

Brotherhood of  
Locomotive Engineers  
and Trainmen

Texas State Legislative  
Board

# Travel and Business Related Expenses

Policies and Procedures

---

## Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION .....	1
GENERAL .....	1
EXPENSE REPORTS .....	2
EXPENSE STATEMENT OVERSIGHT .....	3
DELINQUENCY IN SUBMITTING EXPENSE STATEMENTS.....	3
RAIL, AIR TRAVEL AND TRAVEL BY COMMON CARRIER.....	4
USE OF FREQUENT FLIER MILES.....	4
RENTAL CARS .....	4
BUSINESS MEALS AND ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES.....	5
LODGING EXPENSES.....	6
MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER EXPENSES .....	7
ITEMS OF A PERSONAL NATURE .....	7
UNION USE OF PERSONAL CREDIT CARD.....	7
REIMBURSEMENT FOR PERSONAL AUTO USAGE .....	7

## INTRODUCTION

It is recognized that in the performance of their duties as employees of the Texas State Legislative Board (TSLB) of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, a Division of the Rail Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, employees will incur travel and business related expenses. This TSLB Travel and Business Related Expense Policies supersede all previous expenses policies of the Texas State Legislative Board of the BLET as they relate to employees. It is effective April 6, 2011 and applies to all travel and business expenses of employees on and after that date. This policy will be strictly enforced.

The following are examples of travel and business related expenses covered by these policies, but are not necessarily limited to the examples:

- Expense Statements
- Air Travel
- Rental Cars
- Business Meals and Entertainment Expenses
- Lodging Expenses
- Miscellaneous Expenses
- Union Sponsored or Charitable Events
- Items of a Personal Nature
- Business Use of Personal Charge Cards
- Credit Card Statements
- Cellular Telephones
- Automobile Expenses

## GENERAL

The overall authorization of the Texas State Legislative Board of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (TSLB) travel and business related expense and reimbursement policies is set forth in Section 13(a) and (b) of the amended and restated Bylaws of the BLET, effective January 1, 2004. In accordance with the Bylaws, the TSLB will provide its employees with the financial resources necessary to pay for reasonable and ordinary travel and business related expenses incurred in the performance of their duties and responsibilities as representatives of the TSLB. In no instance are TSLB employees to receive allowances or payment for travel and business related expenses for which they have already received, or are entitled to receive, or will receive an allowance from an affiliated body or any other resource. Payment for expenses incurred which exceed what would otherwise be allowed in accordance with the Travel Policy

will be the responsibility of the employee unless there has been specific authorization from a member of the TSLB Executive Committee.

## EXPENSE REPORTS

All employees must submit a completed Expense Statement to the TSLB Office on a monthly basis which records each trip and charges for all travel arrangements made by any travel service. The Expense Statement must fully describe the union purpose of the charge or request for reimbursement, and must be submitted no later than the end of the month following the month the expenses were incurred.

All original supporting documents must be attached to the Expense Statement. A properly completed Expense Statement will document the following items:

- 1) Name and title of traveler
- 2) Date of trip(s) or meeting(s).
- 3) Description of union purpose of all trips or meetings.
- 4) Location(s) of meeting(s).
- 5) Each expense item should be listed on the Expense Statement and included under one of the appropriate headings.
  - a) Hotel
  - b) Mileage – number of miles logged in personal vehicle
  - c) Mileage reimbursement amount – miles logged times current mileage rate
  - d) Meals
  - e) Transportation – airfare, taxi fare, rail fare, parking fees, etc.
  - f) Other – tips, copy expenses, office supplies, etc.
- 6) Each meal documentation should include the following if a meeting was held during the meal:
  - a) Date
  - b) Name of restaurant
  - c) List of participants (full name and title)<sup>1</sup>
  - d) Union purpose
  - e) Original receipt must accompany the expense report
  - f) Each meal must be identified as breakfast, lunch or dinner, regardless if a meeting is held during the meal.
- 7) Requests for mileage reimbursement must include reimbursable miles, and must be properly documented.

---

<sup>1</sup> If the meal is a sustenance meal for yourself only, add the word “self.”

- 8) Airfare and rail fare must include original receipt for travel or some other evidence of travel.
- 9) Original hotel receipts must be attached to the expense report.
- 10) Hotel receipts that include charges for meals must include:
  - a) Date
  - b) Name of facility
  - c) Identify which meal of the day.
  - d) List of participants (full name and title).
  - e) Union purpose.<sup>2</sup>Rental car receipts must be attached.

Actual receipts must be submitted whenever possible; photocopies are acceptable only with a detailed explanation as to why the original is unavailable. When a receipt is not available, a full explanation of the expense and the reason for the missing receipt is required. Restaurant tear tabs and photocopies are not acceptable as receipts, unless accompanied by a full explanation. Expense reports that are incorrect or incomplete will be returned for corrective action and may result in delay or non-reimbursement of specific items.

The Expense Statement is due and must be submitted no later than the end of the month following the month the expenses were incurred (see section on Delinquency Policy).

## EXPENSE STATEMENT OVERSIGHT

All monthly expense reports from employees will be submitted for review and approval by the office of the TSLB Chairman. After each expense report submitted for approval is reviewed by the office of the TSLB Chairman, an additional internal review will be conducted by the Secretary/Treasurer of the TSLB. Any discrepancies or other issues regarding any expense report found by the Secretary/Treasurer will be returned to the TSLB Chairman for direct handling with the employee involved.

## DELINQUENCY IN SUBMITTING EXPENSE STATEMENTS

All TSLB employees are required to submit expense statements that include all necessary supporting documentation no later than the end of the month following the month in which the expenses were incurred. If a properly completed expense report is not filed timely, the TSLB will take the following actions:

- 1) Thirty days from the end of the second month in question, a letter will be sent requesting the Expense Statement or the documentation necessary to support the Expense Statement.

---

<sup>2</sup> The documentation of a. through e. may be added to the expense report itself, instead of writing on the receipt.

- 2) If the Expense Statement or supporting documentation is not received within 30 days from the date of the letter, the Executive Committee will be notified. Any charges unaccounted for in excess of 60 days from the end of the month following the month the expenses were incurred, may be considered personal in nature and will not be paid.

This policy will be strictly enforced.

No reimbursements for out of pocket expenses will be processed if submitted beyond 90 days from the date the expense is incurred or in the case of out of town travel, the last day of travel was incurred. The only exception to this policy is for extenuating circumstances beyond the individual's control (e.g. serious illness causing incapacitation for 90 days or more).

## RAIL, AIR TRAVEL AND TRAVEL BY COMMON CARRIER

The general policy of the TSLB is that all domestic rail or air travel should be by coach. In all situations, the employee should attempt to schedule travel at the lowest fare possible; i.e. advance scheduling. If authorized to travel at a higher class, the employee must note such in the remarks section of the Expense Statement. All authorizations must be in writing from the TSLB Chairman beforehand. The TSLB is responsible for the payment of travel expenses for only its employees while on TSLB business. Therefore, if family members accompany you, their travel expenses are of a personal nature and payment will be your responsibility.

## USE OF FREQUENT FLIER MILES

Employees may use their frequent flier miles for business travel when air fare is extremely costly. If the employee should elect to do so, he/she may claim payment in an amount equal to the lowest logical air fare of a three-week advanced booking, although that flight will not be used. Such payment claim will be considered earnings and subject to taxes.

## RENTAL CARS

Rental cars should be utilized only where the employee expects to incur a significant amount of business miles in connection with his/her assignment. Accordingly as a benchmark, if you expect that our total daily mileage will not exceed 25 miles, or your total weekly mileage will not exceed 125 miles, it is expected that you will utilize public transportation or taxi service in lieu of renting a car. However, we recognize that you will encounter situations where you need a rental car, in spite of not meeting the minimum mileage guidelines. Where an exception such as this occurs, you must provide an explanation in the remarks section of your Expense Statement.

Generally, union represented rental companies should be patronized whenever possible. When employees travel together or work on the same assignment, whenever possible, only one car should be rented. In addition, travelers should check with the rental car agent for any promotional rates, last-minute specials or free upgrades.

When practical, the fuel service option should be declined. When a fuel service option is declined, it is important that the vehicle be returned with a full tank of gas. Payment for gas may be made through reimbursement.

Traffic violation fines and parking fines incurred while on TSLB business will be the responsibility of the employee when using a personal or rental automobile. Any exception will require approval from the TSLB Chairman.

## BUSINESS MEALS AND ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES

The TSLB recognizes that employees will incur business related meal expenses for themselves and others in the performance of their duties. Legitimate expenses are allowable, but must be reasonable in nature and fully documented.

Although this policy establishes upper limits for meal expenses, these limits are maximums and should not be viewed as the customary or usual amount to spend on such meals. The TSLB Chairman is authorized to restrict future expenses below the established maximums if an employee regularly and consistently incurs the maximum without adequate justification.

Supporting documentation must indicate the union purpose for the expense and must identify each individual involved by full name and title. Business meal expenses will be reimbursed based on actual expenses, limited to the following maximum amounts.

The current maximum meal limits, which include all taxes and gratuities, are:

Breakfast      \$22.00 per person

Lunch            \$28.00 per person

Dinner          \$65.00 per person

The limits are specific to the intended meal and may not be combined in any way.

Tips included on meal receipts will be reimbursed; however, any tips considered excessive will not be reimbursed. As a general rule, employees should not tip more than they would on a personal trip. Any tips considered excessive will not be reimbursed.

If there are circumstances where the maximums are not sufficient for a particular need, the employee must obtain approval to exceed the limitation from the TSLB Chairman. Such approval must state the reasons for exceeding the established maximums. Approval to exceed the business meal dollar limitations must be attached to the Expense Statement for the business meal. Approvals must be made in writing prior to making the purchase.

Expenses incurred on business trips not requiring an overnight stay must be in accordance with the Travel and Business Related Policies and be necessary and reasonable. Permissible entertainment and related charges can be incurred while in the company of members, National Division, Local Division, General Committee, and Legislative Board officials, employers and others in the course of conducting TSLB official business, but must have written authorization from the TSLB Chairman. Supporting documentation must indicate the union purpose and must identify each individual by full name and title.

Meals and entertainment expenses can be reimbursement provided prior written approval has been obtained. The request for approval should include the business purpose, number of attendees, estimated cost and type of function.

## LODGING EXPENSES

Hotel accommodations should be comfortable but not extravagant. A maximum lodging reimbursement is applicable to all TSLB employees when traveling on TSLB business. The maximum lodging reimbursement is equal to 150% of the maximum federal lodging allowance as published by the U.S. General Services Administration exclusive of applicable taxes and related fees. Any additional costs for lodging in excess of these amounts, unless approved in writing in advance by the TSLB Chairman, shall be considered personal expenses to be paid by the employee.

It is the policy of the BLET to patronize union facilities whenever possible. It is recognized that when making reservations at a union represented hotel or motel, the rate may exceed the maximum lodging rate as computed above. In those situations, subject to authorization, an employee may exceed the maximum lodging amount by no more than \$75 per night. When making reservations, be sure to ask for the lowest available union/corporate rate. When there are extenuating circumstances that require a higher rate than that allowed, or previously approved, written authorization must be obtained.

An exception to the maximum lodging amount will occur when an employee is on special assignment or is directed to attend a meeting of function at a hotel/motel designated by the TSLB. In those situations, where there is not control over the rate being charged, the actual rate will be reimbursed. Employees should note this on the Expense Statement and should include



the approval obtained from the TSLB for the employee not to be held personally responsible for the excess. Persons traveling on TSLB business, who exceed these limitations without specific authorization, will be personally responsible for payment of the excess amount. Employees also should not stay in a suite at any hotel/motel unless: (i) the hotel/motel is an “all suites” facility; or (ii) the cost of the suite is not more than the maximum lodging amount described; or (iii) written advance approval is obtained from the TSLB Chairman because of special circumstances of a particular meeting.

## MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER EXPENSES

Reasonable and necessary expenses such as office supplies, reproduction, fax, mailing and printing costs incurred in the performance of your duties during a field assignment will be reimbursed.

## ITEMS OF A PERSONAL NATURE

The TSLB will reimburse its employees for all reasonable union related expenses. Expenses of a personal nature will not be reimbursed. The following are examples (not all inclusive) of personal expenses:

- Travel expenses of family members or acquaintances;
- Meal expenses of family members or acquaintances (unless the meal is part of a Union sponsored event or dinner);
- Exercise, work-out, health club, spa charges;
- In-room movies;
- Laundry/dry cleaning charges;
- Mini bar charges; and
- In-room safe charges (personal items).

## UNION USE OF PERSONAL CREDIT CARD

Personal charge cards may be used for union travel. Employees will be reimbursed for union-related fees on their personal charge card provided proper documentation is submitted. Employees will not be reimbursed for annual fees on personal charge cards.

## REIMBURSEMENT FOR PERSONAL AUTO USAGE

Employees will be reimbursed for business use of personal cars at the same rate as the standard automobile mileage reimbursement rate set by the IRS. Employees will not be reimbursed for any repairs to their personal car resulting from business travel. To be

reimbursed for use of a personal car for business, employees must provide on their Expense Statement, the date, location and purpose of the trip.