

EVALUATOR REIMBURSEMENT INFORMATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

ACICS GUIDELINES FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Each person is expected to exercise the same caution and care for incurring expenses while traveling for ACICS activities that a prudent person exercises when traveling on personal business. The institutions we accredit pay for the expenses related to evaluation visits and may review the expenditures and reimbursement requests made by our staff and volunteer evaluators. Additionally, ACICS needs to ensure that expenditures being reimbursed are reasonable and justifiable to meet IRS regulations (accountable plan) and recommendations from our auditor.

Policy and Procedures require travel expenses to be itemized and submitted using the Concur expense reimbursement tool. Access to Concur is obtained by logging on through ACICS and clicking [LINK TO CONCUR](#)

- All expenditures must be supported by original receipts. Please attach to “8 ½ x 11” sheets of paper with tape and send them to ACICS, 750 First Street, NE, Suite 980, Washington DC 20002. Provide as much detail as possible on the nature and reason for the expenditures involved. *Failure to provide adequate documentation of expenses will void ACICS’ reimbursement responsibilities.*

The following are valid business travel expenses and will be reimbursed by ACICS if the documentation identified below is provided:

I. Transportation:

Team members are responsible for making their own transportation arrangements. Please do not schedule return transportation that would require you to leave the premises of the institution being visited before 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the visit unless advised otherwise. The Council provides travel/accident insurance for evaluators.

Air

- A. Coach/economy class fares will be reimbursed. Advance purchase (more than 7 days before date of departure) and discounted fares should be used whenever possible.
- B. Advance approval must be given by the ACICS staff member coordinating the visit for tickets costing more than \$1000.
- C. A copy of the travel itinerary with total cost paid (holds or quotes are unacceptable), departure and destination, dates of travel, and rate class is required for reimbursement.
- D. Passenger receipts without the above information are not acceptable documentation for reimbursement.
- E. Travel agent invoices for airline tickets are not acceptable documentation.
- F. Travel agent fees will be reimbursed up to \$35 per trip.

Train

Train travel to and from a visit requires the same documentation as commercial airfare. Business class is acceptable when less expensive than coach airfare. (Note: If the total cost is \$500.00 or less an airline comparison is not required.)

Personal Auto Use

- A. If personal or rental auto is used for travel from home base (i.e., personal residence or place of employment) to a visit site and back, total reimbursement for the trip is limited to the amount of the cost of round-trip coach class airfare purchased more than 7 days prior to departure.
- B. If you choose to drive from your home base to the visit location, include a printout of airline “quotes” from travel services such as Travelocity, Expedia, or Orbitz documenting what round trip coach class airfare purchased more than 7 days prior to departure would cost for travel from your home base to the visit site. (Note: If the total miles driven from your home base to the site visit and back is 400 or less an airline comparison is not required.)
- C. If a personal automobile is used to travel to and from a visit, mileage reimbursement is at the current government rate. A ”map it” mileage printout from Map Quest, AAA, etc. with home base starting address and visit ending address must accompany the request for mileage reimbursement.
- D. In-transit meals or hotel accommodations will be reimbursed during use of personal automobile to or from a visit if receipts are provided; however, the total reimbursement for mileage and other travel expenditures for the trip are limited to the equivalent of the cost of round-trip airfare as defined in A., above.

Rental Cars

- A. Rental car expenses will not be reimbursed unless approved in advance by the ACICS staff member coordinating for the visit. Preferred rental car agencies are Avis (use discount #D375300) and Hertz (use discount #0426028).
- B. Receipts should show date/time out, miles traveled, , date/time of return and total cost paid.
- C. The Council does not reimburse for **insurance coverage** of a rental vehicle.
- D. The “bring it back full” gas option should be chosen upon signing a rental agreement.
- E. If you are asked to rent a car by an ACICS accreditation coordinator and agree to do so, the Council has coverage for both Liability and Physical Damage for rented vehicles. You should complete the rental agreement with Your Name, c/o Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges & Schools, 750 First Street, NE, #980, Washington, DC 20002. This is needed to tie the company into the contract for coverage. If there is a loss or claim, it would be reported directly to the Hartford, under policy number 42SBANK8991, Hartford's direct reporting number is 1-866-467-8730 and their E-mail address is agency.services@thehartford.com

Commercial Ground Transit

- A. Taxi, commuter bus and mass transit system fares that take you between the airport, station or your hotel and the work location of an ACICS institution will be reimbursed.
- B. Airport or hotel shuttles are to be used whenever possible.
- C. Receipts are required with the following information:

1. Date of travel
2. Name of transporter (cab company, rail line, etc.)
3. Departure and arrival locations
4. Names of people riding, if more than one

II. Lodging:

Normally, hotel reservations will be made by the ACICS accreditation coordinator, but **payment is the responsibility of each team member.** (*Staff will not pay for the hotel/ lodging costs of team members. Please do not ask them to do so.*) For convenience, all team members will stay at the same hotel. The accreditation coordinator will notify team members of the name, address, and phone number of the hotel as well as the confirmation number for their reservations. In the event that travelers are unable to find reasonable flight accommodations on the last day of the visit, approval by the accreditation coordinator will be needed in order to submit for an additional night's stay.

- A. Expenses for spouses, relatives or guests' hotel accommodations or room service meals are not reimbursed. All reimbursements for hotel rooms will be at the single rate.
- B. Changes made to hotel reservations by a team member may create a rate change. Any rate increases due to changes made will be the responsibility of the team member.
- C. Reasonable personal long distance telephone calls home, related to arrival and departure plans, are authorized. Receipts are required (may be on hotel bill). Personal cell phone use is encouraged.
- D. A daily Internet connection charged to the hotel bill will be reimbursed.
- E. Reasonable laundry service is authorized on extended visits consisting of four or more visit days. Receipts are required
- F. In-room movie expenses will not be reimbursed.
- G. In-room "honor" bars/boxes/refreshments will not be reimbursed.

III.Meals and Beverages

A. A credit card "total only" receipt is not acceptable documentation. For reimbursement documentation, printed receipts should include:

1. The name and location of the restaurant
2. The names of people served
3. The food/beverages ordered
4. The date and amount of the expense

NOTE: Increasingly tips are automatically added to meal receipts. They may also be referred to as service charge or delivery charge for in room dining. Additional tipping will not be covered by ACICS. Tipping beyond 20% will also not be reimbursed.

- B. Meals charged to hotel bills must be reasonable and documented with a receipt showing:
 1. The name and location of the restaurant
 2. The names of people served
 3. The food/beverages ordered
 4. The date and amount of the expense

- C. Reimbursement for meals/food/beverages normally begins after departure from the home base and continues until returning to the home base. Therefore, reimbursement for meals/food/beverages purchased (at airports or in transit to or from the airport) before departures from or after return to your airport of departure is not normally provided. However, reimbursement will be given for meals/food/beverages purchased before departures from an airport if there is a delay in departure time or the flight is longer than three hours and for meals/food/beverages purchased after return if an unusually late arrival is involved. A written explanation should accompany requests for such reimbursements.
- D. For meal and beverage purchases only which are under \$10, a receipt is no longer necessary. However, an explanation for the expense must include the purpose of the expense, the amount and date.
- E. Lavish or extravagant meals – Each visit is unique; lavish and extravagant meals should be avoided. ACICS staff has been advised that perception by others is important when choosing restaurants.
- F. Alcohol: Discretion should be used. Perception by others is important.
 1. Reimbursement will not be made for alcohol consumed other than that served with dinner and detailed on a meal receipt. Alcohol consumed in a bar area while waiting to be seated for dinner may be considered as being served at the meal that follows.
 2. There is a maximum of 2 alcoholic beverages per dinner per person
 3. Alcoholic beverages served for group consumption, such as pitchers of beer or bottles of wine are not allowed.
 4. Prior to operating motor vehicles, abstain from consuming alcohol.

IV. Preparing Team Reports: Up to a maximum of \$25.00 will be honored for the costs of producing, duplicating, or preparing team reports or for phoning team members before or after the visit.

V. Miscellaneous: Reimbursement will not be made for prescription or over-the-counter drugs, souvenirs, clothing, books, magazines/newspapers, bar bills, or non-Council related travel.

TIPS – The maximum amount of cash tips related to maid, baggage and concierge services is \$20.00 per visit. This does not include tips for car/cab service and meals. Any excessive tipping as it relates to these and other services will be reviewed for approval and/or rejection.

VI. Honorariums:

- A. An honorarium of \$350 per actual visit day is paid to the chair of the evaluation team. The honorarium covers all telephone calls, mailing expenses, etc., incurred by the chair for team coordination and report preparation. Separate reimbursement will not be provided for these items.
- B. An honorarium of \$250 per actual visit day is paid to evaluators from outside ACICS-accredited institutions for participating as a team member.
- C. An evening school visit, when coupled with a one- or two-day visit, does not qualify an evaluator for an additional day's honorarium. Honoraria are based on the number of full

days scheduled for the visit. Each honorarium is intended to cover travel time, time on the premises, and time involved in preparing the formal report to the Council.

- D. The honoraria will be paid by the Council upon completion of the visit and receipt of reimbursement request forms with receipts incurred. All requests for reimbursement are to be sent to the Council office in Washington, D.C., not to the institution visited.

Expense forms must be submitted within 60 days of completion of the activity. Requests for reimbursement received after 60 days will not be honored.

Thank you for your work as an evaluator.