

## **Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request**

**Date of Meeting:** January 2, 2018

**Date Submitted:** December 19, 2017

**To:** Honorable Chairperson and Members of the Board

**From:** Dee Jackson, Interim County Administrator

**Subject:** Approval of Resolution 2018-001 Revising the Gadsden County Travel Policy

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### **Statement of Issue:**

This agenda item seeks Board approval of Resolution 2018-001 revising the Gadsden County Travel Policy.

### **Background:**

Major revisions were made to the County's Travel Policy on June 7, 2005 and additional revisions were made on April 11, 2006, February 2, 2010, and November 18, 2014. The County has been operating under the 2014 policy since that time. Over the years, several issues have prompted these proposed revisions.

### **Analysis:**

One issue of concern is gas per diem. The attached (Exhibit A) was created to calculate the estimated mileage for a trip and the estimated fuel cost. Before a trip, the Finance Department will process a check for the gas per diem as well as the meal per diem and provide that to the employee. This will eliminate issuing gas cards as well as having to keep up with gas receipts.

Other exhibits have been added to make the policy easier for everyone to use. One exhibit shows the GSA pages for that calendar year; the goal is to update the exhibits at the beginning of each calendar year.

Sections 1.65 to 1.67.6 is being moved into the policy on County Vehicles.

Below is a list of proposed changes:

1. Added Exhibit A – mileage per diem.
2. Added Exhibit B – GSA per diem rates – search location example.
3. Added Exhibit C – GSA per diem rates – Orlando example.
4. Added Exhibit D – GSA meals breakdown – Orlando example.
5. Added Exhibit E – 2017 Standard Mileage Rate.
6. Update and change “him” to “him/her”.
7. Clarify car rentals, assigned cars and unassigned cars.
8. Replace the Chair and Vice Chair approving each other’s travel with the Board approving all Commissioners travel.
9. Replace old form name with new form name.
10. Delete section 1.65 thru 1.67.6 from the travel policy and add to the County Vehicle’s Policy.

In an effort to be more transparent, the policy recommends travel requests made by Commissioners be approved by the Board.

**Fiscal Impact:**

None.

**Options:**

1. Approve the proposed revisions to the Travel Policy and authorize the Chairperson to sign Resolution No. 2018-001.
2. Do not approve.
3. Board direction.

**Interim County Administrator’s Recommendation:**

Option 3.

**Attachment(s):**

1. Proposed Resolution 2018-001 and revised Travel Policy.

*RESOLUTION NO. 2018 – 001*

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF GADSDEN COUNTY**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF GADSDEN COUNTY AMENDING THE COUNTY TRAVEL POLICY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

**WHEREAS**, the revised County travel policy will be in effect January 1, 2018 for one (1) year and provides for the payment and reimbursement of travel expenses for public officers, employees, and authorized persons when performing authorized travel; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of County Commissioners recognizes the need for all Commissioners travel to be approved by the entire Board; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of County Commissioners seeks to use the funds entrusted to it in a manner that provides the most benefit to the citizens of Gadsden County; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of County Commissioners of Gadsden County, Florida, hereby amends the Travel Policy as reflected on the Attached hereto.

Adopted this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of January 2018.

Board of County Commissioners  
Gadsden County, Florida

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Brenda A. Holt, Chairperson

Attest: Nicholas Thomas, Clerk

By: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1.01 TRAVEL POLICY

The travel policy of the County shall be divided into two parts: (1) that which shall govern travel by employees and authorized persons; (2) that which shall govern travel by members of the County Commission.

1. Employee Travel and Authorized Persons: The County Administrator or his/her designee shall have the authority and responsibility for approving or denying travel requests for employees or authorized persons directly or indirectly under the County Administrator's supervision.

Prior to approving a travel request, the County Administrator or his/her designee must confirm that sufficient funds are available in the budget of the department to which the employee or authorized person is assigned, to cover the cost of the travel. If funds are sufficient, the County Administrator may deny the travel request or approve a written request from the department for a budget amendment to cover the cost of the travel.

The County Administrator shall not approve his or her own travel request. The County Administrator must obtain advance approval for travel from the Chairman, or Vice-Chairman when the Chairman is unavailable, when the County Administrator will incur out of town, overnight travel expenses.

2. Travel Request: Travel requests from employees and authorized persons must contain the following information, additional information may be required: (To be included on or attached to the Travel Approval and Request for Advance Travel Form.)

- a. Dates of Travel and a travel Itinerary;
- b. Mode of Travel;
- c. Specific Purpose or Reason for Travel;
- d. Anticipated Travel Costs;
- e. Description of the benefit that will be derived from the travel.

3. Travel Costs: With respect to the cost of travel on county business for any purpose, the following guidelines should apply:

- a. Day trip, depending on the time of day travel begins and ends, reimbursement will be limited to meals and mileage.

- b. Mileage will be reimbursed only when privately owned vehicles are used for travel. Mileage may be paid in advance when calculated on Exhibit A.

When privately owned vehicles are used for travel, mileage will be paid at the rate of 53.5 ~~59.5~~ cents per mile or most current IRS rate. Mileage must be recorded to the nearest whole mile. Exhibit E. Use of a private car for travel is authorized when approved on the Travel Approval and Request for advance Travel form. All mileage shall be shown from point of origin (official headquarters or employees home; whichever is shortest) to point of destination, and included with the travel request form. When possible, mileage should be computed and reimbursed based on the current map of the Florida Department of Transportation for in-state travel. Alternate methods of computing mileage, such

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as the use of an Internet website, may be authorized on the Travel Request form if supported by appropriate documentation. Road and bridge tolls may be claimed in addition to mileage upon presentation of receipts

c. Rental Car - Car rental expense is reimbursable but only when prior approval is obtained on the Travel Approval and Request for Advance Travel form and a receipt is attached. It is desirable for the traveler to seek advanced pay prior to traveling. However, a County - approved traveler should not purchase collision-damage waivers when renting a car, as the County's self-insured program is adequate to cover claims. The purchase of "Personal Accident Insurance" by a traveler is also non-reimbursable as employees on authorized business are covered under Workman's Compensation.

The state contract for car rental providers should be used whenever possible. Expenses incurred for collision-damage waivers or personal accident insurance will not be reimbursed unless prior approval of an exception is granted. Exhibit A is recommended to use for gas per diem. However, a Purchasing or gas Card may be used for fuel purchases in a County-owned or rental vehicle when on authorized travel, if needed. If used, receipts must be processed for payment within 7 days of return.

ⓔ-

When County assigned vehicles are used, the actual costs of gasoline, oil, other fluids, and required maintenance while traveling shall be reimbursed. When County assigned vehicles are supplied with gasoline, oil, and other fluids expressly for the trip, those costs shall be charges to that trip and paid from the appropriate Department budget.

Employees with personally assigned vehicles may utilize their vehicle for travel with the approval of the County Administrator or his/her designee. Travel should not apprehend the daily use and availability of a County vehicle for regular departmental use.

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d. Meal expenditures will be reimbursed according to the most current federal government General Services Administration (GSA) per diem meal rates.

ⓔ- (Exhibit B) - Location: [www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates](http://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates). The GSA provides for differential rates depending upon the location of travel.

(Exhibit C) - sSelect state and city to receive the current per diem rates. This approach recognizes cost differential between various cities.

(Exhibit D) - Taking the M&IE number from Exhibit B, locate on this list - that is your meal values. The following times shall be used to determine when meal reimbursements may be claimed:

1. Breakfast: when travel begins prior to 6:00 a.m. and extends beyond 8:00 a.m.

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2. Lunch: when travel begins prior to noon and extends beyond 2:00 p.m.
3. Dinner: when travel begins prior to 6:00 p.m. and extends beyond 8:00 p.m.
4. For cities not included in the GSA list, the standard rate applies. Meals shall be charged at a rate of \$10.00 for breakfast, \$15.00 for lunch, and \$25.00 for dinner. The total for meals cannot extend beyond \$50.00 for one full day's travel.

f.e. Employees and authorized persons traveling on county business, conventions and conferences included, shall have the option of traveling at a per diem rate not to exceed \$100.00 per day, \$25.00 per quarter of a day, or traveling at actual cost. Examples of quarters are: 12:01 a.m. to 6:00 a.m., 6:01 a.m. to 12:00 noon, 12:01 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and 6:01 p.m. to 12:00 midnight. Any variation thereof that constitutes a six (6) hour block or portion thereof shall constitute a quarter of a day.

g.f. To claim per diem, the travel by the employee or authorized person must include an overnight stay.

h.g. Receipts are not required to be submitted when an employee or authorized person claims travel reimbursement on per diem. However, in advance of the travel the employee must submit a travel request that contains the information required under section (2) of this policy.

i.h. Employees or authorized persons traveling under the actual cost option, with no per diem, shall be afforded meals at the rates shown in section (3)(f) of this policy. To be reimbursed for lodging the employee must submit receipts for lodging.

j.i. With any option, if employees or authorized persons use County vehicles, buses, trains, airplanes, or other transportation, to be reimbursed for costs the employee or authorized person must provide receipts. Employees or authorized persons who use County vehicles, buses, trains, airplanes, or other transportation are not entitled to mileage reimbursement.

4. County Commissioners Travel: County Commissioners shall abide by the same travel policies, regulations, and restrictions, provided in the employee and authorized person section of this policy, along with the following provisions:

a. Commissioners shall have an established budget for travel. ~~The Chairman shall approve the travel of each Commissioner, and the Vice Chairman shall approve the Chairman's travel.~~ The Board shall approve the travel of each Commissioner.

- b. Commissioners are limited to per diem or actual cost requirements as described in this policy.

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- c. Commissioners must submit completed requests for travel forms prior to authorized travel and must submit completed forms for reimbursement following the authorized travel.
- d. When Commissioners' travel budget is depleted, no travel may be authorized unless additional funds are allocated through a budget amendment submitted by the County Administrator.

#### 1.61 **ADVANCED TRAVEL PAY/REIMBURSEMENT**

To claim Advance Travel Pay or Reimbursement of authorized travel, the following procedures shall be followed:

#### 1.62 **ADVANCE TRAVEL PAY**

To claim Advanced Travel Pay for authorized travel, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. *Travel Approval and Request for Advanced Travel Form* shall be completed, approved and submitted to the Department of Management Services seven (7) days prior to travel.
2. The following supporting information must be attached: copy of program or agenda with provided meals noted; copy of hotel and rental car information; per diem or meals information; registration information; and any other expenses noted.

#### 1.63 **REIMBURSEMENT**

To claim reimbursement of authorized travel, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. A Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses must be prepared and signed by the traveler as well as the County Administrator or his/her designee for County employees or the Commission for Commissioners as appropriate. The required supporting receipts must be attached and submitted to the Finance Department.
2. Supporting receipts include: receipts of incidental expenses (taxi fare), tolls, storage, or parking fees, communication expenses, copy of program or agenda, and a copy of the hotel bill and other related expenses.
3. Employees who fail to submit the Travel Reconciliation Form a Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses, along with the required documentation, within seven (7) days following the conclusion of travel, is subject to having the amount of the advanced travel funds withheld from their next pay check.
4. A Reimbursement check will be issued within ten (10) days from the date the Finance Department received a signed claim and required receipts.

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5. Employees and/or elected officials that fail to attend seminars and trainings, that may or may not require out of town travel, which is paid with County funds, will be required to reimburse the County of such funds within 14 days following the terminus of the seminar, training, and/or travel. Reimbursement would include but is not limited to all costs associated with such event such as registration fees, cost of books/materials, lodging, rental car fees, gas and meals. The only exception would be in the event of an unforeseen emergency occurring after registration fees have been paid, but before completion of the seminar, conference, or training that may or may not be job related or related to the employee's duties (e.g. death, accident, illness, etc.), which will be considered on a case by case basis by the County Administrator or Board as appropriate.

#### **1.64 MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS WITH NO OVERNIGHT STAY**

Department Directors may authorize the necessary travel expenses for employees to attend meetings and workshops, not involving over-night accommodations, to improve their efficiency, if considered in the best interest of the county, and the money is in the budget.

To claim reimbursement for travel not involving over-night accommodations traveler shall follow guidelines established in Section 1.63.

[To be incorporated with the County policy # XXX County Vehicles](#)

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#### **1.65 REQUIREMENTS TO DRIVE COUNTY VEHICLES**

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Employees authorized to drive County licensed vehicles are require to have:

- A valid Florida Driver's License or valid Florida Driver's License required by the employer's classification or the operation of the vehicle.
- A driving record acceptable to County Insurance Carrier.
- A driving record acceptable to the County Administrator.
- A review of the employee's driving record for the previous three (3) years of employees authorized to drive county vehicles, shall be conducted on October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year or upon the directive of the County Administrator.

#### **1.66 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**



- All traffic citations received by employees while on-duty or during work hours must be reported immediately to the Department Director or to the Supervisor, in their absence the Department Director.

All traffic citations received by employees while off-duty must be reported to the Department Director as soon as practicable or upon their return to work.

- Upon the disposition of any traffic violation, the employee must notify the Department Director or Supervisor upon their return to work.
- Employees who fail to comply with the reporting requirements will be subject to disciplinary action.
- In case of an accident, a complete report of damages must be submitted to the County Administrator within 48 hours of the accident. Repairs not reimbursed by insurance will be billed to the Assignee's department budget.

#### **1.67 ASSIGNMENT AND USE OF VEHICLES**

1. Purpose: To establish a procedure for assignment, use and maintenance of county provided vehicles.

2. Assignment: County vehicles are assigned by the County Administrator or designee to employees determined by the County Administrator to be appropriated for the assignment or use of a county vehicle.

3. Operation and Maintenance of Vehicles:

a. General – Maintenance and the overall management of County vehicles is the responsibility of the assignee.

b. Condition of Operation – Vehicles shall operate under the following guidelines:

- Assignee shall possess a valid Florida Drivers License.
- Fuel, lubrication, maintenance insurance and repair cost will be paid by the County.
- Each County vehicle shall be equipped with the following:
  1. First-Aide Kit
  2. Fire Extinguisher
  3. Flares
  4. Flashlight
  5. Litter Bag
- Individuals on vacation or extended travel, or extended leave shall park return their assigned vehicle to their Department during that period.

The County Administrator may authorize the use of the vehicle while the individual is on vacation, extended travel, or extended leave.

- Individuals with poor driving records, driving records not acceptable by the County insurance carrier, or a driving record deemed unacceptable by the County Administrator, will not be allowed to operate County vehicles unless special accommodations are negotiated with the County's Insurance carrier.

Employees who fail to obtain or fail to maintain authorization for the use of a County vehicle from the County Administrator, including Emergency medical Services employees, may be reclassified or demoted to a non-driving position, if a position is available. If the employee is demoted the lower pay grade non-driving position, the employee's pay may be reduced in accordance with the lower pay grade.

4. Personnel Not Assigned a Vehicle: When transportation is necessary for County assignments, County Personnel may use a County vehicle. Authorization must be granted by the individual and Department responsible for the vehicle. Fuel, oil and other maintenance costs will be charged to the department using the vehicle.

5. Daily Fee for Personnel Provided County Vehicle: Individuals assigned County vehicles will be charged according to the Internal Revenue Service rules for Personnel use of vehicles. The amount is subject to the change according to Internal Revenue Service rulings.

A daily fee will be charged for day(s) or any part of a day worked.

6. Also reference vehicle usage policy No. 97.02.

\*\*\*NOTE: Revisions to the travel policy were made and approved through resolution on February 2, 2010.