

HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

SUBJECT: TRAVEL/TRAINING REQUEST

POLICY NO. 230

**PURPOSE**

To provide guidelines and establish procedures for the approval of all travel/training requests (including salary only requests), and reimbursement to employees incurring training and business travel expenses on the County’s behalf. The travel/training policy applies to all employees of Harbor-UCLA Medical Center as provided in the County Code.

**POLICY**

Harbor-UCLA Medical Center is responsible for ensuring that County employees, members of commissions and advisory boards, and consultants engaged to work for the Department, who are required to travel on business for the County, be reimbursed for travel expenses as authorized by the Board of Supervisors.

Reimbursement for travel and training expenses may also be allowed for County employees to attend approved training seminars and continuing education programs, health-related conventions or conferences, meetings regarding legislation or regulations, meetings called by state and federal government and/or meetings related to County programs and services. All travel and training requests, including salary only requests, must be pre-approved by Harbor-UCLA Medical Center’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or designee, prior to attendance or expenses will not be reimbursed.

Exceptions:

1. Travel/Training Requests that require an exception request due to County Business Travel Restrictions (accessible on the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Finance webpage) must be reviewed and approved by the County’s Chief Executive Office. All exception requests will be submitted to the DHS Director for approval, prior to submission to the County’s Chief Executive Office for review. If approved, all other guidelines and procedures in this policy shall be followed.
2. This policy does not apply to affiliated university and non-affiliated full-time physicians special salary only travel.

**GUIDELINES**

Travel and training request procedures and guidelines must be met and the appropriate management approvals obtained in advance. Cost estimates, travel and meeting itinerary, conference brochures and/or other informational materials are to be submitted as part of the approval process and in accordance with

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 8/98**

**SUPERSEDES:**

**REVISED: 9/00, 2/02, 8/06, 1/11, 5/15, 3/16, 4/18**

**REVIEWED: 2/02, 2/05, 8/06, 5/15, 3/16, 4/18**

**REVIEWED COMMITTEE:**

**APPROVED BY:**

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**Kim McKenzie, RN, MSN, CPHQ**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

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**Anish Mahajan, MD**  
**Chief Medical Officer**

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**Patricia Soltero Sanchez, RN, BSN, MAOM**  
**Chief Nursing Officer**

Signature(s) on File.

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the provisions of the Los Angeles County Administrative Code and the Auditor-Controller's fiscal procedures.

County employees engaged to work for the Department, who are required to travel or attend training on County business are to submit such claims in accordance with the provisions of the Los Angeles County Administrative Code, the Auditor-Controller's fiscal procedures and the Department of Health Services (DHS) Travel and Training guidelines.

Travel and training claims submitted for reimbursement of costs for training, educational conferences, and related travel expenses shall be limited, where applicable, to established County rates and itemized expenses approved on the Training/Travel Cost Estimate Form. However, it should be noted that all airfare, car rental, train reservations, and lodging (unless bundling and savings conditions are met) must be booked through County's travel agency (CONCUR Solutions, hereinafter referred to as "Agency").

Reimbursed training must be related to the employee's job, and is considered "related to the job" if the primary purpose is to enable the employee to handle his/her present job more efficiently.

Attendance at conferences and educational training sessions is dependent upon meeting the needs of the service. It is the responsibility of the Department Head to assure that critical County services are maintained.

**PROCEDURE**

Each department is responsible for ensuring that requests for approval of travel/training are in accordance with DHS and Auditor-Controller Guidelines, and those records are maintained. This policy applies to all travel/training conducted on County time whereby an employee incurs travel/training expenses, including salary only.

To meet this responsibility, the following procedures are to be followed for approving travel/training requests:

**I. REQUESTING AUTHORIZATION****A. Requesting Department/Division/Service**

1. The employee seeking approval for travel/training completes the "Training/Travel Approval Request" (Appendix I) and a "Training/Travel Cost Estimate" form (Appendix II) in accordance with DHS Instructions, DHS Travel and Training Guidelines and Harbor-UCLA Medical Center's Travel/Training Request Policy. All Travel/Training instructions, policies, procedures and forms may be obtained from the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Finance webpage. In accordance with the above, the request should:
  - Provide a justification of the need to attend the seminar/training/conference and its nexus to the employee's job.
  - Include registration form, brochures, agenda, letters, etc. to support the request.
  - Clearly indicate the date, time, location of the event, registration deadline, registration fee, etc.
  - Indicate salary only, grant funded or other funding method on Appendix I and Appendix II, if applicable.
  - Itemize **all** costs associated with the event, including car rental, ride-share (e.g., Uber, Lyft), taxi, lodging, capital city allowance, etc. The quotes for airfare, car rental, train reservations and lodging must be obtained from the Agency and attached to the request.

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- Whenever possible, utilize County calling cards to make telephone calls.
  - Requests should not include meals if this is included in the registration fee.
2. Department Head (Department Chair or Executive Leadership member) reviews and signs Appendix I.
  3. Employee forwards Appendices I and II with all supporting documentation to the Travel Coordinator, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 8E-3, Box 1. To ensure sufficient processing time, all requests should be received at least **45** days prior to the scheduled travel/training, if possible. All travel/training requests must be pre-approved. See the Travel/Training Request and Reimbursement Approval Process that is posted on the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Finance webpage.
  4. Retroactive requests for approval of training will not be processed. All requests must be received and approved prior to incurring any travel expenses.

**B. Hospital Administration Travel Coordinator**

1. Upon receipt, review Training/Travel Approval Request, Training/Travel Cost Estimate forms and attachments to ensure all required documents are submitted by the employee for review and approval.
2. Reviews the submitted request forms and attachments to ensure compliance with DHS Instructions, DHS Travel and Training Guidelines and this Policy. Travel Coordinator ensures completion of all pertinent information (i.e., employee name, title of travel/training, location, costs, justification, etc.) on request forms and cost estimate. The review shall include validating the following:
  - a. Registration

The employee will pay for his/her own registration upfront and request reimbursement upon return from travel. Most often, registration is paid to the vendor in advance of travel to reserve a seat.
  - b. Airfare, Transportation and Lodging

*Airfare, car rental, train reservations and lodging arrangements **must be booked through the Agency's system**. Expenses incurred outside of the Agency's system **will not be reimbursed**. Exceptions are where the County achieves a purchasing advantage through bundling these expenses.*

    - *Airfare must be booked through the Agency to ensure travel is conducted in the most economical manner. Airfare cost is billed direct to the County's billing account by the Agency.*
    - *Hotel must be booked through the Agency and a personal credit card must be provided. Subject to pre-approval, the only exception is when lodging accommodations are bundled together with a conference/training fee and when it can be demonstrated that the conference rate is lower than that quoted through the Agency. Employee submits an expense claim for reimbursement of expenses.*
    - *Car rental arrangements and train reservations can only be booked through the Agency. Car rental costs are billed direct to the County's billing account by the Agency.*
  - c. Estimated Costs and Budget Allocation
    - Calculate estimated costs to ensure figures are accurate and enter full year allocation, YTD expenditures and balance of allocation on Travel/Training Spreadsheet. Ensures the costs claimed are in compliance with reimbursable expense amounts as

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established by Section 5.40.095 of the County Code as established by the Department of the Auditor-Controller and this policy.

- The Travel Coordinator is responsible for ensuring budget allocations are not exceeded.
3. The Travel Coordinator forwards the Training/Travel Approval Request and Training/Travel Cost Estimate forms and other materials (e.g., travel/training spreadsheet, pamphlets, brochures, flyers, etc.) to the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for review and approval.
  4. The CFO notes approval as to the budget (funding availability) and forwards to the CEO for final approval and signature. Upon determination by the CEO, the Travel Coordinator will be contacted by the CEO's office of the CEO's decision.

**II. UPON APPROVAL****A. Hospital Administration Travel Coordinator**

1. Upon receipt of Training/Travel Approval and Training/Travel Cost Estimate forms and attachments, the Travel Coordinator notifies the employee, in writing, of the determination.
2. Forwards copies of all approved and denied requests to the CFO and Expenditure Management/Accounting for their records.
3. Process travel/training as follows:
  - Approved Training/Travel Approval Request and Training/Travel Cost Estimate forms are forwarded to employee, along with an Expense Claim form (Appendix III) and other informational travel/training documents.
  - If denied, CEO's office will notify the Travel Coordinator to contact the employee/requestor via memo stating the reason for denial. The denied travel request packet will be returned to the employee, and a copy sent to the CFO and Expenditure Management/Accounting Unit.
4. All travel/training request records are required to be maintained for a minimum of five (5) years.

**B. Requesting Department/Division/Service**

1. Upon notification by the Travel Coordinator of an approved request, employee may proceed with making travel/training arrangements.
2. Employees are reimbursed for approved/allowable expenses (e.g., registration and meals, exclusive of tips and the cost of alcoholic beverages) by submitting an Expense Claim form (Appendix III). Original itemized receipts must accompany the Expense Claim form for employees to be reimbursed per the guidelines posted on the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Finance webpage. Capital city allowance and portorage receipts are not needed. The Travel Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the amounts claimed are within the approved request.

**III. UPON COMPLETION OF TRAVEL/TRAINING****A. Requesting Department/Division/Service**

1. The employee must submit the Expense Claim (Appendix III) to the Travel Coordinator within two weeks of completion of the travel/training. Original itemized receipts must be attached, in accordance with this policy (on-line receipts are acceptable). If available, include certification of training completion/attendance. Tips on meals and expenses for alcoholic beverages are non-reimbursable.

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**B. Travel Coordinator**

1. The Travel Coordinator receives completed Expense Claim forms, and all necessary attachments from the employee.
2. Reviews Expense Claim and attachments for accuracy and ensures all necessary documentation is attached. The Travel Coordinator reviews and scrutinizes all documentation (e.g., Expense Claim, receipts, Certificate of Attendance/Completion, etc.). Expense Claims will not be processed without a certificate of completion, unless the entity providing the training does not issue such documentation.
3. The Expense Claim and attachments are forwarded to the CEO for approval.
4. Upon receipt of an approved Expense Claim, the Travel Coordinator forwards to Expenditure Management/Accounting to process the reimbursement to the employee.

**C. Expenditure Management**

1. Upon receipt of the Expense Claim receipts and CEO/CFO approved Training/Travel Approval Request and CFO approved Training/Travel Cost Estimate forms from Travel Coordinator, Expenditure Management will review all Expense Claims to ensure compliance with DHS Travel and Training Request Instructions, DHS Travel and Training Guidelines and Harbor-UCLA Medical Center's Travel/Training Request policy. The review shall include confirmation of the following:
  - Department Head and Travel Coordinator have approved the travel/training forms.
  - Expense Claim form has been accurately completed and is in compliance with approved/allowable reimbursable expense amounts as established by County Code, Section 5.40.095
  - All necessary documentation, such as cost estimate, registration form, brochures, agenda, receipts, and if available, certification of completion or proof of attendance are included. Expenditure Management will notify the Travel Coordinator if documentation supporting the Expense Claim is incomplete.
2. Requests the Auditor-Controller's Office to issue a reimbursement warrant via the eCAPS on-line system. The Auditor-Controller will mail the warrant to the employee's home address.
3. Records payment transaction and updates travel log.
4. Prepares and submits Quarterly Tracking Report per HSA instructions using the Travel/Training Activity Report template provided by HSA Finance.

**REFERENCES:**

Los Angeles County Administrative Code, Chapter 5.40

Los Angeles County Fiscal Manual: Chapter 12, Los Angeles County Travel Policy

Fiscal Services Processing Procedures for Expense Claims/Request for Approval of Training/Petty Cash Reimbursement