

Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

Date of Meeting: June 19, 2018

Date Submitted: June 7, 2018

To: Honorable Chairperson and Members of the Board

From: Dee Jackson, Interim County Administrator
L. Bradford Johnson, Assistant County Administrator
Jeff Price, Senior Management & Budget Analyst

Subject: Approval of Resolution 2018-001 Revising Gadsden County's Travel Policy

Statement of Issue:

This item seeks Board approval of Resolution 2018-001 revising Gadsden County's Travel Policy for all employees and authorized persons.

Background:

At the January 2nd and March 20th commission meetings, the Board was presented with updates to the County's current travel policy. The Board decided to further discuss the policy in a workshop which was held on May 8th. At the direction of the Board, the proposed policy is being brought forth for consideration. 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 come up and this revision addresses these issues.

Analysis:

To ensure transparency and efficacy in County operations, revisions are being proposed within the travel policy. The revisions are reflected in the attached policy.

Fiscal Impact:

No fiscal impact.

Options:

1. Approve and adopt Resolution No. 2018-001, amending the Gadsden County Travel Policy, and authorize the Chair to sign the Resolution.
2. Propose changes to Resolution No. 2018-001, amending the Gadsden County Travel Policy, and adopt the Resolution and amendments to the Travel Policy with changes and authorize the Chair to sign.
3. Do not approve.
4. Board direction.

County Administrator's Recommendation:

Option 1

Attachments:

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2018- 001

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE GADSDEN COUNTY TRAVEL POLICY, SECTION I OF THE PERSONNEL RULES OF THE GADSDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL, SEVERABILITY, MODIFICATIONS THAT MAY ARISE FROM CONSIDERATION AT PUBLIC MEETING, AND CORRECTION OF SCRIVENER’S ERRORS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Gadsden County, Florida has all of the powers of self-government as provided by general or special law; and

WHEREAS, the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners (“Board”) may adopt policies not inconsistent with general or special law; and

WHEREAS, the Board previously adopted a Travel Policy within its Personnel Rules; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that the Travel Policy should be amended; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that the amendments to the Travel Policy will protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Gadsden County and serve a proper public and county purpose; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA, that:

Section 1. Incorporation of Recitals.

The foregoing recitals are hereby incorporated by reference into the body of this Ordinance, and are adopted as findings of fact.

Section 2. Authority and Purpose.

This Resolution is adopted pursuant to the County’s sovereign home rule authority for the purpose of amending the Travel Policy.

Section 3. Approval and Adoption of the Resolution.

The amendments to the Travel Policy as attached hereto as Exhibit A are hereby approved and adopted.

Section 4. Repealer.

All prior policies, resolutions and ordinances, or portions thereof, which are in conflict with the Travel Policy as set forth in Exhibit A are hereby repealed and superseded to the extent of such conflict. The remainder of the Personnel Rules shall not be amended or affected by the adoption of this Resolution or the changes to the Travel Policy.

Section 5. Severability.

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or provision of the Travel Policy is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of the Travel Policy shall be construed as not having contained said section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or provision, and shall not be affected by such holding.

Section 6. Non-Inclusion into the Code of Ordinances.

This Resolution shall not be codified in the Gadsden County Code of Ordinances, but the Travel Policy as set forth in Exhibit A shall be retained as part of the Personnel Rules.

Section 7. Modification.

It is the intent of the Board that this Resolution and the Travel Policy may be modified as a result of considerations that may arise during public hearings. Such modifications shall be incorporated into the final version of the Resolution and Travel Policy adopted by the Board and filed by the Clerk.

Section 8. Scrivener's Errors.

The County Attorney may correct any scrivener's errors found in this Resolution and Travel Policy by filing a corrected copy with the Clerk.

Section 9. Effective Date.

This Resolution and the amendments to the Travel Policy shall be effective upon adoption.

DULY READ, PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of Gadsden County, Florida after proper notice and public hearing, this 19th day of June, 2018.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

BRENDA A. HOLT, Chairperson

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS,
Clerk of the Circuit Court

APPROVED AS TO FORM FOR THE
RELIANCE OF GADSDEN COUNTY,
FLORIDA ONLY

DAVID J. WEISS, County Attorney

EXHIBIT A

1.05 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; and (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 insufficient, 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 Chairperson, or Vice-Chairperson when the Chairperson 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 to the county 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 shall apply:

- a. ~~Day trip, depending on the time of day travel begins and ends, reimbursement will be limited to meals and mileage. Travel that doesn't require an employee to leave prior to 6:00am to get to the event on time are not entitled to lodging costs.~~ **Employees and authorized persons shall not be entitled to lodging costs for travel which does not require departure from the point of origin prior to 6:00 a.m. or return to the point of origin after 9:00 p.m.**

- b. Privately owned vehicles - Mileage at the IRS rate will be reimbursed, or advanced if approved in accordance with this policy, only when privately owned vehicles are used for travel. **When privately owned vehicles are used for travel, mileage will be paid at the most current IRS rate. Mileage must be documented and recorded to the nearest whole mile. The State of Florida Department of Transportation Official Highway Mileage Chart will be used to calculate number**

of miles between the point of origin and destination. Any additional miles accrued by a traveler that exceed the miles disclosed on the advance travel form, will be at the expense of the traveler, unless the additional miles traveled were necessary and are included and documented on the travel reconciliation form.

- c. Rental Car vehicles - Car rental expense is reimbursable, but only when prior approval is obtained on the Travel Approval and Request for Advance Travel form. 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. When rental vehicles are used, the actual costs of gasoline, oil, other fluids, and required maintenance while traveling shall be reimbursed, or advanced if approved in accordance with this policy. If an advance of fuel cost is approved, the amount shall be calculated by multiplying the number of miles between the point of origin and destination according to the FDOT Official Highway Mileage Chart by the current lowest fuel price in the State of Florida. Any additional fuel costs incurred by the traveler that exceed the amounts included on the advance travel form will be at the expense of the traveler, unless the additional costs were necessary and are included and documented on the travel reconciliation form. Any additional rental car miles accrued by a traveler that exceeds the miles disclosed on the advance travel form, will be at the expense of the traveler, ~~if not~~unless the additional miles traveled were necessary and are included and documented on the travel reconciliation form.
- d. County assigned vehicles - When County assigned vehicles are used, the actual costs of gasoline, oil, other fluids, and required maintenance while traveling shall be reimbursed, or advanced if approved in accordance with this policy. 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. If an advance of fuel cost is approved, the amount shall be calculated by multiplying the number of miles between the point of origin and destination according to the FDOT Official Highway Mileage Chart by the current lowest fuel price in the State of Florida. Any additional fuel costs incurred by the traveler that exceed the amounts included on the advance travel form will be at the expense of the traveler, unless the additional costs were necessary and are included and documented on the travel reconciliation form. Any additional miles accrued by a traveler that exceed the miles disclosed on the advance travel form, will be at the expense of the traveler, unless the additional miles traveled were necessary and are included and documented on the travel reconciliation form.

Employees with personally assigned County vehicles may utilize their vehicle for travel with the approval of the County Administrator or his/her designee. Travel should not impede the daily use and availability of a County vehicle for regular departmental use. Employees must still follow the County Vehicles pPolicy 4-65 requirements.

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

The GSA provides for differential rates depending upon the location of travel.

This approach recognizes cost differential between various cities.

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.
 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 reimbursement for meals shall be charged at a limited to the maximum rate of \$10.00 for breakfast, \$15.00 for lunch, and \$25.00 for dinner. The total for meals cannot extend beyond exceed \$50.00 for one full day's travel.**
 5. **Under no circumstances may an employee be reimbursed for any meal or lodging included in convention or conference registration fees paid by the County. A continental breakfast provided as part of the conference/convention registration fee is considered breakfast and an additional breakfast meal may not be claimed for reimbursement. An evening reception or other function that serves only hors d'oeuvres are is not considered dinner and dinner may be claimed for reimbursement. ~~However, should~~ **If the conference/convention registration fee include the provision of any lunches or dinners, these meals may not be claimed for reimbursement.****
 6. **Reimbursement for lodging expense is limited to single occupancy or occupancy shared with another County traveler. Cost of lodging shared with a non-official or non-employee (e.g., family members) is limited to the single room rate. In the event of an extenuating circumstance (e.g., death, accident, illness, etc.), staff exception may be granted by the signature of the County Administrator on the travel request form, and by the Board for an elected official.**
- f. Employees and authorized persons traveling on county business, conventions and conferences included, shall have the option of traveling at a per diem **(flat 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. **Employees and authorized persons electing to**

travel at a per diem rate shall not be entitled to reimbursement of any additional amounts for meals or lodging.

- g. To claim per diem, the travel by the employee or authorized person must include an overnight stay.
- h. 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. Employees or authorized persons traveling under the actual cost option, with no per diem, shall **only be entitled to the necessary reasonable and actual travel costs expended as shown in the documentation and receipts submitted.** ~~be afforded~~ **Costs for meals and lodging shall be limited as at the rates shown in section (3)(f) of set forth in this policy.** ~~To be reimbursed for lodging the employee must submit receipts for lodging.~~
- j. ~~Employees or authorized persons who use County vehicles 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 and approve budget amendments as needed.~~ Routine travel shall generally be included in the annual budget approved by the Board. Travel that is not approved in the adopted budget may only be approved if funds are available in the travel budget and must be approved by the Chairperson, or Vice-Chair in the case of the Chairperson, prior to travel. Such travel shall be included as an informational item on the first County Commission meeting agenda following the traveler's return.
- b. Commissioners are limited to per diem or actual cost requirements as described in this policy.
- c. Commissioners must submit completed Requests for Travel forms **with all required documentation** prior to authorized travel and must submit completed forms for reimbursement **with all required documentation and receipts** 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. Failure to follow the following procedures, or to provide advance notification of absence from travel when advance travel accommodations have been made, may result in the traveler not receiving reimbursement for amounts expended by the traveler or reimbursing the County of for all costs expended by the County for travel. In the event of an extenuating circumstance (e.g. death, accident, illness, etc.), exception may be granted by the County Administrator for employees, and/or by the Chairperson, or Vice-Chair in the case of the Chairperson, Board for an elected official Commissioners.

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 or other vehicle or mode of transportation information; per diem or meals information; registration information; number of miles between the point of origin and destination according to the FDOT Official Highway Mileage Chart mileage and any other expenses noted.
3. Should a traveler elect to depart later or return earlier than what is scheduled and calculated on the Request for Advance Travel Form, it is the responsibility of the traveler to amend the travel plans and accommodations to reflect the new travel arrangements and avoid added cost to the County. Should new travel plans not be amended prior to departure or return, any overage in advance accommodations or previously allocated advance travel pay shall be reimbursed to the County. In the event of an extenuating circumstance (e.g. death, accident, illness, etc.), exception may be granted by the County Administrator for employees, or by the Chairperson, or Vice-Chair in the case of the Chairperson, for Commissioners. -All activity shall be documented on the Travel Reconciliation Form.

1.63 REIMBURSEMENT

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

1. A ~~Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses~~ Travel Reconciliation Form must be prepared and signed by the traveler as well as the County Administrator or his/her designee for County employees, or the Chairperson, or Vice-Chair in the case of the Chairperson, for Commissioners—as appropriate. The required supporting documentation and receipts must be attached and submitted to the Finance Department within 7-25 days or reimbursement will not be granted.

2. Supporting receipts are required for all costs claimed for reimbursement, including but not limited to the following: meals, fuel, transportation expenditures (rental car, airfare, etc.), hotel bill and other related expenses. Receipts for incidental expenses are required to be reimbursed for taxi fare, tolls, storage, parking fees, communication expenses, copy of program or agenda.

Employees and elected officials are responsible for obtaining and reviewing receipts for accuracy. Any hotel receipts with taxes applied should be corrected prior to leaving the hotel.

3. Employees and/or elected officials who fail to submit the Travel Reconciliation Form ~~a Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses~~, along with the supporting documentation and receipts, within ~~seven (7)~~ twenty-five (25) days following the conclusion of travel, will not receive reimbursement of such travel costs and are 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 receives a signed claim and required receipts.
5. Employees and/or elected officials that fail/partially fail to attend seminars and trainings, will be required to reimburse the County within 14 days. Reimbursement includes all costs associated to travel such as: registration fees, cost of educational 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 for employees, or by the Chairperson, or Vice-Chair in the case of the Chairperson, for Commissioners 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.

1.65 TOURIST DEVELOPMENT

In accordance with Florida Statute 125.0104, the Tourist Development department is authorized to provide, arrange, and make expenditures for transportation, lodging, meals, and other reasonable and necessary items and services in connection with the performance of promotional and other duties. Entertainment expenses shall be authorized only when meeting with travel writers, tour brokers, or other persons connected with the tourist industry. All travel and entertainment-related expenditures more than \$10.00 shall be substantiated by paid bills and justification shall be provided on the Travel Expense Report form. The actual reasonable and

necessary costs of travel, meals, lodging and incidental expenses of officers, employees and other authorized persons when meeting with travel writers, tour brokers, or other persons connected with the tourist industry and while attending or traveling in connection with travel or trade shows shall be reimbursed. With the exception of provisions concerning rates of payment, the provisions of this policy and F.S. 112.061 are applicable.