would be more economical and advantageous to the city for them to return to their official domicile or residence. You will not be allowed meal or lodging reimbursement within a 50-mile radius of their official domicile or residence.
9. The completed travel expense breakdown shall be turned into the finance department (with receipts) within five workdays.

## **100.10 DEPARTURE AND RETURN TIME**

Departure time and return time normally mean the times when you leave from and return to headquarters, respectively. However, if you depart from your home and return to your home without stopping at headquarters, the times leaving from and returning to home become the times you use in computing the allowance. If you leave from your home and return to headquarters after the trip, the starting time would be when leaving home and the ending time would be when arriving at headquarters.

It is usually necessary to begin traveling prior to the time established for the meeting, appointment, or conference that necessitated the travel. Also, business

activities may end late in the day, and because of inclement weather, fatigue, or the unavailability of transportation, it may not be feasible for you to return promptly to headquarters. In such cases, you may claim travel expenses for a reasonable time before and after the actual business activities that necessitated the travel. Because circumstances vary, managers have to decide what is reasonable on a case-by-case basis. To the extent possible, however, you should travel within a normal travel shift. For example, you may want to start a meeting in Casper at 9:00 a.m. rather than 8:00 a.m. or conclude business at 3:00 p.m. to allow adequate time to return home. The aim is to reduce city travel expense whenever possible.

If an employee is required to drive after their normal work shift the driver is eligible to receive comp time or overtime pay. However, any passengers traveling in the vehicle are not eligible to receive comp time or overtime pay.

#### **100.35 REIMBURSEMENT FOR PERSONAL VEHICLES USE**

If city owned vehicles are not available, you have the option to use your personal vehicle or vehicles from a private rental agency, whichever is most cost effective.

If your department head or designated approving authority authorizes you to use your personal vehicle on city business, you may use the city credit card for fuel while in travel status. All fuel receipts must accompany the travel expense breakdown form, failure to provide receipts may result in a possible denial of the reimbursement of expenses. Reimbursement will be for the cost of fuel only.

#### **100.40 MEAL ALLOWANCES GENERALLY**

To be eligible for a meal allowance while traveling on city business, you must be in a travel status be at least 50 miles from headquarters or home for more than three continuous hours or staying overnight, away from home, for at least one night of your travel.

You may not request reimbursement for meals included in the cost of a conference registration that is paid by your department or for meals provided by the city or another governmental entity.

#### **100.50 MEAL ALLOWANCES--TIME RANGES AND RATES**

Below is the timeframes used to determine meal allowances. All meals should be supported with receipts from the vendor in order to be eligible for reimbursement. Because meal costs vary by location, meal reimbursements will be decided using the [www.GSA.gov](https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates/per-diem-rates-lookup) per diem rates, <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates/per-diem-rates-lookup>. (incidentals of \$5.00 will not be allowed). Please keep in mind, these are the maximum rates allowed and meal expenses should be kept to a reasonable amount. Tips are included in this allowance and should not exceed 15%. Actual costs of the meal will be reimbursed (not the amount allocated). ITEMIZED meal receipts must accompany the travel expense breakdown form for all meals in which reimbursement is requested, failure to provide receipts may result in a possible denial of the reimbursement of meal expenses. Alcohol will not be reimbursed.

##### **Time Range Meal Allowed**

12:01 a.m. to 10 a.m. morning meal

10:01 a.m. to 3 p.m. midday meal

3:01 p.m. to midnight evening meal

You must consider each time range separately when applying the more-than-three hour rule.

#### **100.55 REIMBURSEMENT FOR RECEIPTABLE LODGING**

You may receive reimbursement for your actual out-of-pocket lodging expenses. If traveling in state, any taxes should be waived. Please travel with your request for authorization, a sales tax exemption form, and city identification, if possible.

Some lodging facilities may require their own credit card authorization to be filled out. Please inquire in advance if this will be required to avoid issues when you arrive.

In order to claim lodging reimbursement, you must attach the original receipt from a licensed lodging facility to your travel claim form. Other receipts, such as credit card receipts, are not acceptable.

If you are traveling with a non-city-employee, the lodging rate claimed must reflect only the rate for one person. The single-occupant rate should be noted and marked as such on the receipt.

Whenever practical, you should call more than one hotel or motel to ensure that you are receiving the best possible room rate in a location. Although an establishment may not have rooms available at or below the standard state rate, it may be willing to offer a government rate or other discounted rate that is less than its normal business rate. To save on travel costs, always ask for the lowest available rate for which you qualify.

If you stay in a non-receiptable facility, e.g. with friends or relatives or in a camper or trailer, or you fail to obtain a receipt, you may not be reimbursed for lodging expenses.

In some instances, lodging is provided at no charge. In these instances, you cannot claim lodging expense. Examples include:

1. Lodging is provided on campus for industry or government seminars;
2. Lodging is included in the registration fee

#### **100.60 LODGING REIMBURSEMENT AT ACTUAL COST**

Your department head or designated approving authority may approve reimbursement of lodging at higher cost than cheaper alternatives, under the following circumstances:

1. lodging costs below the cap provided for above is temporarily unavailable due to special functions such as fairs, sporting events, or conventions or seasonal demand; or
2. convenience of location for the event attended, if reasonable (i.e. the event is located at the hotel); or
3. emergency travel arrangements preclude being able to find accommodations below the cap provided; or
4. remote locations with limited accommodations
5. you have reasonable cause to believe there is risk to your personal safety.

You should provide adequate justification, along with the original lodging receipt, to the department head or designated approving authority. The justification should also indicate that reimbursement at actual cost is within your department's budget.

#### **100.65 MISCELLANEOUS REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES**

Reimbursable travel expenses include only those incurred while traveling in connection with official city business. Expenses incurred during periods of vacation or compensatory time off while in a travel status are not allowable.

Miscellaneous business expenses associated with official city travel are reimbursable. You must support each expense with paid receipts. Examples of allowable miscellaneous expenses include needed working supplies purchased on an emergency basis, transportation fares, rental car costs, and business telephone calls. Miscellaneous expenses do not include tips or taxes on meals.

#### **100.70 CREDIT CARD**

Departments may use one of the city's credit cards for employee air travel, lodging, meals, registration, and other costs as deemed necessary. Travel advances are not to be issued under any circumstance. Any inappropriate charges (i.e. the purchase of alcohol, or nonessential items) or charges that cannot be accounted for (i.e. a receipt cannot be provided) made by an employee using a City credit card will be reimbursed to the City at the employee's expense.