

Section 18
EMPLOYEE EXPENSES
Number 18.0

Effective Date: March 1, 1996

Subject: **EMPLOYEE EXPENSES** Revised Date: January 1, 2000

Applicable To: All classified employees, as well as exempt, appointed and temporary, with the Executive Branch of the State of Vermont.

Issued By: Department of Personnel

Approved By: Kathleen C. Hoyt, Secretary of Administration

PURPOSE AND POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to outline the expenses for which employees may be reimbursed, and the method for requesting reimbursement.

Agency of Administration Bulletin 3.4 (See Appendix A) sets forth the Policy and Procedures for the reimbursement of expenses to State employees. Agency and department heads have considerable discretion with respect to assignment of employee activities that result in personal expense claims. Thus, the responsibility for authorizing employees to incur claims that are consistent with this policy and the regulations as set forth in Bulletin 3.4. remains with supervisors and managers within the reimbursing departments. The Commissioner of Personnel is required, by law, to enforce all regulations that pertain to any employee claims for reimbursement of expenses.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Only actual and necessary expenses which are incurred in the conduct of the State's business by persons acting for the State shall be reimbursed. Among the expenses that may be reimbursed are: lodging, meals, telephone calls, moving expenses, interview expenses, mileage, parking, tolls, and taxis. Extra meals, coffee breaks, entertainment charges, and personal expenses are not reimbursable expenses.

The Secretary of Administration has the final decision in any dispute or question concerning travel at State expense, and (s)he may authorize in advance deviations (still necessarily consistent with negotiated agreements and statutes) from these regulations when, in his or her judgment, such action is in the best interest of the State.

Agencies and departments should establish deadlines for employees to submit their expense accounts to avoid a long lapse in time until employees receive reimbursement for expenses incurred while conducting State business.

Please refer to the Expense and Mileage Reimbursement Article of the current Agreements Between the State of Vermont and the Vermont State Employees' Association, Inc. (VSEA) for more information. Contract provisions must be followed.

DOCUMENTATION

All claims for reimbursement must be fully justified and must be submitted on the State of Vermont Request for Reimbursement (form AAF8) (See Attachment A). Employees should check with their supervisors to determine what the agency/department internal deadlines are for processing expense accounts.

The responsibility for authorizing employees to incur claims that are entirely consistent with the regulations of Bulletin 3.4 remains with supervisors and managers within the reimbursing agency or department. Managers may request that employees provide receipts for all expenses incurred. If receipts are going to be required, the employee should be so notified prior to incurring the expense

Section 18.00 - Allowable Expenses

When an employee is away from home and the office on official duties, (s)he will be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred for travel accommodations, certain meals, postage, parking, tolls, telephone, telegraph, express mail, and other incidentals. Expenses are paid from the appropriation of the employee's department.

The Expense Reimbursement Article of the current contract states the maximum allowable reimbursement for meals.

Expenses incurred on an employee's day off will only be reimbursed provided that the Department of Personnel has: (1) recorded some form of compensation for hours worked on the day for which the employee is claiming expenses; or (2) the employee incurred the expense in travel on State business.

Section 18.01 - Lodging and Meals

Employees can only be reimbursed for actual meal expenses, up to the maximum amount set forth in the contract.

Many lodging facilities provide a special government rate, a reduction of the normal charges, to government employees. All State employees must request the government rate for lodging, if applicable.

Reimbursement for lodging is limited to the rate charge of a single room. Double rooms offered at a single room rate will be considered single rooms.

If an employee is required to attend a business meeting after normal working hours and the time between the meeting and the employee's quitting time is so short that it is not reasonable for them to travel to their residence for a meal, the

employee may request and receive reimbursement for his or her meal, even though it is taken at a work station. The request must either be signed by the agency/department head, or include the agency/department head's prior approval.

Breakfast will normally only be reimbursed on the morning following a reimbursable overnight stay, or in extraordinary circumstances such as when departing home before 5:30 a.m. to attend a meeting.

Dinner will be reimbursed when an employee is eligible to claim lodging, or when required to work beyond the normal dinner hour. Normally, an employee will not receive more than one meal during any eight (8) hour period unless (s)he is required to work overtime at least four (4) hours, away from home or regular duty station.

No reimbursement will be allowed for the cost of alcoholic beverages.

Section 18.02 - Mileage Allowance

Employees are entitled to be reimbursed for use of a privately owned vehicle at the rate established by the federal General Services Administration (GSA), for authorized automobile mileage actually and necessarily traveled in the performance of official duties. This rate changes periodically. For the current rate of mileage reimbursement, contact your personnel officer.

When at all possible, State employees should use State vehicles for travel. Gas for State vehicles can be purchased at Agency of Transportation district garages and at Vermont State Police barracks at a less expensive rate than from private businesses.

No reimbursement will be made for fares paid by a State employee to another State employee who is receiving reimbursement for mileage for the use of his or her vehicle.

Signed By Kathleen C. Hoyt, January 3, 2000

Secretary of Administration

Approved,