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CONTACT:

**Business Services Center
Travel Unit
518.457.4272, Option 1, Option 3
OGSTravel.Unit@ogs.ny.gov**

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on filing SFS Travel & Expense
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NEW YORK STATE TRAVEL GUIDELINES for STATE EMPLOYEE TRAVELERS

GENERAL TRAVEL GUIDELINES

1. Travel expenses will be reimbursed for actual, reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by an employee while in travel status on official state business. Reimbursement will be in accordance with established OSC travel guidelines: <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/agencies/travel/travel.htm>
2. Employees should utilize the New York State Procurement (NYSPRO) statewide travel contracts for travel agent services, lodging, rental vehicles, and air travel.
The travel contracts are available at: <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/BU/SS/Trav/default.asp>
3. Employees are in travel status when they are more than 35 miles from both their home and official station.
4. All employees should know their assigned official station.
5. Lunch is not a reimbursable expense.
6. Lodging and car rentals are tax exempt in New York State. Travelers should always have tax exempt certificates with them in case they are needed: ST-129 Tax Exempt Certificate for Lodging, and AC-946 Tax Exempt Form — other expenses/car rentals. These forms are on the BSC website: bsc.ogs.ny.gov

TRAVEL APPROVAL - All travel must be approved in advance.

- Routine travel may be approved verbally by the employee’s supervisor.
- Agencies may require a Travel Authorization (pre-approval) for certain types of travel or in situations where standard travel rules and regulations cannot be followed. Please contact your agency’s finance or budget office for direction.

TRAVEL CARD

- The Visa travel card is used only for official state business travel expenses.
- Apply for a travel card through the BSC Credit Card Unit, see contact information below.
- Travel cards should be used for all state-related travel purchases (airfare, lodging, rental cars, Amtrak, etc.).
- Do not charge personal expenses or other travelers’ expenses to your travel card.
- Register for the Citidirect card management system at the website below to track charges online.
- Report lost or stolen cards to the Citibank Member Center number below.

Citibank Member Center
1.800.248.4553 • <https://home.cards.citidirect.com>
BSC Credit Card Administrator
(518) 457-4272 Opt 1 Opt 5 • CreditCard@ogs.ny.gov



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MEALS AND LODGING EXPENSES

Employees must be in travel status to be eligible for reimbursement of meal and lodging expenses.

Method 1 - No receipts are required

A set per diem allowance for meals, lodging and incidentals, regardless of where lodging was obtained.

- Method 1 Rates:
 - New York City, Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland, and Westchester Counties: \$50.00
 - Cities of Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and their metro areas: \$40.00
 - All other locations in NY State: \$35.00
 - Out of State locations: \$50.00

Method 2 - Receipts required

Reimbursement of actual lodging costs up to a specific maximum amount and an allowance for meals based on the location of lodging.

- Lodging receipts are required, meal receipts are not up to \$75.
- Per diem rates are available at the US General Services Administration (GSA) website:
<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>

Meal Rates without Receipts for Day Trips (all locations)

- Day trip meals are set at a fixed rate and reported as taxable income.
- Breakfast rate is \$5.00. Traveler must depart at least one hour before their normal workday start time to be eligible for a breakfast.
- Dinner rate is \$12.00. Traveler must return at least two hours after the end of their normal workday to be eligible for a dinner.
- Departure/arrival times must be entered on the expense report (details of the meal expense line, comments, or general information) to be eligible for day trip meal reimbursement.



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NEW YORK STATE TRAVEL GUIDELINES for STATE EMPLOYEE TRAVELERS

TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES

Travel should be by the most economical method possible and in the best interest of the state. When determining the method of travel, consider the distance, travel time, number of travelers, and modes of transportation available.

VEHICLE TRAVEL:

State Vehicle

- State vehicles are the first choice when a vehicle is needed.
- State garages or the State-provided fuel card should be used whenever possible.
- State vehicles should only be used for official state business or for reasonable transportation when an employee is in travel status.

Rental Vehicles

- Rental Vehicles should be used when a state vehicle is not available and a rental vehicle is more economical than a personal vehicle.
- Always rent in the name of New York State.
- Rental vehicle should be returned with the same amount of fuel as when it was rented before returning it.
- Indicate all drivers and if crossing state lines, use form AC-946 for tax exemption.
- Do not purchase additional insurance if using the State contracted vendors for rental vehicles.
- Use the state-contracted rental agencies and charge to state-issued Travel Card. Contract information and price lists are available at: <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/purchase/snt/awardnotes/7200122273can.htm>
- Consider geographic surcharges when determining which contracted rental agency to use.

Personal Owned Vehicles (POV)

- If opting to use a POV instead of a rental vehicle, reimbursement will be the lesser of the rental rate or Personal Car Mileage rate (PCM). Use the OGS Trip Calculator (a spreadsheet calculation that measures rental costs against PCM rates) to figure which is less expensive. The OGS Trip Calculators are located at: <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/BU/SS/Trav/Calculators.asp>. The OGS Trip Calculator must be attached to expense reports when estimated mileage of the trip is over 100 miles.

Parking & Tolls

All reasonable and necessary parking charges will be reimbursed when an employee is in travel status. All appropriate tolls documented on an expense report will be reimbursed.



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NEW YORK STATE TRAVEL GUIDELINES for STATE EMPLOYEE TRAVELERS

TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES continued

Accidents

- All accidents should be reported to the local law enforcement agency and the employee’s supervisor.
- Accidents with a State vehicle should be reported to the OGS Bureau of Risk, Insurance & Fleet Management (BRIFM), per its accident reporting procedures and to the state-contracted vehicle maintenance provider, if applicable for the agency. Drivers must also complete the MV-104 Accident Report. BRIFM accident reporting procedures: <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/BU/SS/RIFM/ARP.asp>
- Accidents in a rental vehicle must be immediately reported to the rental agency and Citibank (1-866-390-9735, www.eclaimsline.com), if applicable.

Taxi Fares / Expenses to a Transportation Terminal

Reasonable and necessary taxi fees will be reimbursed, customary tipping will be allowed. Actual costs will be reimbursed for taxi or other common carriers between an employee’s residence and transportation terminal or for personal car mileage. Receipts for taxis are needed if the cost is greater than \$75.

Train Travel

- Train tickets should be charged to the employee’s state-issued Travel Card.
- Train tickets should be reserved and purchased through the Amtrak website (www.amtrak.com) or through the Amtrak App on a mobile device.
- Advance reservations (7 days or more) are highly recommended to secure lowest available fares and preferred departure times.
- If reservation changes are required after the ticket has been purchased, changes can be made prior to the scheduled departure time through the Amtrak website or the Amtrak app on a mobile device.

Airfare Travel

- When traveling by commercial air, airline tickets must be charged to the employee’s state-issued travel card and purchased through a contracted travel agency (<http://www.ogs.ny.gov/purchase/snt/awardnotes/7900520958can.HTM>) from a contracted airline (<http://www.ogs.ny.gov/purchase/snt/awardnotes/7900621991can.HTM>).
- Exceptions to using this contract would only apply in an emergency situation or when the non-contract fare would result in a savings of \$200 or more round trip. Exceptions require the advance approval of the agency finance office. The finance office must report them to the statewide travel coordinator.
- Reasonable baggage transfer and storage charges will be allowed.



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MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

Telephone Charges

Only telephone charges for official state business may be reimbursed. Business calls should be indicated on your report.

Personal Expenses

Personal expenses such as laundry, valet service, movie rentals, maids, or entertainment are not reimbursable.

Conferences and Seminars

- All state-sponsored conferences and seminars should be held at facilities that honor federal per diem rates.
- If the lodging rate exceeds the maximum per diem rate, most likely for non-state conferences, prior approval is required from the agency's finance office.
- If the conference registration fee includes meals, meals should not be claimed separately.
- Registration fees can be paid by personal credit card or travel card. These charges must be submitted on the SFS expense report.

RECEIPTS

Receipts are Required for:

- Method II lodging • Car rentals • Expenses over \$75 (under \$75, no receipts) • Day trip meals if claiming receipted rate • Gas purchase more than \$75 • Airfare • Amtrak • Long distance bus tickets

No Receipts are Needed for:

- Tolls or parking under \$75, per instance
- Metro cards under \$75, per instance
- Long Island Railroad tickets under \$75, per instance
- Taxis and subways under \$75, per instance
- Meals associated with overnight travel under \$75, per instance (per diem rates apply)
- Day trip meals unless claiming for the receipted method



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NEW YORK STATE TRAVEL GUIDELINES for STATE EMPLOYEE TRAVELERS

FILING A SFS EXPENSE REPORT

- A SFS expense report is required for all travel and expense reimbursement requests.
- Expense reports should be submitted within 10 days of return from a trip.
- Scan and attach all required receipts and documentation to your SFS expense report.
- All required fields in General Information section must be filled in before submitting expense report.

Top 10 Travelers' Tips for Expense Report Approval

1. Obtain all travel approvals prior to trip; if the trip total expenses are \$500 or more include DOB B-1184 number on expense report.
2. Ensure the General Information Box in expense report is completely filled out including start/end times, official station, dates of travel, etc.
3. If claiming day trip meals or overnight extra meals, click on the details link in expense report and fill in the start and end times.
4. When meals are purchased with your travel card, in SFS they need to be specified as “Return to State” before they are brought over from the wallet.
5. Ensure per diem meal claims match the travel dates indicated on hotel bill and expense report.
6. Itemize hotel expenses on expense report if multiple charges other than lodging are included on the receipt.
7. If the traveler does not return the rental vehicle with the same amount of fuel as when they rented it, the cost to refuel the rental vehicle will appear on the rental vehicle bill. In this instance, the fuel charge must be split from the cost of the rental vehicle inside the SFS Expense Report.
8. Wait until all travel card charges and credits pertaining to a specific trip are loaded in your wallet and applied to that trip expense report before submitting it for processing.
9. Attach all required receipts, approvals, justifications for upgrades/over the max rate for lodging, waivers, etc to an expense report before submitting it.
10. For any personal car mileage claims over 100 miles per trip, use the Trip Calculator spreadsheets to calculate how many miles to report in SFS in order to report the equivalent expense of renting a vehicle. Be sure to attach the Trip Calculator spreadsheet in SFS. The OGS Trip Calculators are located at: <http://www.ogs.ny.gov/BU/SS/Trav/Calculators.asp>