

ORDINANCE NO. 155

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF MOUNT CARMEL, TENNESSEE,
TO ESTABLISH TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT REGULATIONS FOR
TOWN OFFICIALS AND TOWN EMPLOYEES CONDUCTING OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION ONE

That the Code of Ordinances, Town of Mount Carmel, Tennessee, is hereby amended
by adding a new chapter to Title 1, which said chapter reads as follows:

CHAPTER 5

TRAVEL AND EXPENSE REGULATIONS

SECTION

- 1-501. Purpose.
- 1-502. Enforcement.
- 1-503. Travel Policy.
- 1-504. Travel Reimbursement Rate Schedules.
- 1-505. Administration Procedures.

1-501. Purpose. The purpose of this chapter and referenced regulations is to bring the Town into compliance with Tennessee Public Acts 1003, Chapter 433 which requires Tennessee municipalities to adopt travel and expense regulations covering expenses incurred by "any Mayor and any member of the local governing body and any board or committee member elected or appointed by the Mayor or local governing body, and any official or employee of the municipality whose salary is set by Charter or general law" to provide consistent travel regulations and reimbursement. This chapter is expanded to cover regular Town employees. It is the intent of this policy to assure fair and equitable treatment to all individuals traveling on Town business at Town expense.

1-502. Enforcement. The chief administrative officer (CAO) of the Town or his or her designee shall be responsible of the enforcement of these travel regulations.

1-503. Travel Policy. (a) In the interpretation and application of this chapter, the term "Traveler" or "Authorized Traveler" means any elected or appointed municipal officer or employee, including members of municipal boards and committees appointed by the Mayor or the municipal governing body, and the employees of the Town or such boards and committees who are traveling on official municipal business and whose travel was authorized in accordance with this chapter. "Authorized Traveler" shall not include the spouse, children, other relatives, friends or companions accompanying the authorized traveler on Town business, unless the person(s) otherwise qualifies as an authorized traveler under this chapter.

(b) Authorized travelers are entitled to reimbursement of certain expenditures incurred while traveling on official business for the Town. Reimbursable expenses shall include expenses for transportation; lodging; meals; registration fees for conferences, conventions, and seminars; and other actual and necessary expenses related to official business as determined by the CAO. Under certain conditions entertainment expenses may be eligible for reimbursement.

(c) Authorized travelers can request either a travel advance for the projected cost of authorized travel or advance billing directly to the Town for registration fees, air fares, meals, lodging, conferences, and similar expenses. Travel advance requests will not be considered documentation of travel expenses. If travel advances exceed documented expenses, the traveler

must immediately reimburse the Town. It will be the responsibility of the CAO to initiate action to recover any undocumented travel advances.

(d) Travel advances are available only for special travel and only after completion and approval of the travel authorization form.

(e) A travel expense reimbursement form shall be used to document all expense claims.

(f) To qualify for reimbursement, travel expenses must be:

(1) Directly related to the conduct of the Town business for which travel was authorized, and, (2) Actual, reasonable, and necessary under the circumstances. The CAO may make exceptions for unusual circumstances. Expenses considered excessive by the CAO will not be allowed.

(g) Claims of \$5 or more for travel expense reimbursement must be supported by the original paid receipt for lodging, vehicle rental, phone calls, public carrier travel, conference fees, and other reimbursable costs.

(h) Any person attempting to defraud the Town or misuse Town travel funds is subject to legal action for recovery of fraudulent travel claims and/or advances.

(i) Mileage and motel expenses incurred within the Town will not ordinarily be considered eligible expenses for reimbursement.

1-504. Travel Reimbursement Rate Schedules. Authorized travelers shall be reimbursed according to the federal regulation rates. The Town's travel reimbursement rates will automatically change when the federal rates are adjusted. The municipality may pay directly to the provider for expenses such as meals, lodging, and registration fees for conferences, conventions, seminars, and other education programs.

1-505. Administrative Procedures. The Town adopts and incorporates by reference, as if fully set out herein, the administrative procedures submitted by the Municipal Technical Advisory Services to, and approved by, the Comptroller of the Treasury, State of Tennessee in June, 1993. A copy of the administrative procedures shall be kept on file in the office of the Town Recorder.

SECTION TWO

LEGAL STATUS PROVISIONS

A. Conflict With Other Ordinances

In case of conflict between this ordinance or any part thereof, and the whole or part of any existing or future ordinance of the Town of Mount Carmel, Tennessee, the most restrictive shall in all cases apply.

B. Validity

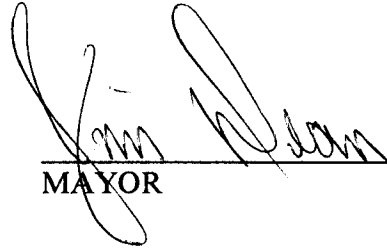
If any rule, section, or sub-section of this ordinance is held by any court to be invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not invalidate, otherwise effect any of the other rules, sections, or sub-sections of this ordinance unless it clearly appears that such other rule, section, or sub-section is wholly or necessarily dependent for its operation upon the rule, section or sub-section so held invalid or unconstitutional.

C. Effective Date

This ordinance shall become effective upon passage, the public welfare requiring.

Passed 1st Reading	<u>12-15-94</u>	Ayes	<u>4</u>	Nays	<u>3</u>	Other	<u> </u>
Passed 2nd Reading	<u>1-24-95</u>	Ayes	<u>4</u>	Nays	<u>3</u>	Other	<u> </u>

Publication: Kingsport Times
Publication Date: 3-10-95


MAYOR

ATTEST:


Town RECORDER

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Town ATTORNEY

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

TRAVEL REQUESTS

To ensure reimbursement for official travel, an approved travel authorization form is required. Lack of pre-approval doesn't prohibit reimbursement, but it does assure reimbursement within the limits of the town travel policy. All costs associated with the travel should be reasonable, estimated, and shown on the travel request form. An approved request form is needed before advanced expenses are paid or travel advances are authorized. A copy of the conference program, if applicable, should be attached to the form. If the program isn't available prior to the travel, submit it with the reimbursement form.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION

It's the responsibility of the authorized traveler to:

1. prepare and accurately describe the travel,
2. certify the accuracy of the reimbursement request,
3. note on the reimbursement form all direct payments and travel advances made by the town, and
4. file the reimbursement form with the necessary supporting documents and original receipts.

The reimbursement form should be filed within 10 days of return or at the end of the month, whichever is more practical.

TRANSPORTATION

All potential costs should be considered when selecting the modes of transportation. For example, airline travel may be cheaper than automobile when time away from work and increased meal and lodging costs are considered. When time is important, or when the trip is so long that other modes of transportation aren't cost-beneficial, air travel is encouraged.

If the traveler goes outside the state by means other than air, the reimbursement will be limited to air fare at tourist or economy class, ordinary expenses during the meeting dates, and one day's meals and motel before and after the meeting. The traveler will be required to take annual leave for any additional time taken beyond the day before and the day after the meeting dates.

Exceptions: When the traveler extends the trip with personal time to take advantage of discount fares, the reimbursement will be limited to the lesser of:

1. the actual expenses incurred or
2. the amount that would have been incurred for the business portion only. The calculations of the business portion of the trip must be made using the least expensive rates available.

All expenses and savings associated with extending the trip must be submitted with the expense reimbursement form.

A. Air

When possible, the traveler should make full use of discounts for advance airline reservations and advance registration. The traveler should request conference, government, or weekend rates, whichever is cheaper, when making lodging or rental car reservations. The town will pay for tourist or economy class air travel. The traveler should get the cheapest reasonable fare and take advantage of "Super Saver" or other discount fares. Airline travel can be paid by direct billing to the town.

Mileage credits for frequent flyer programs accrue to the individual traveler. However, the town won't reimburse for additional expenses -- such as circuitous routing, extended stays, layovers to schedule a particular carrier, upgrading from economy to first class -- for travelers to accumulate additional mileage or for other personal reasons.

The town won't reimburse travel by private aircraft unless authorized in advance by the CAO.

B. Rail or Bus

The town will pay for actual cost of ticket.

C. Vehicles

Automobile transportation may be used when a common carrier can't be scheduled, when it's more economical, when a common carrier isn't practical, or when expenses can be reduced by two or more town employees traveling together.

- * **Personal Vehicle.** Employees should use town vehicles when possible. Use of a private vehicle must be approved in advance by the CAO. The town will pay a mileage rate not to exceed the rate allowed by the federal or state schedule, whichever the town adopts. The miles for reimbursement shall be paid from origin to destination and back by the most direct route. Necessary vicinity travel related to official town business will be reimbursed. However, mileage in excess of the Rand-McNally mileage must be documented as necessary and business-related. If an indirect route is taken, the Rand-McNally mileage table will be used to determine the mileage to be reimbursed.

If a privately owned automobile is used by two or more travelers on the same trip, only the traveler who owns or has custody of the automobile will be reimbursed for mileage. It's the responsibility of the traveler to provide adequate insurance to hold harmless the town for any liability from the use of the private vehicle.

In no event will mileage reimbursement, plus vicinity travel and associated automobile costs, exceed the lowest reasonable available air fare and associated air fare travel costs.

Travelers won't be reimbursed for automotive repair or breakdowns when using their personal vehicle.

- * **Town Vehicle.** The town may require the employee to drive a town vehicle. If a town vehicle is provided, the traveler is responsible for seeing that the vehicle is used properly and only for acceptable business. The employee will be reimbursed for expenses directly related to the actual and normal use of the town vehicle when proper documentation is provided. Out-of-pocket repair cost to the town vehicle in excess of \$100 must be cleared with the proper town official before the repair is authorized.
- * **Rental Cars.** Use of a rental car isn't permitted unless it's less expensive or otherwise more practical than public transportation. Approval of the car rental is generally required in advance by the CAO. Always request the government or weekend rate, whichever is cheaper. Anyone who uses a rental car for out-of-state travel must obtain liability coverage from the vendor.
- * Fines for traffic or parking violations won't be reimbursed by the town.
- * Reasonable tolls will be allowed when the most direct travel route requires them.

D. Taxi, Limousine, and Other Transportation Fares.

When an individual travels by common carrier, reasonable fares will be allowed for necessary ground transportation. Bus or limousine service to and from airports should be used when available and practical. The town will reimburse mileage for travel to and from the local airport and parking fees, provided such costs don't exceed normal taxi/limousine fares to and from the airport. Receipts are required.

For travel between lodging quarters and meetings, conferences, or meals, reasonable taxi fares will be allowed. Remember, original receipts are required for claims of \$5 or more. Transportation to and from shopping, entertainment, or other personal trips is the choice of the traveler and not reimbursable.

Reimbursement claims for taxis, limousines, or other ground transportation must be listed separately on the expense form, claiming the destination and amount of each fare.

Lodging

The amount allocated for lodging shall not ordinarily exceed the maximum per diem rates authorized by the federal or state rate schedule, whichever is chosen by the town.

- A. If the town reimburses using the federal rates, the Federal Travel Register provides guidelines for determining the maximum that can be reimbursed for lodging. These amounts are available by requesting a copy of the IRS Publication 1542. The rates in

that publication are the maximum reimbursable rates for hotel rooms. (Taxes on lodging are **not** included in the per diem limitation.)

If the town chooses Tennessee’s reimbursement rate, the amount is \$33, plus appropriate taxes.

- B. Original lodging receipts must be submitted with the reimbursement form. Photocopies aren’t acceptable.
- C. If a traveler exceeds the maximum lodging per diem, excess costs are the responsibility of the traveler.
- D. If the best rate is secured, and it still exceeds the maximum lodging per diem, the CAO may authorize a higher reimbursement amount.

Even if it costs more, travelers may be allowed to stay at the officially designated hotel of the meeting; however, more moderately priced accommodations must be requested whenever possible. It will be the traveler’s responsibility to provide documentation of the "officially designated meeting site" room rates, if these rates are higher than the normal reimbursable amounts.

- E. If two or more town employees travel together and share a room, the lodging reimbursement rate will be the maximum of two single rooms. If an employee shares a room with a non-employee, the actual cost will be allowed up the maximum reimbursable amount. The receipt for the entire amount must be submitted with the expense form.

Meals and Incidentals

Receipts aren’t required for meals and incidentals. The authorized traveler may be reimbursed the daily amount based on the rate schedule and the authorized length of stay. The per diem meal amounts are expected to cover meals, tips, porters, and incidental expenses. The authorized traveler won’t be reimbursed more than this.

Whether meals may be claimed depends on when the traveler leaves and returns to the official station. The traveler’s official station is home or work, whichever produces the least cost to the town. When partial day travel is involved, the current per diem allowance is determined as follows:

<u>Meal</u>	<u>If departure before</u>	<u>If return after</u>
Breakfast	7 a.m.	8 a.m.
Lunch*	11 a.m.	1:30 p.m.
Dinner**	5 p.m.	6:30 p.m.

- * Generally, lunch won't be reimbursed unless overnight travel is involved. Lunch may be reimbursed if departure is before 11 a.m. and the employee is eligible to be reimbursed for dinner.
- ** When overnight travel is involved, dinner reimbursement is made regardless of departure time.

Regardless of which reimbursement rate the town uses, the amounts include tip, gratuity, etc. The hour and date of departure and return must be shown on the expense reimbursement form.

The excess cost of an official banquet may be allowed provided proper documentation or explanation is submitted with the expense reimbursement form. If a meal is included as part of a conference or seminar registration, or is included with the air fare, then the allowance for that meal should be subtracted from the total part of the conference fee, the maximum meal allowance for the day should be reduced by the allowed dinner amount.

PLEASE NOTE:

The municipality has selected to reimburse travelers at the state travel regulation rates. The town's rates will automatically change when the selected State of Tennessee rates are adjusted.

Miscellaneous Expenses

- A. Registration fees for approved conferences, conventions, seminars, meetings, and other educational programs will be allowed and will generally include the cost of official banquets, meals, lodging, and registration fees.

Registration fees should be specified on the original travel request form and can include a request for pre-registration fee payment.

- B. The traveler may be reimbursed for personal phone calls while on official travel, but the amount will be limited to \$5 per day.
- C. A \$4 allowance will be reimbursable for hotel/motel check-in and baggage handling expenses.
- D. Laundry, valet service, tips and gratuities are considered personal expenses and aren't reimbursable.
- E. For travel outside the United States, all expenses claimed must be converted to U.S. dollars. The conversion rate and computation should be shown on each receipt.

Entertainment

The town may pay for certain entertainment expenses provided that:

- A. the entertainment is appropriate in the conduct of town business;

- B. the entertainment is approved by the CAO;
- C. the group or individuals involved are identified; and
- D. documentation is attached to the expense form to support the entertainment expense claims.

To request reimbursement for authorized entertainment expenses, be sure to include with the expense reimbursement form:

- A. required receipts. All requests must be supported by original receipts from the vendor (restaurant, caterer, ticket office, etc.). Reasonable tips and gratuities included on the receipt by the vendor are reimbursable.
- B. a disclosure and explanation statement, explaining the purpose of the entertainment and identifying the group and the number of people entertained (or individual names listed if not a recognized group).

If the CAO is the person filing the claim, then it must be approved by the governing board before payment is authorized.

TRAVEL RECONCILIATION

- A. Within 10 days of return from travel, or by the end of the month, the traveler is expected to complete and file the expense reimbursement form. It must be certified by the traveler that the amount due is true and accurate. Original lodging, travel, taxi, parking, and other receipts must be attached.

If the town provided a travel advance or made advanced payment, the traveler should include that information on the expense form. In the case of advances, the form should have a reconciliation summary, reflecting total claimed expenses with advances and town pre-payments indicated. The balance due the traveler or the refund due the town should be clearly shown -- below the total claim on the form or in a cover memo attached to the front of the form.

- B. If the traveler received a travel advance and spent less than the advance, the traveler should attach a check made payable to the town for that difference.
- C. The CAO will address special circumstances and issues not covered in these procedures on a case-by-case basis.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Violation of the travel rules can result in disciplinary action for employees. Travel fraud can result in criminal prosecution of officials and/or employees.

STATE AND FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT RATE COMPARISON

The following travel reimbursement rates are current (June 1993) for some of the more common travel expenses. State officials are discussing an increase in the rates below, but nothing's final.

Expense Item	State Rates	Federal Rates
Personal Vehicle	.22 cents mile	.28 cents mile
In-State Meals		
Breakfast	\$4	\$5
Lunch	\$6	\$8
Dinner	\$9	\$13
Out-of-State Meals		
Breakfast	\$6	*
Lunch	\$8	*
Dinner	\$14	*

* Generally, the meal rate for in-state and out-of-state is the same. Exceptions to this include those locations designated as a **high-low substantial method** locality. (For a definition of this term, see IRS publication 1542.) There are less than 70 cities nationwide that qualify for the maximum \$34 food allowance and none of these cities are in Tennessee.

Lodging (amounts + applicable taxes) \$33*
\$40**

* The CAO is authorized to make exceptions to the lodging amount for out-of-state, high-cost city lodging.

** Except in those locations that qualify as a **high-low substantial method**, and listed in IRS Publication 1542. For municipalities that adopt the federal rates, there are about 500 cities that qualify. The Tennessee cities that meet the federal criteria for higher room rate reimbursement are:

- * Chattanooga - \$45
 - * Columbia - \$49
 - * Gatlinburg - \$63
 - * Johnson City - \$54
 - * Kingsport/Bristol - \$45
 - * Knoxville - \$53
 - * Memphis - \$56
 - * Murfreesboro - \$44
 - * Nashville - \$52
 - * Shelbyville - \$52
- Initial check-in service fee \$4 \$0

TOWN OF MOUNT CARMEL
AUTHORIZATION FOR TRAVEL

I hereby request authority for travel on official town business to the destination on the dates and for the purpose indicated below:

DATE	CITY & STATE	HOTEL ADDRESS	PURPOSE OF TRIP

ACCOMPANIED BY _____

Applicant _____ Department Account _____

Signature _____

Total Estimated Cost of Travel \$ _____

SPECIAL FUNDING REQUESTS (Circle Items Requested)

- (1) Registration Prepayment
- (2) Prepaid Air Line Tickets
- (3) Travel Advance of \$ _____

APPROVAL (Please Note--Approval of Travel Requests by the Signatory below indicate that adequate funding is provided in appropriations to cover the estimated cost of this travel.)

Signature _____ Signature _____

Department Head Chief Administrative officer

TOWN OF MOUNT CARMEL
AUTHORIZATION FOR TRAVEL

I hereby request authority for travel on official town business to the destination on the dates and for the purpose indicated below:

DATE	CITY & STATE	HOTEL ADDRESS	PURPOSE OF TRIP

ACCOMPANIED BY _____

Applicant _____ Department Account _____

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Total Estimated Cost of Travel \$ _____

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Signature _____ Signature _____

Department Head Chief Administrative officer

Hot Topics for Tennessee cities and towns

March 17, 1998 #34

Federal and State Reimbursement Rates for Travel

Federal Rates

For those cities that elected to reimburse for travel using the federal reimbursement rates, the federal government has increased the vehicle-cents-per-mile reimbursement rate to 32.5 cents per mile, up from 31.5 cents per mile in 1997.

Federal reimbursement rates have remained the same in most Tennessee cities. The standard federal rate is \$50 per night for lodging and \$30 per day for meals and incidentals (M&I). However, there are higher reimbursement rates in some of Tennessee's larger cities. Please see the chart below for those rates.

City	County	Lodging	M & I	Total
Chattanooga	Hamilton	\$62	\$30	\$92
Gatlinburg	Sevier			
(May 1 - Nov. 30)		\$85	\$34	\$119
(Dec. 1 - April 30)		\$61	\$34	\$95
Knoxville	Knox County, city of Oak Ridge	\$59	\$34	\$93
Memphis	Shelby	\$79	\$30	\$109
Murfreesboro	Rutherford	\$52	\$30	\$82
Nashville	Davidson	\$91	\$38	\$129
Townsend	Blount			
(May 1 - Oct. 31)		\$77	\$30	\$107
(Nov. 1 - April 30)		\$50	\$30	\$80

Federal reimbursement rates for out-of-state travel vary from state to state. For a complete listing of federal per diem rates, please reference the IRS publication #1542. Or, you can find a complete listing of federal per diem rates on the Internet at www.fss.gsa.gov.

State Rates

Reimbursement rates for the state of Tennessee remain unchanged, but for your information some of those rates are restated below.

Reimbursement Rates for In-State Travel

- Mileage \$.24 per mile
- Maximum parking fees without receipt \$4.50 per day
- Lodging Level I (general state travel) \$37.00 + tax
- Lodging Level II (Gatlinburg, and Davidson, Hamilton, Knox, and Shelby Counties) \$50.00 + tax

Meals Per Day

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Total
Level I	\$ 5	\$ 7	\$10	\$22
Level II	\$ 5	\$ 8	\$11	\$24

Reimbursement Rates for Out-of-State Travel

Lodging Level I -- Travel Sites

Hotel/motel per day (all locations except Levels II - IV) \$55 + tax

Lodging Level II -- Travel Sites

Hotel/motel per day \$70 + tax

- Connecticut
 - Massachusetts
 - Akron, OH
 - Atlanta, GA
 - Baltimore, MD
 - Bethesda, MD
 - Buffalo, NY
 - Canton, OH
 - Charleston, SC
 - Cincinnati, OH
 - Cleveland, OH
 - Columbus, OH
 - Denver, CO
 - Ft. Lauderdale, FL
 - Indianapolis, IN
 - Jacksonville, FL
- Kansas City, MO
 - Miami, FL
 - Milwaukee, WI
 - New Orleans, LA
 - Orlando, FL
 - Providence, RI
 - Richmond, VA
 - Rochester, NY
 - Rockville, MD
 - St. Louis, MO
 - Salt Lake City, UT
 - Seattle, WA
 - Syracuse, NY
 - Tampa, FL
 - Toledo, OH
 - Wilmington, DE

Lodging Level III -- Travel Sites

Hotel/motel per day \$95 + tax

- Boston, MA
 - Chicago, IL
 - Dallas, TX
 - Detroit, MI
 - Hartford, CT
 - Los Angeles, CA
- Minneapolis, MN
 - Philadelphia, PA
 - Phoenix, AZ
 - Pittsburgh, PA
 - San Diego, CA
 - San Francisco, CA

Lodging Level IV -- Travel Sites

New York City and Washington, D.C. \$117 + tax

Meals Per Day

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Total
Level I	\$ 6	\$ 8 10	\$14	\$28
Level II	\$ 7	\$10	\$15	\$32
Levels III & IV	\$ 8	\$12	\$16	\$36

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