

REIMBURSEMENT FOR BUSINESS TRAVEL

Business travel is defined to include both mileage reimbursement for authorized business trips within Buncombe County which an employee makes in a personal vehicle as well as authorized business trips outside the borders of Buncombe County.

The State of North Carolina has established policies and procedures which apply to all business travel paid from state and federal funds. In order to minimize confusion, the Buncombe County Board of Education adopts the same policies and procedures to apply to the local funds under its control, with the following six exceptions:

- Meal costs incurred by the members of the Board of Education or the Superintendent may be reimbursed from local funds, when the expenditure is properly supported by actual receipts at a higher amount than the flat rate established by the state for that type of meal.
- Excess lodging costs may be approved retroactively when in the Superintendent's judgment the required advance approval process was not intentionally circumvented.
- The Superintendent may approve using local funds to provide a meal to participants in officially approved and/or sponsored activities when the state regulations would not permit state funds to be used to provide a meal.
- The Superintendent may approve reimbursing from local funds certain incidental costs of travel that are not normally reimbursable from state funds.
- The Superintendent may approve using local funds to reimburse a higher registration fee than could be paid from state funds.
- The mileage reimbursement rate used by Buncombe County Schools will automatically rise if the reimbursement rate used by the State of North Carolina rises.

I. Advance Approval Required for Travel

Costs projected to be incurred by an employee as a result of travel on school business or attendance at a professional meeting are to be approved in advance by the employee's immediate supervisor. If the travel is out-of-state, the Superintendent must also approve the proposed travel in advance of the trip being taken. In approving travel requests, the supervisor shall not exceed the amount budgeted for such purposes without securing the written authorization of the Superintendent.

Administrative and supervisory staff are encouraged to attend regional and state meetings that relate to their respective areas of responsibility. Attendance at national professional meetings should be limited to one per year, unless there are justifiable reasons for an exception. Such exceptions must be approved by the Superintendent.

Reimbursable travel expenses may include food, lodging, registration, transportation, and other business-related costs. If travel includes the use of a personal car to drive out of state on authorized school business, the reimbursement for mileage expenses incurred shall not exceed the total for round-trip, regular coach air fare to the same destination, plus other normal, usual, transportation-related expenses at the meeting site. Use of a Buncombe County Schools owned vehicle to attend an out-of-state business meeting must be approved in advance by the Superintendent. Travelers are encouraged to make special arrangements which will save public funds.

Round-trip travel between an employee's work station and home is not eligible for mileage reimbursement.

II. Deadline for Filing Request for Reimbursement or Travel Reconciliation

Employees must file a request for reimbursement of all travel-related expenses within 30 days after the end of the month in which the travel occurred unless the Superintendent specifically approves an extension of the deadline for that individual. Any requests for reimbursement received after this deadline will not be processed for payment unless an extension of time to file the request had been approved by the Superintendent. This deadline does not apply to mileage reimbursements which would amount to less than ten dollars (\$10.00) for a given month; such low-volume mileage reimbursements must be filed at least quarterly (within 30 days after the end of the calendar quarter) to be eligible for reimbursement, however.

III. Documentation Required

Receipts are not required for meals which will be reimbursed at the state-approved flat rates. Receipts are required for lodging and transportation costs (odometer and/or trip-odometer readings will suffice for travel in a personal vehicle). Receipts are also required for registration and material fees and any other incidental fees.

History of Policy 575

Adopted: August 6, 1992

Revised: September 3, 1998

Revised: May 3, 2001

NCSBA wording and revisions replacing Policy 575 were adopted: June 6, 2013