

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL REQUESTS, ADVANCES, ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO. 107.1	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/01	PAGE 1 of 12
APPROVED BY:  Director	SUPERSEDES 01/01/00	ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE 01/01/00	DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S) 1

- PURPOSE:**
- 1.1 To update Department of Mental Health (DMH) policy, criteria and guidelines governing the review and approval of employees' requests to travel on County business.
 - 1.2 To provide procedures for DMH employees to request approval to travel on County business, receive travel advances, make travel arrangements and claim reimbursement of authorized expenses.
- POLICY:**
- 2.1 **All DMH employees traveling outside of Los Angeles County on County business MUST request and receive approved written permission from the DMH Director, Chief Deputy Director or Deputy Director of the Planning and Program Support Bureau prior to the commencement of any travel.**
 - 2.2 **No approval will be given to travel when authorization is requested after the trip has been taken.**
 - 2.3 Travel within Los Angeles County is considered training. Approvals and reimbursements for training must be arranged through the DMH Training and Cultural Competency Bureau.
 - 2.4 All travel must be requested in advance using a typed Travel Request Form ([Attachment I](#)) which includes all appropriate signatures.
 - 2.5 In general, travel will be authorized on a salary-only basis. In specific cases reimbursement of some or all travel expenses may be authorized.
 - 2.6 Employees who have been authorized to travel with expenses approved and who meet certain Auditor-Controller criteria may request an advance of expense funds ([Attachment II](#)).
 - 2.7 Employees must comply with all ordinances of the County Fiscal Manual relating to submission requirements of Expense Claims ([Attachment III](#)).
- DEFINITIONS:**
- 3.1 SALARY ONLY TRAVEL

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL: REQUESTS, ADVANCES ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO. 107.1	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/01	PAGE 2 of 12
--	----------------------------------	--	------------------------------

Salary only travel is the authorization for employees to receive their County salary while traveling on County business outside of Los Angeles County and accordingly receive no other reimbursement for such travel. Travel includes employee attendance at conferences, seminars, business meetings and training sessions. No overtime may be claimed as the result of salary only travel.

3.2 TRAVEL WITH EXPENSES AUTHORIZED

Travel with expenses authorized is the authorization for employees to receive their County salary and some or all expenses while traveling outside the County of Los Angeles on business. Travel includes employee attendance at business meetings, conferences, seminars and training sessions. Employees may be authorized to receive reimbursement for transportation, lodging, registration, meals and any other allowable costs not to exceed the maximum travel expense reimbursement rates as set by the Auditor-Controller.

CRITERIA:

4.1 TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

To be eligible for authorization, travel must meet the criteria listed below:

- 4.1.1 Have a purpose directly related to the employee's function and furnish information of substantial benefit to DMH and the County.
- 4.1.2 Conference travel must be sponsored by a professional society or organization whose functions are directly related to DMH operations and attendance by the employee would afford clear benefit to DMH and the County.
- 4.1.3 Travel in general, but especially conference travel, shall be limited to one DMH representative unless there is written documentation of overwhelming justification for additional attendees.
- 4.1.4 Continuing education travel may be limited to a reasonable number of days per year per employee which may also be specifically designated in the Memoranda of Understanding for specific employee representation units.
- 4.1.5 While reviewing travel requests for approval, management shall

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL: REQUESTS, ADVANCES ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO. 107.1	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/01	PAGE 3 of 12
--	----------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------

examine all relevant factors included in, but not limited to, the following list:

- Local operational needs for adequate coverage;
- Timeliness of the submission;
- Individual need for training/skill development;
- Overall value of attendance to specific job responsibility or the mission of DMH;
- Employee's overall performance.

4.2 TRAVEL ADVANCES

Employees are eligible to request an advance warrant for approved travel expenses ([Attachment II](#)) when the following conditions are met:

- 4.2.1 Length of stay is a **minimum** of three days and two nights.
- 4.2.2 Request is submitted to the Accounting Division no later than ten (10) working days prior to the requested issue date of the warrant.
- 4.2.3 Employee is aware that he/she or a representative from his/her office is responsible for coordinating pick-up of the Travel Advance check with the Accounting Division.

5.1 TRAVEL REQUESTS

PROCEDURES:

All travel (Salary Only and Travel with Expenses Authorized) must be requested by the submission of an appropriately completed, **TYPED** Travel Request Form ([Attachment I](#)). The DMH Travel Coordinator in the Planning and Program Support Bureau at DMH Headquarters is responsible for processing, tracking and monitoring all DMH travel requests.

5.1.1 COMPLETION OF TRAVEL REQUEST FORM

Travel requests must include the following information:

- Bureau/Division/Unit name;
- Unit Cost Center Code/Fax number;
- Date form prepared;
- Employee name and payroll title;
- Destination and dates of travel (with both the exact dates of travel)

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL: REQUESTS, ADVANCES ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO. 107.1	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/01	PAGE 4 of 12
--	-------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------

- and the dates of the meeting/conference indicated);
- A detailed purpose and justification for the trip describing the benefit to the DMH and the County;
- Check boxes and complete dollar amounts for all expenses to be requested/authorized;
- Complete total estimated cost of trip;
- Check box for mode of travel only when DMH is paying the expenses;
- Travel time (actual dates of departure and arrival – which may be different from the actual dates of the meeting/conference);
- The box “Travel Advance Requested” should be checked only when a Travel Advance Request Form is also being submitted. The Travel Advance Request Form must be submitted along with the Travel Request;
- For Salary Only Travel, indicate who is paying expenses other than salary;
- Letters of invitation, conference brochures (indicating registration and other fees) or other documentation supporting the request must be attached.

5.1.2 SUBMISSION OF TRAVEL REQUEST FORMS

Employees should submit completed travel requests to their supervisor at least **ten working days** prior to the departure date. Completed travel requests shall be forwarded to each appropriate supervisory level for approval up to and including Deputy Director. Deputy Directors must submit completed travel requests to the DMH Travel Coordinator. **The DMH Travel Coordinator should receive all requests at least five (5) working days prior to the date of departure. Travel requests with Travel Advance Forms require a fifteen (15) day receipt by the DMH Travel Coordinator.**

- 5.1.2.1 Supervisors are responsible for ensuring travel requests are forwarded to the next appropriate management level in a timely manner.
- 5.1.2.2 Travel requests for Deputy Directors and above must be submitted directly to the DMH Travel Coordinator for processing.
- 5.1.2.3 The DMH Travel Coordinator shall review all requests for

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL: REQUESTS, ADVANCES ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO. 107.1	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/01	PAGE 5 of 12
--	----------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------

compliance with DMH and County policies, obtain additional information when necessary and obtains final signatures.

5.2 NOTIFICATION OF APPROVAL/DENIAL OF TRAVEL

The DMH Travel Coordinator will immediately return (by fax or hand delivery) copies of all travel requests to employees upon final disposition.

5.2.1 The DMH Coordinator will notify all travelers via e-mail when travel requests are received and again upon approval/denial.

5.2.2 Employees/supervisors should not assume travel has been approved until official notification has been received.

5.2.3 Supervisors should verify travel has been approved prior to the employee's departure.

5.2.4 The DMH Travel Coordinator may be contacted regarding the current status of requests.

6.1 TRAVEL ADVANCES

Travel advances are requested by the submission of an appropriately completed Travel Advance Form ([Attachment II](#)). The Travel Advance Form shall be submitted along with the Travel Request Form.

6.1.1 Travel advances may be requested for approved Travel with Expenses Authorized that meet the Auditor-Controller criteria.

6.1.2 Travel Advance Request Forms are available from the DMH Travel Coordinator by mail or e-mail.

6.1.3 Travel Advance Request Forms must be submitted with the completed Travel Request Form so that the signature/approval of the Director, Chief Deputy Director, or Deputy Director of the Planning and Program Support Bureau may be obtained before final processing.

6.1.4 No later than two weeks after returning from a trip using a Travel Advance, the claimant must submit an Expense Claim and attach proper receipts of expenditure in accordance with Los Angeles County Code requirements.

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL: REQUESTS, ADVANCES ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO. 107.1	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/01	PAGE 6 of 12
--	----------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------

6.1.4.1 When the Expense Claim amount exceeds the travel advance, a General Warrant will be issued to the claimant.

6.1.4.2 When the Expense Claim amount is equal to the travel advance, the Expense Claim must still be filed.

6.1.4.3 When the travel advance amount exceeds the Expense Claim amount, the employee must attach a check or money order made payable to the "County of Los Angeles" in the amount due. When a check or money order is not attached, the Auditor-Controller is authorized to take steps to collect the amount due.

6.5.1 If an expense claim is not submitted within two weeks after completion of the trip, steps may be taken to deduct any amounts advanced (including prepaid transportation) from the employee's payroll warrant.

6.2 COMPLETION OF TRAVEL ADVANCE FORMS

The Claim for Travel Advance Form must include the following information:

- Claimant's (employee's) name;
- Employee number;
- Date travel was approved (completed by DMH Travel Coordinator);
- Destination of travel;
- Amount requested (**excluding airfare**);
- Inclusive dates of travel;
- Date warrant is requested;
- Employee's signature and date.

6.3 ISSUANCE OF TRAVEL ADVANCE WARRANT

The Accounting Division staff will notify the employee when the Travel Advance Form is approved. At that time, the employee may opt to have the warrant mailed to his/her home address or may pick it up from the Accounting Division.

7.1 TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN CALIFORNIA

Travel reservations and other arrangements for approved County Travel with Expenses Authorized (**for travel within California**) must be made through ANTELOPE CORPORATE TRAVEL SERVICES.

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL: REQUESTS, ADVANCES ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO. 107.1	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/01	PAGE 7 of 12
--	----------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------

7.1.1 DMH employees should contact Antelope Corporate Travel Services and mention the California Local Government Airfare Program – YLOCAL which is a ticketless program offering discounted airfares on Southwest Airlines. Reservations can be made via fax request, telephone, internet or e-mail.

Fax: 916-920-6206
 Phone : 800-466-6874
 Internet: www.antelopetravel.com (select Marcy or Andrea)
 E-mail: marcy@antelopetravel.com (primary contact) or andrea@antelopetravel.com

7.1.2 When making reservations travelers shall provide Antelope with their name and departmental organization number. Frequent travelers may establish a profile with Antelope to simplify California and Reno travel requests.

7.1.3 TRAVELERS MUST KEEP A COPY OF THE AIRLINE TICKET CONFIRMATION NOTICE WHICH MUST BE ATTACHED TO THE EXPENSE CLAIM – EVEN IF THE ONLY TRAVEL EXPENSE IS THE AIRLINE TICKET.

8.1 TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS OUTSIDE OF CALIFORNIA

Travel reservations and other arrangements for approved County Travel with Expenses Authorized (**for travel outside of California**) should be made through the County’s travel agency, American Express Travel Management Services Company (American Express). Each Bureau/Division/Unit is responsible for making travel reservations for its employees. **It is recommended that each Bureau/Division/Unit designate one person to make all travel reservations.**

8.2 MAKING TRAVEL RESERVATIONS

American Express can be contacted at 800-582-1956. The following information must be provided when ordering tickets:

- Department name;

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL: REQUESTS, ADVANCES ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	PAGE
	107.1	09/01/01	8 of 12

- Employee name;
- Employee's unit cost center number (aka organization number)
- Dates and destination of travel.

8.2.1 **Reservations may be made prior to final approval of travel, however reservations should not be ticketed until the employee has been notified that travel is approved.**

8.3 RENTAL CARS

Prepaid vouchers are available by calling American Express at 800-582-1956. A major credit card and valid California Driver's License are required for security. Car rentals will not be authorized for employees traveling to metropolitan cities due to the availability of public transportation. Reservations for rental cars may be made only when the following conditions have been met:

- Rental of a car has been specifically indicated on the Travel Request Form, and
- No public transportation exists between the airport arrival location and the final destination, or
- Numerous locations are to be visited in a short period of time and public transportation is not available/feasible.

9.1 EXPENSE CLAIMS

Employee should submit expense claims no later than two weeks after returning from an approved trip ([Attachment III](#)). Claims should be made only for actual expenses incurred as part of approved travel. If a Travel Advance was received, the employee **MUST** submit an expense claim within two weeks (see Section 6.1.4 and 6.1.5).

9.2 **County regulations prohibit the Auditor-Controller from authorizing reimbursement for expense claims submitted later than one year from the date of travel.**

10.1 ALLOWABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

Section 5.40.095 of the County Code requires the Auditor-Controller to annually adjust the maximum travel, meal, lodging and incidental expense reimbursement rates based on annual changes in the Consumer Price Index. The current rates are internally distributed annually and are also available

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL: REQUESTS, ADVANCES ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO. 107.1	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/01	PAGE 9 of 12
--	----------------------------------	--	------------------------------

from the DMH Travel Coordinator or the DMH Accounting Division. The following list of expenses may be claimed for reimbursement, subject to prior approval by the Director, Chief Deputy Director or Deputy Director of the Planning and Program Support Bureau.

- 10.1.1 Actual cost of transportation by public carrier may be claimed upon presentation of original receipts (airfare, taxi, airport shuttle, etc.).
- 10.1.2 If a privately owned vehicle is used to travel outside of California or to counties other than Kern, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura, six cents per mile or the equivalent of the fare via the most appropriate public carrier.
- 10.1.3 Regular mileage reimbursement rates apply for travel to the above listed Counties for employees who are mileage permittees. Non-mileage permittees receive six cents per mile compensation.
- 10.1.4 Single-occupancy hotel accommodations up to the maximum set by the Auditor-Controller may be claimed upon presentation of an original receipt. Maximum reimbursement without a receipt is \$20.00.
 - 10.1.4.1 Lodging reimbursement may be approved for one night prior to the meeting/conference when public transportation is not available allowing the employee to arrive at the location prior to the start of the function.
- 10.1.5 Meals may be reimbursed up to the maximum set by the Auditor-Controller. When claiming meals on a per diem basis, receipts need not accompany the expense claim.
 - 10.1.5.1 Meals included in the cost of the meeting/conference will not be reimbursed.
 - 10.1.5.2 Meals will not be reimbursed for one-day trips to the following nearby Counties:

San Luis Obispo	Santa Barbara
Kern	Ventura
San Bernardino	San Diego
Orange	Riverside

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL: REQUESTS, ADVANCES ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO. 107.1	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/01	PAGE 10 of 12
--	----------------------------------	--	-------------------------------

10.1.6 Incidental expense allowance for travel to the following capital/major metropolitan cities may be claimed at a rate set by the Auditor-Controller:

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| Sacramento | Philadelphia |
| Chicago | San Francisco |
| Detroit | Washington, DC |
| New York | |

10.1.7 Each claim for incidental expense allowance shall be reviewed and approved on its own merits. Spending amounts greater than the normal reimbursement amounts is not sufficient justification for approval of the claim. Generally, employees must demonstrate that increased expenses are unavoidable or necessary for the efficient conduct of business. It is the employee's responsibility to provide reasonable information to support his/her claim for the incidental expense allowance.

10.1.8 Airport parking reimbursement is limited to the number of days of approved travel. For LAX, the reimbursement rate is the rate in effect in Lot C. Maximum rates are included in the Auditor-Controller's annual publication of expense reimbursement rates. The current allowable amounts are available from the DMH Travel Coordinator or the Accounting Division.

10.1.9 Airport parking original receipts are required to claim reimbursement.

10.1.10 Claims for miles driven to and from the airport should be included on the Mileage Reimbursement Form rather than the expense claim.

10.1.11 Reimbursement for rental cars will be made upon presentation of original receipts for authorized rentals that have not been secured by a prepaid voucher issued by American Express/Auditor-Controller. Any gasoline purchased for the rental vehicle will be reimbursed upon the presentation of original receipts.

11.1 COMPLETION OF EXPENSE CLAIM FORMS

Expense claims must be completed with the following information:

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL: REQUESTS, ADVANCES ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO. 107.1	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/01	PAGE 11 of 12
--	----------------------------	--------------------------------------	-------------------------

- Employee name
 - Employee home address
 - Department name
 - Employee's headquarters address (work location)
 - Date of claim (date form completed)
 - Period of claim (inclusive of travel dates)
 - Indication of each authorized expense being claimed:
 - ✓ Date – each date's expenses should be listed separately
 - ✓ Description of expense incurred
 - ✓ City where expense was incurred
 - Total of expenses being claimed
 - Employee's **payroll** title
 - Employee's signature
- 11.2 A copy of the approved Travel Request **AND** Airline Ticket Confirmation must be attached to the completed Expense Claim Form.
- 11.3 Original receipts for all claimed expenses (excluding meals) must be attached.
- 11.4 Completed expense claims must be submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor for verification, approval and initials.
- 11.5 The supervisor should submit the expense claim, along with all attachments, to the Bureau's Deputy Director for final approval.
- 11.6 The Deputy Director will return the expense claim to the supervisor for submission of all of the forms to the Accounting Division for payment processing. The supervisor will provide copies of the expense claim and all attachments to the employee.
- 11.7 Reimbursement warrants will be mailed to the employee's home address by the Auditor-Controller.

Board of Supervisors/Chief Administrative Office Guidelines for Department Head Authorization of Travel, March 11, 1987.
 Los Angeles County Travel Policy Modifications, July 3, 1997.
 Auditor-Controller Recommendations, May, 1999

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: TRAVEL: REQUESTS, ADVANCES ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	PAGE
	107.1	09/01/01	12 of 12

Los Angeles County Code – Chapter 5.40.
Los Angeles County Fiscal Manual – Chapter 7.2.0.

[Travel Request Form - Attachment 1](#)
[Claim for Travel Advance Form - Attachment II](#)
[Expense Claim Form - Attachment III](#)
[Southwest Airline Ticket Request – Attachment IV](#)

AUTHORITY:

ATTACHMENTS: