VOLUNTEER TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT POLICY FOR APWA TRAVEL AND BUSINESS EXPENSES

Effective: March 14, 2022 | Revised September 5, 2026

GENERAL POLICY GUIDELINES:

APWA shall reimburse volunteers, APWA Board of Directors, committee members, consultants, and vendors (travelers) for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred while conducting business or performing services on behalf of the association, as authorized in the approved annual budget and/or approved by the Chief Executive Officer in advance of incurring expenses.

In addition to compliance with these guidelines, good judgment, prudent spending, and a thrifty attitude are expected of all travelers who request reimbursement for any APWA business related expense under this policy. The accounting and reporting of all APWA travel and business expenses follow established IRS guidelines for an “Accountable Plan” which can be found in Treasury Regulation 1.62-2.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF DOLLAR THRESHOLDS: The dollar thresholds in this policy (including the airfare and drive-versus-fly pre-approval thresholds, meal limits, and gratuity caps) shall be reviewed annually by the Chief Financial Officer against published federal fare and per diem data and may be adjusted administratively in increments of $50 without further Board action. Material changes will be reported to the Board.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION:

APWA shall issue an APWA Travel Authorization Number for any APWA business travel/event. The Travel Authorization Number must be issued prior to any travel purchases. This Authorization number shall be sent via email by the APWA staff liaison, along with instructions on how to coordinate travel logistics and expense reimbursement.

ADEQUATE EVIDENCE:

APWA requires a receipt for all expenses. A receipt is adequate if it shows the amount, date, place, and nature of the expense. Receipts shall be submitted electronically via Concur. Hotel receipts shall itemize each item and cost, and restaurant receipts shall be itemized as well; a credit-card charge slip or tip total showing only a lump-sum amount is not adequate evidence of a meal expense.

REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT AND DEADLINES:

Requests for reimbursement of APWA travel and business expenses are to be made via Concur (www.concursolutions.com). Travelers without a Concur account can request a new user account by emailing the APWA staff liaison. Reimbursement requests should be submitted to the approving APWA staff member (Budget Manager) within thirty (30) calendar days of when the expense was incurred, but not more than sixty (60) days after completion of travel. If reimbursement requests are received after 60 days of expense occurrence, the expense may be deemed taxable by the IRS and APWA could be required to issue a 1099 tax statement. If the request is over 60 days and falls within a new fiscal year, expenses may not be reimbursed.

TRANSPORTATION:

Air Travel

Because of the variety in air travel classes of service, add-ons and upgrade fees, the following general rules apply as to what can be reimbursed: airfare for lowest-price economy or coach class including a standard assigned seat; baggage fees (maximum of two checked bags) if not free; and upgrades to meet ADA compliance. Where a carrier offers tiered economy fares, the reimbursable fare is the lowest tier that includes an assigned seat, not a premium, preferred, or extra-legroom tier. APWA does not reimburse first-class travel, in-flight movies or entertainment, Wi-Fi, business-class or early-boarding upgrades, charges to select premium, preferred, extra-legroom, or otherwise upgraded seating (unless approved by budget manager prior to travel), change fees (unless approved), or excess baggage fees.

APWA provides the Egencia online travel site as a service to volunteers. APWA will pay for flights under $600.00 once travel authorization code has been issued. Flights that cost over $600.00 require APWA staff liaison approval prior to booking. It is permissible for the volunteer to book air travel through another site, as long as the cost is less than or equal to the published Egencia fare at the time of booking. Where proof of the Egencia fare is required under this policy, the volunteer shall provide a screenshot or printout of the published Egencia fare as of the time of booking. If the cost of the fare is under $600 the volunteer does not have to show proof of the Egencia published fare. Airfares booked outside of Egencia will be reimbursed after business travel is completed, via the Concur expense report.

If the volunteer cannot find a flight under $600, they must contact their APWA staff liaison to discuss prior to booking. Without prior approval, flights that cost over $600 may not be reimbursed.

Personal Travel Extensions: A traveler who extends a trip before or after the required business dates must obtain, at the same time and from the same source, airfare quotes for both the business-only itinerary and the extended itinerary, and must submit both with the reimbursement request. APWA will reimburse the lower of the two. Any incremental airfare, lodging, ground transportation, rental car, or other cost attributable to the personal extension is the traveler’s responsibility. The traveler must notify their APWA staff liaison of a personal extension prior to booking.

Vehicle Transportation

It is permissible for the volunteer to travel by car if the total cost is less than or equal to the published Egencia airfare at the time of booking/trip planning. If the cost of car rental or mileage associated with driving their own vehicle is under $600, the volunteer does not have to show proof of the Egencia published airfare. If the cost of driving will exceed $600, the volunteer must contact their APWA staff liaison to discuss prior to traveling.

Personal Auto or Agency-owned vehicle:

In lieu of airfare, mileage expenses related to the use of the traveler’s personal auto or agency-owned vehicle, tolls and parking at destination shall be reimbursed when the total cost of driving (mileage, tolls, and parking) is equal to or less than the total cost of traveling by air, including airfare, airport parking, and ground transportation to and from the airport, at the IRS standard mileage rate for the period the expense was incurred. The volunteer is responsible for providing a screenshot or printout of the published Egencia airfare as of the time of trip planning to document that the cost of driving is equal to or less than the cost of air travel. The traveler accepts responsibility for providing personal automobile insurance coverage of at least $100,000 per person, $300,000 per accident, and $100,000 property damage when operating a personal vehicle for APWA business. If the traveler travels more than 50 miles in a calendar year using a personal vehicle, APWA may request a copy of the traveler’s driver’s license and/or proof of current personal auto insurance coverage.

Car Rental:

Car rental as the primary mode of transportation is reimbursable when the distance from the traveler's home or airport to the meeting location makes car rental (including tolls, gas and parking at destination) more economical than other modes of transportation, including use of the traveler's personal auto.

Rental-agency insurance is required on any vehicle rented for APWA business. Volunteers must purchase, at a minimum, collision/loss-damage (CDW/LDW) and liability coverage from the rental agency; these coverages are reimbursable as incidental costs of the rental. Additional add-on coverages beyond CDW/LDW and liability are not reimbursable.

The option to decline agency coverage in reliance on personal auto insurance is not available to volunteers, who are generally not vetted through an approved-driver process and whose personal coverage APWA cannot readily confirm.

Car rental at the destination location is reimbursable only when the distance from the airport to the meeting location makes car rental (including hotel parking fees) more economical than taxi, ride-share services (such as Uber or Lyft), bus or shuttle service. Reimbursable costs include taxes, assessments, insurance, tolls, parking and reasonable fuel costs. Rental cars shall be reimbursed up to the standard mid-size car class unless otherwise approved by the budget manager in advance. Before renting, the volunteer must notify their APWA staff liaison of their intent. GPS, additional drivers, or other elective add-ons are not reimbursable.

Ground Transportation:

Public transportation, ride-sourcing options such as Lyft, Uber or similar services, and airport shuttles should be used when practical and are considered cost-effective. Travelers are encouraged to coordinate and share rides when possible to/from the airport, hotel, and approved group functions.

When a volunteer transports other attendees in a personal vehicle on APWA business, the personal-auto insurance requirements above apply to that use. Volunteers should weigh this exposure when arranging shared rides and, where practical, use licensed transportation services rather than driving other attendees.

LODGING:

Reimbursement shall be made at the single-occupancy room rate (including taxes, tariffs, or other mandatory hotel fees), as well as hotel parking, reasonable gratuities for baggage handling or other assistance (up to $5 per occurrence). Expenses incurred solely to conduct APWA business are eligible for reimbursement. The hotel receipt shall itemize each item and cost. Prior approval is required for additional night(s) lodging outside of the approved trip dates.

Lodging reasonableness benchmark: Where a conference or group room block is available, travelers shall book at the group rate. Where no group rate applies, lodging is reimbursable up to 150% of the applicable GSA locality lodging rate; rates above that threshold require budget-manager approval in advance. The applicable GSA locality lodging rate is published at www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates.

MEALS:

APWA shall reimburse the actual cost of meals and incidental food and beverage purchases (including taxes and gratuity) up to $120 USD per day and a $60 USD maximum per single meal. While these are maximums allowable per day, every effort should be made to be a good steward of APWA's funds when selecting dining options. All food and beverage purchases, including snacks, count against the daily maximum. The daily maximum is a ceiling on actual documented expense and is not a per diem allowance.

APWA does not reimburse for alcoholic beverages unless consumed as part of a dinner meal, and within the established maximum dollar limit. Exceptions may apply when an expense is billable to a governmental agency. All travelers are expected to take advantage of group meal functions and shall not be reimbursed for personal meal costs when a group meal function is provided.

SPOUSE OR GUEST MEAL EXPENSES:

Expenses for spouses or guests (other than approved group meal costs) do not qualify for reimbursement by APWA. The APWA President shall be reimbursed for travel expenses for his/her spouse if related to attendance of an international partner meeting. Any such reimbursement shall be administered in accordance with applicable IRS rules and reported as required, including on IRS Form 990 where applicable.

NON-REIMBURSABLE ITEMS:

Non-reimbursable travel expenses include (but are not limited to): laundry or dry-cleaning services (with rare exceptions), spa or health and fitness club fees, clothing, flowers, movies/videos, newspapers, “mini-bar” purchases, parking fines, loss/theft of personal property, damage to personal vehicles, childcare, pet care, travel insurance, gifts, and admission fees to tourist attractions or entertainment venues. Any non-reimbursable expenses charged to APWA’s master hotel account shall be deducted from the traveler’s reimbursements; if none is due, the traveler shall be invoiced.

INJURY/ACCIDENT:

When traveling for APWA, timely report any accident or injury. First go to the nearest medical facility if emergency treatment is needed. Notify the APWA Staff Liaison within 24 hours of the injury or accident. The APWA Staff Liaison shall report the situation to the APWA HR/Office Services department, which shall contact the injured individual to file a report with the appropriate insurance parties.