

# Hamblen County Government

## Comprehensive Travel Regulations

*Effective July 1, 2003*

### Introduction

1. It is the intent of these regulations that employees not suffer additional cost as a result of travel incurred to carry out assigned duties. Employees shall be reimbursed for such expenses subject to the limitations provided in this travel policy and the accompanying Reimbursement Rate Schedule.
2. When traveling, county employees should be as conservative as circumstances permit. The lower cost should be selected whenever practical. Reimbursement for travel will be based upon the most direct or expeditious route possible. Employees traveling by an indirect route must assume any extra expense incurred. It is the responsibility of the employee to be familiar with and adhere to establish county travel policies. Deliberate disregard of these regulations while traveling on county business or filing of an intentionally misleading or fraudulent travel claim are grounds for disciplinary action including termination of employment.
3. The Finance Director will establish and maintain the maximum rates of reimbursement.

### Travel Authorization

4. Travel may not be undertaken unless it is authorized in advance by proper authority. Approved county travel is the basis for reimbursement in accordance with these provisions. The employee is considered to be on official travel status, and eligible for reimbursement, at the time of departure from his/her official station or residence, whichever is applicable.
5. The department head is authorized to approve all travel for county business, including registration fees for conferences, conventions, seminars, etc. (including the cost of official banquets and/or luncheons), with the following exceptions:
  - a) The Finance Director shall approve exceptions to the travel policy and Reimbursement Rate Schedule for in-county travel, including all requests for travel at county expense by non-county employees (except for county contractors, who will be reimbursed according to the terms of their contract.)
  - b) The Finance Director shall approve all out-of-county travel authorizations, including all exceptions to the travel policy and Reimbursement Rate Schedules for out-of-county travel. The approval of the requesting department head and review by the department's fiscal office is required prior to submission to the Commissioner of Personnel.
  - c) The Finance Director retains the authority to change the approval process, as circumstances require.
6. If an employee travels into another county and back in the same day and such travel is less than 50 miles one way, such travel will be considered in-county for approval and reimbursement purposes.

# **Hamblen County Government**

## **Comprehensive Travel Regulations**

*Effective July 1, 2003*

### **Official Station**

7. The department head is responsible for establishing the official station of the employee. This is typically the location from which the employee performs the major portion of his/her assigned duties. The work station closest to an employee's residence should be designated as the official station for employees with multiple work stations. If an employee works predominantly from a home residence and reports to an office or other station less than twice a week, the employee's official station should be the home residence. Under unusual situations, the department head may designate other locations as the employee's official station.

8. The residence of the employee usually becomes the official station for an employee required to be on call at times other than the employee's normal working hours (i.e. nights or weekends). Employees working overtime on weekends are not normally eligible for reimbursement.

9. In the event that an employee is temporarily reassigned to a work location other than his usual official station, that location shall become the employee's official station. The employee will not be eligible for reimbursement unless he/she can demonstrate that by commuting to the temporary location he/she has incurred additional expense over the cost of the commute to his/her usual official station.

### **Reimbursement Procedures**

10. Employees should submit claims for reimbursement for travel expense no later than thirty (30) days after completion of travel. Departments and agencies can more effectively approve travel when timely claims are submitted. Departments and agencies should review and submit claims to the Division of Accounts as rapidly as possible to ensure prompt payment to their employees.

11. All written signatures on the travel claim must be original; electronic signatures may be utilized in accordance with procedures established by the Division of Accounts. In situations where the employee cannot sign (due to extended travel status for instance) the employee filing the claim for the employee shall sign and clearly indicate that he/she is signing for the employee. Typically the immediate supervisor must approve the travel claim.

### **Corporate Charge Cards**

12. Employees who routinely travel on county business and meet the eligibility requirements may apply for a corporate charge card through their department's fiscal office. Charges made on these charge cards are the liability of the employee.

# **Hamblen County Government**

## **Comprehensive Travel Regulations**

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### **Travel Advances**

13. Travel advances are available only under extraordinary circumstances. Advances are subject to the approval of Accounts and will be allowed only if:

- a) the employee is ineligible for a corporate charge card;
- b) the employee can justify the existence of other extraordinary circumstances that warrant an advance.

14. The amount of the travel advance will be based on 80% of the total estimated cost of travel. Advances will not be issued for less than \$100. Immediately upon return the employee must submit a request for reimbursement regardless of whether he/she owes advance moneys back to the county or is due additional reimbursement. Each employee receiving a cash advance must sign a payroll deduction authorization form which will allow the county to recover the advance from any salary owed the employee in the event of termination of employment or failure to submit a travel claim.

### **Honorariums**

15. For those employees who receive honorariums for appearing at meetings while on official county business, the employee may, at his/her option, accept the honorarium as full payment for travel expenses including airfare, or choose to surrender the honorarium to the County, and be reimbursed in accordance with established travel policy.

### **Air Travel - County Travel Agency**

16. Reservations for all air travel shall be made through the county travel agency designated by the Department of Finance & Administration. Air fares should be billed to the department's Business Travel Account. In unforeseen circumstances, direct purchase is permitted; a receipt in the form of a ticket stub must accompany the expense claim. Advantage of discount fares and advance booking should be taken whenever practical, and fares should not exceed the regular tourist or coach fares offered the general public. In accordance with procedures established with the county travel agency, electronic ticketing should be used whenever possible.

### **Taxi Fares - Airport Transportation**

17. Reasonable taxi fares are allowed from airports. It is expected that bus, limousine or light rail service to or from airports will be used when available and practical. In traveling between hotel or other lodging and meeting or conference sites, reasonable taxi fares will be allowed. No receipt is required for reimbursement of reasonable taxi fares.

# **Hamblen County Government**

## **Comprehensive Travel Regulations**

*Effective July 1, 2003*

### **Travel - County Owned Automobile**

18. County-owned vehicles should be used only for official business. Only properly authorized County of Tennessee employees may operate a Motor Vehicle Management dispatch vehicle and must possess a valid driver's license for the type of vehicle being operated. All operators of dispatch vehicles must possess and present a valid state of Tennessee employee identification card.

19. Persons taking a county vehicle out of county will also need a Credit Card Request For Out of County Travel form, and a current drivers license.

20. Emergency out of pocket expenses such as gasoline, oil or other services and emergency repairs will be reimbursed but must be accompanied by proper receipt identifying the automobile and itemizing the services. Claims for such expenditures shall be filed with the Accounts Payable Manager. Reasonable tolls and ferry fees will be allowed when necessary; no receipt is required.

### **Travel - Personally-Owned Automobile**

21. Department head authorization is required for the use of personally owned automobiles in the daily performance of duties. Unnecessary expenses which result from the use of an automobile for reasons of personal convenience will not be allowed.

22. Reimbursement for the use of personally owned cars is at the standard mileage rate. Reasonable tolls and ferry fees will be allowed when necessary; no receipt is required for reimbursement.

23. Only mileage on official county business may be claimed for reimbursement. Mileage as shown by the official state map (or determined by procedures determined by the Accounts Payable Manager) and that published by Rand-McNally for out-of-state routes will be regarded as official. Reasonable vicinity mileage will be allowed.

24. Procedures for calculating mileage are based on the fact that the County is prohibited from reimbursing employees for normal commuting mileage.

- a) If an employee begins or ends a trip at his/her official station, reimbursable mileage will be the mileage from the official station to the destination.
- b) If work is performed by an employee in route to or from his/her official station, reimbursable mileage is computed by deducting the employee's normal commuting mileage from the actual mileage driven.
- c) If an employee begins or ends his/her trip at his/her residence without stopping at his/her official station, reimbursable mileage will be the lesser of the mileage from the employee's residence to his/her destination or is/her official

# **Hamblen County Government**

## **Comprehensive Travel Regulations**

*Effective July 1, 2003*

station to the destination. On weekends and holidays, the employee may typically be reimbursed for actual mileage from his/her residence to the destination.

- d) If an employee travels between destinations without returning to his/her official station or his/her residence, reimbursable mileage is the actual mileage between those destinations.

### **Automobile Rental**

25. Advance authorization from the employing department head must be secured for automobile rental, whether for in-state or out-of-state travel. Charges for insurance for rented automobiles are not reimbursable costs; the County is insured through its general liability insurance policy. Whenever possible, employees should refuel before returning vehicles.

### **Parking**

26. Charges for routine parking while on travel status will be reimbursed. Receipts are required if the parking charge exceeds the allowance stated in the rate schedule. Charges for routine parking at the official work station will not be reimbursed.

27. If travel is by air the employee will be reimbursed for the lesser of: (a) the allowable mileage reimbursement for one round trip and long-term airport parking; or (b) the cost of one round trip taxi fare from the employee's official work station (or residence on weekends/evenings). The employee may also be allowed the appropriate mileage reimbursement for two round trips from home when driven by a friend or relative, at the employee's option.

### **Promotional Materials**

28. Fees for the handling of promotional materials or equipment will be allowed up to the maximum indicated in the Reimbursement Rate Schedule.

### **Lodging**

29. The employee will be reimbursed for actual lodging costs plus tax incurred up to the applicable maximum amounts as indicated on the Reimbursement Rate Schedule. This schedule includes state parks. Lodging receipts are required and must itemize room charges and taxes by date. If a convention rate exceeds the maximum reimbursement rate and is documented by a convention brochure or registration form, a higher reimbursement rate will be allowed. Miscellaneous lodging expenses such as energy or utility surcharges are fully reimbursable and should be added to the lodging cost in a similar manner as are local hotel or sales taxes.

# **Hamblen County Government**

## **Comprehensive Travel Regulations**

*Effective July 1, 2003*

30. The maximum reimbursement rates for out-of-state travel are the same as those maintained by the U.S. General Services Administration for federal employees within the continental United States (CONUS). The CONUS list, available on the General Services Administration web site, contains a standard reimbursement rate for lodging and meals and incidentals, and several pages of exceptions. Most destinations for out-of-state travel all within the list of exceptions.

31. If a room is shared with other than a county employee, actual costs subject to the applicable maximum rate in the reimbursement rate schedule apply. In the event of double occupancy for county employees on official travel, both employees should attach an explanation to his/her travel claim detailing dates and other employees with whom the room was shared. The lodging cost may be claimed by the employee who incurred the cost, or one half the double occupancy charge may be allowable for each employee.

### **Per Diem Rates for Meals and Incidentals**

32. The department head or elected official has the discretion to reimburse travel cost to employees at a per diem rate and/or actual expenses for any travel outside Hamblen County, or for excessive hours of work required outside the county of the employee's official station or residence. The maximum per diem rates include a fixed allowance for meals and incidental expenses (M & I). The M & I rate, or fraction thereof, is payable to the traveler without itemization of expenses or receipts. Incidentals are intended to include miscellaneous costs associated with travel such as tips for baggage handling, phone calls to home, etc. Generally, the applicable maximum per diem rate for each calendar day of travel shall be determined by the location of lodging for the traveler.

33. The per diem rates for meals and incidentals are established on the Reimbursement Rate Schedule. The M & I rates for out-of-state travel are the same as those for federal employees, and are available on the General Services Administration's web site. As with lodging, there is a standard rate for the continental United States (CONUS), and a list of exceptions.

34. Reimbursement for meals and incidentals for the day of departure shall be made at three-fourths of the appropriate M & I rate (either the in-state rate or CONUS rate for out-of-state travel) at the rate prescribed for the lodging location. Reimbursement for M & I for the day of return shall be three-fourths of the M & I rate applicable to the preceding calendar day. To assist in this calculation, the following table lists partial per diem rates for meals and incidentals for in-state and out-of-state travel.

# Hamblen County Government

## Comprehensive Travel Regulations

Effective July 1, 2003

### Per Diem Rates Three-Fourths Calculations

\$30	\$22.50
34	25.50
38	28.50
42	31.50
46	34.50
50	37.50

35. Employees who receive maintenance in the form of meals provided by their employing agency at their official work station shall be eligible for reimbursement if they are away from their official work station on county business and do not receive the maintenance meal.

36. Reimbursement for a single meal (or meals) for employees on one-day travel status with no overnight stay is not permitted. While on travel status if more than a single full meal is provided, as part of a county-sponsored training session or conference, the employee should deduct the cost of those meals from the per diem for that day, using the schedule provided below. This also applies to the day of departure and the day of return. In those instances where all meals are provided, only the \$2.00 incidental rate should be claimed. For non-county sponsored training or conferences the employee is not required to deduct from the per diem the cost of a meal or meals provided through a conference fee.

### In-State and Out-of-State Meals & Incidentals - Allocated By Meal

Per Diem	\$30	\$34	\$38	\$42	\$46	\$50
Breakfast	6	7	8	9	10	11
Lunch	8	9	10	11	12	13
Dinner	14	16	18	20	22	24
Incidentals	2	2	2	2	2	2

### Non-Standard Shift Hours

37. Employees who are scheduled to work nonstandard shifts (official work hours begin before 7 AM or end after 5:30 PM) and are eligible for meal reimbursement shall be reimbursed at one-third of the daily M & I rate for each reimbursable meal. Total reimbursement is limited to the full day M & I allowance listed in the Reimbursement Rate Schedule.

# Hamblen County Government

## Comprehensive Travel Regulations

*Effective July 1, 2003*

### Extended Travel

38. Extended travel status applies to those employees on continuous travel for a period of more than two weeks. Employees on extended travel status may elect to rent an apartment rather than live in a motel or hotel. While this option is left to the discretion of the employee and the employing department, department head approval is required prior to renting an apartment. The monthly rental allowance shall include rental furniture and payment of utilities, and shall not exceed the standard CONUS rate for thirty days.

39. Employees on extended travel status working in-county are authorized to travel to and from his/her home station once a week at the mileage rate for personal vehicles. Those employees on extended travel status working out-of-county are authorized to take one trip to the home station by common carrier once every two weeks. Employees authorized to use personal automobiles in out-of-county travel may be reimbursed at the personal mileage rate. The employee may also be reimbursed for local transportation to conduct county business.

### Telecommunications Costs While on Travel Status

40. Local phone calls, FAX charges and long distance calls for county business will be reimbursed. Employees must provide a statement furnishing the date, name and location called for long distance calls and FAX charges.

41. Department heads may authorize an employee to use his personal cellular phone in conducting county business. Authorized employees shall be reimbursed for any additional cost incurred in using their personal cellular phones on official business. An itemized statement indicating the date, name, location, and cost of each call plus a billing statement indicating that additional cost was incurred above the standard monthly charge are required for reimbursement. In some instances employees may be able to obtain lower cellular rates by purchasing a package that offers lower per minute rates for a higher threshold of minutes per month. Reimbursement is acceptable for such billing packages subject to review by fiscal officers. In such situations, the county would typically reimburse the employee for a portion of the monthly package used for business calls.

### Exceptions

42. The Finance Director shall have the authority to grant exception from any part or all of these rules and regulations when deemed appropriate for an employee or group of employees on official county travel. Approved exceptions other than those for individual trips shall be maintained in a central file by the Department of Finance and Administration. Policy exceptions, which have county-wide implications, shall be approved through established procedures in accordance with the provisions of TCA 4-3-1008 (3).



# Hamblen County Government Comprehensive Travel Regulations

*Effective July 1, 2003*

## Statutory Authority

43. In accordance with the provisions of TCA 4-3-1008 (3), these travel regulations, effective July 1, 2003, supersede and rescind all previous promulgated travel regulations and shall remain in effect until subsequently modified or rescinded.

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Amanda Simerly  
Finance Director

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David W. Purkey  
County Mayor

APPROVED:

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Joe Spoone, Chairman  
Personnel Committee

# Hamblen County Government Comprehensive Travel Regulations

Effective July 1, 2003

## Comprehensive Travel Regulations Travel Reimbursement Rate Schedule General Reimbursement Schedule

(Effective January 1, 2005)

Revised: 2/24/2005

### General Reimbursement Rates

Standard Mileage Rate	\$ 0.38/mile
Maximum Parking Fees Without Receipt	8.00/day
Fees for Handling Equipment/Promotional Materials	20.00/hotel

### Out-of-County Reimbursement Rates

Employees should utilize the U.S. General Services Administration CONUS (Continental United States) rates provided by the federal government. To view the CONUS rates, access the Department of Finance and Administration web page @ <http://www.state.tn.us/finance/> Click on Accounts; then scroll to Policy Development where there is a direct link to the GSA CONUS rates.

Use the CONUS standard rates for all locations within the continental United States not specifically shown on the CONUS web page as a listed point. Both in-county and out-of county meals and incidentals are reimbursed at 75% for day of departure and/or day of return.

### In-County Travel Reimbursement Rates

#### Level I Counties and Cities Maximum Maximum Meals

Lodging and Incidentals

Shelby County, Davidson County \$75.00 \$38.00

Gatlinburg

*(Includes Paris Landing, Montgomery Bell, Natchez Trace, Pickwick and Fall Creek Falls S. Parks)*

#### Level II Counties Maximum Maximum Meals

Lodging and Incidentals

Knox, Hamilton, Sullivan and Williamson

Counties \$65.00 \$31.00

Johnson City

*(Includes Henry Horton and Reelfoot Lake S. Parks)*

#### Level III Counties Maximum Maximum Meals

Lodging and Incidentals

All counties not listed above \$60.00 \$31.00

*In accordance with the provisions of TCA 4-3-1-8 (3) and the Comprehensive Travel Regulations, the above travel rates supersede and rescind all previous promulgated travel rates. These rates are effective November 1, 2004, and shall remain in effect until subsequently modified or withdrawn.*

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Nicole Epps, CPA  
Finance Director

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David Purkey  
County Mayor

# Hamblen County Government Comprehensive Travel Regulations

Effective July 1, 2003

## Comprehensive Travel Regulations Travel Reimbursement Rate Schedule Department Head and Board Member Reimbursement Schedule

(Effective January 1, 2005)

Revised: 2/24/2005

### General Reimbursement Rates

Standard Mileage Rate	\$ 0.38 /mile
Maximum Parking Fee Without Receipt	8.00/day
Fees for Handling Equipment/Promotional Materials	20.00/hotel

### Out-of-County Reimbursement Rates

Employees should utilize the U.S. General Services Administration CONUS (Continental United States) rates provided by the federal government. To view the CONUS rates, access the Department of Finance and Administration web page @ <http://www.state.tn.us/finance/> Click on Accounts; then scroll to Policy Development where there is a direct link to the GSA CONUS rates.

Use the CONUS standard rates for all locations within the continental United States not specifically shown on the CONUS web page as a listed point. Both in-county and out-of county meals and incidentals are reimbursed at 75% for day of departure and/or day of return.

### In-County Travel Reimbursement Rates

Level I Counties and Cities	Maximum	Minimum Meals
Lodging and Incidentals		
Shelby County, Davidson County Gatlinburg	\$85.00 + tax	\$38.00
Level II Counties	Maximum	Minimum Meals
Lodging and Incidentals		
Knox, Hamilton, Sullivan and Williamson Counties Johnson City	\$75.00 + tax	\$31.00
Level III Counties	Maximum	Minimum Meals
Lodging and Incidentals		
All counties not listed above	\$70.00 + tax	\$31.00

*In accordance with the provisions of TCA 4-3-1-8 (3) and the Comprehensive Travel Regulations, the above travel rates supersede and rescind all previous promulgated travel rates. These rates are effective November 1, 2004 and shall remain in effect until subsequently modified or withdrawn.*

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Nicole Epps, CPA  
Finance Director

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David Purkey  
County Mayor