Policy D02: Travel Policy

Status: ADOPTED

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The KCATA will pay for travel expenses for KCATA employees and board members who travel outside the area for training, professional development, attendance at KCATA-related meetings or for other approved reasons related to their positions with the KCATA. All persons traveling at the KCATA's expense are expected to use good judgment, differentiate between expenditures for business and those for personal convenience and avoid unnecessary fees and excessive charges.

The following rules will apply to all KCATA employees. Exceptions to this policy, other than those related to CEO travel, may be approved in writing by the CEO, in situations where the circumstances warrant such action; however, exceptions to policy related to CEO travel must be approved by the board chair. Board members will follow this policy as well unless the board or the board chair determines that unusual circumstances justify an exception. All exceptions will be documented in writing for auditing purposes.

Authorization for Travel

KCATA employees must obtain prior authorization from the appropriate director for KCATA-related travel before the employee is allowed to incur travel expenses. Travel costs that are charged to a federal grant or fund award must first be approved in writing by the CEO or designee who oversees that particular federal program. The board chair must approve the CEO's travel in advance.

Payment Method

1. *Direct Payment by KCATA* – Board members and employees are required to register for meetings and make travel arrangements through the KCATA whenever possible so that vendors are receiving payment directly from the KCATA or through a KCATA-issued credit card when available and authorized.

2. *Reimbursement* – Board members and employees are encouraged to only pay for travel costs and seek reimbursement from the KCATA in situations where direct payment by the KCATA is not possible or practical, such as mileage reimbursements or payment for parking fees.

3. *Per Diem* – In order to avoid claims that the board member is receiving compensation in violation of any relevant and applicable law, the KCATA will not pay board members a per diem amount in excess of actual for travel expenses. Employees will be paid the lesser of actual expenses or per diem amounts if other methods are not available, or other methods are available but not practicable under the circumstances. Payment must be authorized by the CEO or designee, and will require receipts or appropriate proof of legitimate KCATA-related travel expense.

Documentation

Original itemized receipts are required for all travel reimbursements with the exception of mileage. All documentation must be submitted to the CEO or designee within 10 days of the end of the travel.

Documentation for Use of Federal Funds

When federal funds are used for travel, the KCATA must be able to justify the necessity of the travel to the federal program and demonstrate that the costs incurred were reasonable and consistent with the KCATA's travel policy. Therefore, KCATA staff or board members using federal funds for travel must provide sufficient documentation to the CEO or designee who oversees the applicable federal program. Such documentation may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. An agenda of the event attended.

2. A list of attendees at the event.

3. A written statement justifying the expense.

4. Evidence of prior written approval for the expense.

The CEO or designee may require additional information when he or she determines it is necessary.

Specific Travel Rules

Traveling by Personal Vehicle

The KCATA will pay for mileage when employees or board members travel using their personal vehicles, but only for the actual distance necessary to attend the event and only if the employee or board member is appropriately licensed to drive the vehicle and insured as required by law. The vehicle must be licensed as required by law.

Individuals who are traveling to the same destination are required to share transportation unless an exception is granted by the CEO or designee or unless the employee or board member is willing to travel at his or her own expense. When sharing transportation, only the person whose vehicle is used may claim mileage.

The mileage allowance rate represents full compensation for the costs of operating the vehicle, including fuel costs. The KCATA will not cover physical damage to the private vehicle or loss of its personal property contents. Employees and board members who choose to drive in lieu of flying when flying is considered more economical shall be reimbursed up to the amount of the air travel. Likewise, employees and board members who choose to fly when driving is more economical will only be reimbursed for the amount that would have been incurred if the employee or board member had driven.

Traveling by KCATA-Owned Vehicles or Rental Vehicles

Employees and board members may drive KCATA-owned vehicles or rental vehicles only if they are appropriately licensed to drive the vehicle and insured as required by law.

Employees and board members are expected to use safe but inexpensive transportation services. Rental vehicles should be limited to mid-class or smaller economy vehicles unless a larger vehicle is needed to accommodate the number of persons attending or the price is the same or less to use a larger vehicle.

Employees and board members who have been issued a credit card are required to use the card when purchasing fuel for KCATA-related travel expenses using KCATA-owned or rental vehicles; otherwise, the KCATA will reimburse them for fuel purchased. The beginning and ending odometer reading for the trip must be included with the reimbursement request.

Parking and Other Travel Expenses
The KCATA will reimburse employees and board members for reasonable parking fees and road tolls incurred as a necessary part of the travel, as long as proper documentation is provided.

Airplane or Other Transportation
Employees and board members are required to secure the lowest available fares for commercial airplane, train or other transportation services unless the fare would:

1. Require circuitous routing.

2. Require travel during unreasonable hours.

3. Excessively prolong the travel.

4. Result in additional costs that would offset the transportation savings.

5. Not meet the reasonable medical needs of the employee or board member.

If a board member or employee relies on one of the listed exceptions, that exception must be approved and documented.

Business Travel Requiring Overnight Accommodations
The KCATA will not pay for hotel expenses unless an overnight stay is necessary to attend the function or returning to the area would be unsafe or cause the board member or employee to travel late at night.

In general, lodging arrangements must be made prior to departure and paid by the KCATA directly or through the use of a KCATA credit card. If advanced planning is not possible, the KCATA will reimburse employees and board members for the reasonable cost of single occupancy hotel accommodations and a reasonable amount of gratuities, up to the authorized federal lodging rate for the area. Conference or corporate rates must be utilized when available. Additional costs associated with higher-than-single-occupancy rates (spouse, children or guest) are not reimbursable and must be paid by the employee or board member prior to check out.

Meals
The KCATA will reimburse employees or board members for meals that will not be paid for or reimbursed by the KCATA as part of conference or meeting registration fees, up to the federal per diem rate for the area in which the conference or meeting is located. See https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates.

Seminar and Registration Fees
Employees and board members should register for seminars and conferences in advance so that the KCATA may pay directly for the registration. In unusual situations where an employee or board member must pay directly for such expenses, the KCATA will reimburse at the lowest rate available if an adequate reason is provided. Requests for reimbursement must be accompanied by a receipt. The KCATA will only pay for late registration fees when there is a valid reason the board member or employee did not register earlier.

Unauthorized Expenses
The KCATA prohibits any expense that is unauthorized, excessive or unnecessary as determined by the CEO or designee. Unauthorized expenses include, but are not limited to:

1. Costs associated with the travel of a spouse, child or other person accompanying an employee or board member.

2. Care of a dependent of a board member or employee during the course of the travel.

3. Alcoholic beverages.

4. Snacks are authorized as KCATA-related travel expenses up to the amount of per diem; no addition allowance above the normal per diem rate will be paid for snacks .

5. Personal expenses, including personal communication expenses and laundry.

6. Entertainment, unless the entertainment expense is part of the registration for the event in which the employee or board member is participating and the expense is business related and typical for the event. These expenses should be approved by the employee's director before the trip begins.

7. Expenses for travel extending beyond the time required for the meeting or business unless it is in the KCATA's financial interest to extend the travel to obtain rate advantages.

8. Expenses incurred by non-employees traveling with the staff member or board member, including room surcharges.

9. Fines for parking or traffic violations.