



Town of Chester

Travel Policy and Procedures

Last Updated: 10/10/2025

Approved: 10/20/2025

General Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Town of Chester to reimburse employees for work-related travel, including the cost of transportation, meals, registration and lodging, provided such travel is approved in advance by the Board of Selectman or the Town Administrator. This policy document provides staff with an organized source of information regarding Town policies and related guidelines relative to acceptable travel and the guidelines required to initiate a travel request, document travel expenses, and initiate process for reimbursement of travel related expenses.

All travel requests must be approved in accordance with this policy and performed in the conduct of official Town of Chester business. Failure to adhere to the provisions and procedures contained in this policy may result in a rejection of the requested reimbursement. The Town Administrator or his/her designee is the party responsible for reviewing travel reimbursement requests.

For purposes of mileage reimbursement, round trip mileage will be calculated using Chester's Municipal Building (or permanent work location) or the employee's residence (if closer) as the departure and arrival point. Note: reimbursement under this section does not apply to those employees presently receiving a "car or gas allowance".

Approval Process

The Board of Selectman or the Town Administrator approves travel requests for ALL employees. Department Heads must also approve all requests for travel for employees in their respective departments. Travel requests must be submitted in writing via email at least **fifteen (15) working days** in advance of the anticipated travel or deadline date for registration for conference. Requests submitted for approval less than 15 days in advance must be accompanied by a written statement by the **Department Head** justifying the timing of the submittal. Employees requesting travel shall send an email providing the following information:

- Purpose of and reason for travel;
- Destination of travel;
- The estimated cost, including transportation, lodging, and meals;

- Names of all other Chester employees in department who are travelling to the same destination;
- Duration of travel.

Reimbursement of Expenses

Employees will be fully reimbursed for all reasonable, documented costs as generally described below. All requests for reimbursement shall be submitted on the Employee Reimbursement Form and must be supported by original legible receipts, copy of a cancelled check, copy of a credit card statement showing payment unless otherwise noted herein. If a legible receipt is not submitted where required, reimbursement shall not be made. The following types of expenses are covered by this policy.

Transportation

Air Travel

- Employees should purchase round-trip “coach class/economy” tickets. All airline reservations should be made sufficiently in advance to take advantage of airline discount fares (usually 21 days in advance), if available and practical.

Rental Vehicles, Taxi, Ferry & Bus

- Employees are expected to obtain the lowest possible rental rate for cars where practical. Rental cars should be limited to mid-class or smaller vehicles, unless the number of persons attending requires a larger vehicle. Receipts must be attached to the employee reimbursement form.
- Car rental insurance is to be purchased and will be reimbursed by the Town. Pooled transportation is encouraged to reduce costs. Discounts to government employees (or conference attendees) may be available and should be requested.
- Taxi/Ferry fares will be reimbursed with appropriate receipts.
- Employees are expected to obtain the lowest possible rate for all bus fares.

Lodging

- Overnight lodging is allowable up to standard hotel room rates. Hotel bills for additional items ex: Personal telephone charges, movies will not be reimbursed. Items such as facility fees, miscellaneous charges etc. will require further explanation on bill.

- Discounts to government employees (or conference attendees) may be available and should be requested. Lodging receipt must accompany the reimbursement form.
- In general, trips of less than 100 miles one way do not qualify for an overnight stay unless there are meetings or conferences that last more than one day or there are two different meetings being held in the same location on two consecutive days, therefore saving the additional travel expenses for mileage and the traveler's additional time to and from the different meetings. Additionally, overnight stays the previous evening before the business event will not be reimbursed.

Mileage, Parking and Tolls

- Reimbursements will be allowed for parking and tolls provided that the costs are documented and reasonable. All receipts must accompany the reimbursement form.
- Mileage reimbursement rate will be made at the amount set at the IRS allowable amount.

Meals & Entertainment

- Regular Meals: Employees may be reimbursed for up to 3 meals per day, in addition to taxes and reasonable tips (not to exceed 15% when dining in and 0% when getting take out) paid with a detailed receipt. Employees will be reimbursed at no more than \$55 for 3 meals per day (please see the Town Administrator to seek approval for an exception to this amount). Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable. Please note that employees will not be reimbursed for meals if the conference is providing meals to attendees.
- Special Conference Activities: Many conferences provide activities such as tours, receptions, meals, etc., which are offered at an additional cost to the participant. These activities may be paid for by the Town, if approved in advance and if the activity is of reasonable cost and if the Town Administrator, or his/her designee, deems that the information gained would be of benefit to the Town.
- Miscellaneous: Snacks will not be approved for reimbursement.

Non Reimbursable Expenses

The following expenditures incurred by an employee in the course and scope of their duties shall not be reimbursed:

- Alcoholic beverages including liquor, beer and wine;
- The personal portion of any trip;
- Family expenses;
- Entertainment expenses, including theatre, shows, movies, sporting events, sightseeing tours, golf, spa treatments, etc.;
- Personal losses incurred while on Town business;
- Expenses paid for by any other organization;
- Valet services(exception-if no other means of parking is available);
- Personal travel insurance;
- Medical or hospital expenses;
- Theft, loss or damage to personal property while on Town business;
- Personal toiletry articles, postage, reading material, personal telephone calls while on Town business.

Restriction and Other Limitations

Employees are required to submit in writing no later than 60 days prior to event an email identifying what conferences or professional development events he/she will be required to attend in order to obtain or maintain a professional association or state sponsored designation, which has been previously approved by the Town Administrator or his/her designee. Such statement shall assume that the Town requires the employee to take the least days off possible to obtain or retain said designation.

Attendance at conferences other than those required to maintain or obtain an approved designation will be limited to two (2) calendar days per year, unless provided for in an employment contract or collective bargaining agreement.

No employee will be allowed to attend more than one professional association meeting per calendar month. Additionally, the maximum amount of Town time allowed for any such meeting shall be three (3) hours.

Out of State travel is only permitted with advanced approval of the board of Selectman and or the Town Administrator.

The board of Selectman and or the Town Administrator, reserves the right to reject any request for travel or time-off covered by this policy.

Employee Misconduct

Disciplinary or corrective action should be taken whenever it is determined that an employee falsified an employee expense reimbursement form or failed to pay their bill after the Town reimbursement.

When it has been determined that an employee has knowingly and purposefully falsified an employee expense reimbursement form, the Town may take disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If the employee has violated a local, state or federal law, proper authorities will be contacted.

Policy Abuse & Penalties

All employees are expected to adhere to the procedures outlined in this policy. Continued failure to act in compliance with this policy may result in the employee's travel privileges being revoked. Any abuse of travel policies will subject employees to disciplinary action including possible termination.

Employees' actions and behavior, while traveling on Town business at Town expense, reflect on the Town of Chester. Professionalism is expected of Chester employees at all times during this type of travel. Any action which is inappropriate or would give the appearance of being inappropriate should be avoided and may subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including employee termination.

Print Name:

Signature:

Position:

Date: