

Travel Regulations

Prepared by
Management Council
Legislative Service Office

December 2023



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Wyoming Legislature

Travel Regulations

December 2023

Foreword

These Management Council Travel Regulations are a recompile of existing policies and regulations with some modifications intended to reflect existing practices and procedures.

TRAVEL REGULATIONS MANUAL

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TRAVEL REGULATIONS
WYOMING STATE LEGISLATURE

A. In-State Travel - Legislators

1. Session Compensation. Salary, per diem and travel expenses are authorized for members of the Wyoming Legislature for traveling to and from and attendance at sessions of the Legislature subject to the following terms and conditions:
 - a. Salary and per diem at the rate specified by law shall be paid for each day commencing with the date the session convenes and continuing through the date the session adjourns. Compensation during a member's absence from the session is subject to Management Council Policy 07-02;
 - b. Except for legislators who reside in the Cheyenne area, all legislators shall receive:
 - (i) One (1) day per diem for travel to and one (1) day per diem for travel from the session;
 - (ii) Mileage for one (1) round trip to and from Cheyenne and their home, point to point by the nearest practicable route.
 - c. Members may receive mileage reimbursement for one (1) trip home each week of the session.
2. Compensation for Interim Activities. Salary, per diem and travel expenses are authorized for members of the Wyoming Legislature for in-state travel during the interim between sessions of the Legislature subject to the following terms and conditions:
 - a. Interim Activities for Which Compensation is Authorized. Salary, per diem and travel expenses are authorized for traveling to and from and attending meetings of:
 - (i) Any joint interim committee, select committee or subcommittee of the Legislature or other committee of the Legislature of which the legislator is a member;
 - (ii) Any legislatively created committee, task force or other group to which the legislator has been officially appointed as a member by the presiding officer of his house or by other legislative action. Upon approval by Management Council, salary, per diem and travel expenses are authorized for traveling to and from meetings of any executive or judicial branch created committee, task force or other group to which the legislator has been officially appointed as a

member by the presiding officer of the member's house or by the executive or the judicial branch. (Management Council Minutes 12/21/2023);

- (iii) Any group or organization, including educational seminars and state agency meetings or hearings, if the chairman of a committee or subcommittee specifically authorizes such attendance as being directly related to approved committee work or if approved by the Management Council.
- b. Computation of Mileage and Per Diem. Mileage shall be computed from point to point by the nearest practicable route. Per diem shall be paid for each day a legislator engages in authorized interim activities and for each day reasonably necessary to travel to and from such activities. Per diem shall be the amount determined on July 1 of each year by the state auditor that is equal to the most recent per diem rates established by the United States general services administration for locations within Wyoming. (Management Council Minutes 12/21/2023)
- c. Expenses Charged to Appropriate Committee or Activity. Salary, per diem and travel expenses shall be charged to the appropriate committee or activity budget as approved by Management Council. No legislator shall be reimbursed for salary, per diem or travel expenses in excess of the amounts approved by the Council in the budget for that committee or activity.
- d. Exceptions to Standard Compensation. Salary, per diem and travel expenses shall be paid at the rates specified by law except:
- (i) Committee chairmen may specify that salary shall not be authorized for activities related to approved committee work such as tours when the committee does not convene on the day of the activity;
 - (ii) Any legislator may elect to waive any portion of any salary, per diem or travel expenses to which he is otherwise entitled;
 - (iii) Salary for travel days and meeting preparation shall be paid in accordance with Management Council Policy 08-02.
 - (iv) Legislators shall receive salary and per diem under the Local/Short meeting policy contained in Part A.2.e of these regulations unless they elect to opt out of that policy by so advising the Legislative Service Office;
 - (v) The Management Council may establish policies with respect to receipt of salary, per diem and mileage for special in-state events involving the Legislature, e.g. where Wyoming hosts meetings of

legislative organizations such as the Western Legislative Conference, or for budget "school" or "seminar" for legislators, etc.;

- (vi) Legislators shall be reimbursed for the cost of commercial or private transportation, such as charter or private aircraft or rental vehicles, to the extent the cost does not unreasonably exceed the regular mileage allowance plus reasonable per diem;
 - (vii) Mileage shall not be paid to the extent a state aircraft or vehicle is used for transportation. State aircraft may be used for transportation when the cost does not unreasonably exceed the regular mileage allowance plus reasonable per diem.
- e. Special Policy for "Local" or "Short" Meetings. Special compensation policies apply to certain interim meetings as listed below. They were established by the Management Council as a reasonable way to deal with video meetings of short duration and meetings in the near vicinity of a Legislator's residence.

Because all Legislators are entitled under law to full salary and per diem for attending interim committee meetings regardless of the location or length of the meeting, any Legislator may choose to "opt out" of the following policy by contacting the LSO Fiscal Officer.

The policy is as follows:

- (i) Local Meetings.
 - (A) For attending a meeting in a location where the Legislator is not entitled to mileage under current procedures, a legislator will be paid 1/4 day per diem regardless of the length of the meeting.
 - (B) For attending a meeting where the Legislator is entitled to mileage for 50 miles or less one-way (100 miles or less round trip) and overnight lodging is not involved, a legislator will be paid 1/2 day per diem regardless of the length of the meeting. (Management Council Minutes 1/4/2016; 12/21/2023)
- (ii) Short Meetings. The following policies apply to meetings of less than three (3) hours, whether the meeting is in person, by video or by telephone conference call:
 - (A) For local meetings as defined in paragraph (i) above, the Legislator will be paid:
 - 1/2 day salary (\$75.00)
 - 1/4 day per diem

(B) For meetings where the Legislator is entitled to mileage for 50 miles or less one-way (100 miles or less round trip) the Legislator will be paid:

1/2 day salary (\$75.00)
1/2 day per diem

(C) For meetings where the Legislator is entitled to mileage for more than 50 miles one-way (over 100 miles round trip) the Legislator will be paid the full statutory rates, i.e.,:

One day salary (\$150.00)
One day per diem (Management Council Minutes 1/4/2016; 12/21/2023)

f. Waiver of Per Diem for Expenses Paid by State.

When expenses for meals or lodging which would otherwise be paid from a legislator's statutory per diem allowance are paid directly by the State (e.g., meals and lodging which are included as part of a registration fee paid by the Legislative Service Office or other state agency) the legislator may elect to waive an amount equal in value from the per diem allowance to which he would otherwise be entitled by signing and filing a disclaimer with the Legislative Service Office. In determining the value of meals, reference shall be made to values established by the State Auditor's Office accounting policies. (Management Council Minutes 10/24/2005)

g. Non-Governmental Committees, Task Forces, etc.

Unless funds are specifically appropriated by the legislature, members are not authorized compensation for serving on boards, commissions, advisory councils, committees, task forces, etc. that are not created by the legislative, executive or judicial branches of state government. (Management Council Minutes 1/9/2014; 12/21/2023)

B. Out-Of-State Travel - Legislators

1. Salary. Salary is not authorized for out-of-state trips.

2. Special Terms and Conditions. Reimbursement for out-of-state travel expenses are subject to the following terms and conditions:

a. Authorized Out-of-State Travel. Reimbursement is authorized for approved travel as follows:

(i) Meetings of National Organizations. Subject to Section B.2.b(vii) of this handbook, legislators may, without prior approval, attend two (2) meetings of a national or regional organization in which the

Legislature participates, during the interim between each session. Travel to meetings of these organizations in excess of the two (2) meetings must, however, be specifically approved in advance by the Management Council (Management Council Minutes 01/24/2008). "National or regional organizations in which the Legislature participates" includes the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), the Council of State Governments (CSG) {this includes the Western Legislative Conference}, the Education Commission of the States, and the Energy Council (travel to Energy Council meetings is limited to members appointed to the Energy Council), and the State Legislative Leaders Foundation (SLLF) (travel limited to members of House and Senate Leadership). (Management Council Email Poll 8/6/2014)

- (ii) Meetings of Committees, Task Forces or Other Groups to Which the Legislator is Appointed. Salary, per diem and travel expenses approved by Management Council for traveling to and from out-of-state meetings of any committee, task force or other group to which the legislator has been officially appointed as a member by the presiding officer of the member's house, by other legislative action or by the executive or the judicial branch shall count towards a members' two (2) preapproved out-of-state meetings under subsection (i) of this section.
- (iii) Other Travel Requires Management Council Authorization. All other out-of-state travel must be specifically approved in advance by the Management Council (Management Council Minutes 01/24/2008). Members seeking funding under this paragraph, shall state in their request the number of out-of-state trips taken by the member for which reimbursement by the state has been authorized, and shall provide a general description and mission statement of the organization sponsoring the activity. (Management Council Minutes 8/31/2015; 1/4/2016). Absent extraordinary circumstances, travel under this paragraph will generally be approved only if it relates to:
 - (A) A significant substantive topic currently under study or consideration by the Legislature; or
 - (B) A training opportunity specifically focused on development of legislative skills. (Management Council Minutes 08/10/2009)
- (iv) Travel Outside Continental U.S. Notwithstanding paragraphs (i) through (iii) of this subsection, approval by at least two-thirds (2/3) of Management Council members is required to attend any meeting held outside the Continental United States, i.e. the lower 48 states and the

District of Columbia. (Management Council Minutes 8/31/2015; 1/4/2016; 12/19/2017)

- b. Reimbursement for Actual Expenses; Conditions and Restrictions. Travel expenses for out-of-state travel shall be reimbursed for the actual amount of the costs incurred subject to the following:
- (i) Registration fees may be paid directly by the Legislative Service Office or the legislator may elect to pay registration fees directly and be reimbursed. Payment of registration fees shall be limited to the lowest amount offered for advance registration at the meeting.
 - (ii) Reimbursable costs are limited to transportation costs, lodging and meals which are not provided as part of the registration fee for the meeting. Reimbursement for meals shall be limited to the lesser of actual costs or \$60 per day. No reimbursement shall be made for the cost of alcoholic beverages.
 - (iii) Legislators shall be reimbursed for the cost of commercial or private transportation such as charter or private aircraft or rental vehicles to the extent the cost does not unreasonably exceed the regular mileage allowance plus reasonable per diem.
 - (iv) If air travel is reimbursable under this subsection, legislators shall be reimbursed the lesser of actual expenses or the cost of commercial coach class airfare at the time of purchase. (Management Council Minutes 1/4/2016)
 - (v) Mileage shall not be paid to the extent a state aircraft or vehicle is used for transportation.
 - (vi) A legislator may elect to waive any portion of travel expenses to which he is otherwise entitled. Mileage shall be computed from point to point by the nearest practicable route.
 - (vii) The Management Council may limit travel or expenditures for travel to stay within the approved budget.
 - (viii) Unless excused for good cause by a vote of Management Council, if a member cancels travel to an out-of-state meeting after the expense for air fare has been incurred or paid by the state, the cancelled trip will be counted against the member's total authorized trips for that year. If the member subsequently receives a full or partial refund of the ticket price or uses the ticket for personal travel, the amount of the refund or the value of the ticket for personal travel shall be reimbursed to the state. As used in this paragraph, "good cause" will typically be limited

to severe weather, illness or injury of the member or family emergencies. (Management Council Minutes 11/16/2011)

C. Travel Policies - Legislative Staff

1. Travel by members of the staff must be authorized and approved by the director, who shall be responsible for maintaining such travel expenses within the approved budgetary limits.
2. Staff members shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses for in-state or out-of-state travel. Staff members will be reimbursed at the rate paid to state employees for use of their own vehicles, for each mile actually and necessarily traveled in their own vehicle in performance of authorized and approved activities. Mileage shall be computed from point to point by the nearest practicable route.

Reimbursable costs are limited to transportation costs, lodging and meals which are not provided as part of any registration fee for a meeting. No reimbursement shall be made for the cost of alcoholic beverages.

D. Special Travel Authorization.

1. In addition to travel authorized by Part A.2.a.(i) through (iii) and Part B.2.a of these travel regulations, and subject to available budget, during the interim the Chairman of Management Council, or in his absence the Vice-Chairman, may authorize mileage expenses, or may authorize the use of state aircraft, for the transportation of one or more members of the legislature who have been designated by the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman to attend a meeting or other activity related to official legislative business, or to attend a special ceremony or function as an official representative of the legislative branch of state government. (Management Council Minutes 02/28/2007)
2. A member seeking authorization to use the state aircraft under this subsection shall request the LSO to prepare in advance an estimate of costs to present to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Management Council prior to authorization being granted. (Management Council Minutes 10/27/2008)
3. No payment shall be made to the aeronautics division or to any other executive agency as reimbursement for a legislative member's travel on the state aircraft at the member's individual request, or at the invitation of an executive agency, unless the LSO has certified to the aeronautics division in advance that payment of the travel expense has been specifically authorized in accordance with this subsection. (Management Council Minutes 10/27/2008)

E. Vouchers; Receipt Requirements

1. Vouchers Required. Claims for the payment of expenses must be made by voucher, signed by the claimant and by the officer or officers authorized to approve them. Claims

for reimbursement of expenses shall be based on actual expenses, within the limitations specified in these rules, for staff and out-of-state travel for legislators, and on the per diem allowance for in-state travel for legislators.

2. Claims for Actual Expenses; Receipts. When the claim is for actual expenses, the voucher shall contain or have affixed thereto a full itemized statement covering each item of expense for which reimbursement is claimed. False claims are punishable as provided in W.S. 6-5-303. When the claim for reimbursement of expenses is based upon the per diem allowance, an itemized statement is not necessary. Receipts to support claims are required except for meals and incidental expenses of less than \$15.00.

Claims for meals and incidental expenses in excess of \$15.00 shall be supported by original itemized vendor receipts, or by a sworn statement attesting to the expense signed by the claimant under penalty of W.S. 6-5-303, attached to the voucher. (Management Council Minutes 11/16/2011)

3. Vouchers Must Include Dates. Legislators submitting claims for salary or per diem allowances must specify on their voucher the day when performance of the activity entitling them to such payments commenced and when it terminated.

F. Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix A sets out a number of frequently asked questions concerning Legislative Travel.

Appendix A

A. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING TRAVEL EXPENSE VOUCHERS.

WILL I BE ALLOWED AN EXTRA TRAVEL DAY TO RETURN HOME ON THE DAY FOLLOWING A COMMITTEE MEETING?

A rule of reason is applied based generally upon the time the meeting adjourns and the distance and conditions under which the legislator has to travel.

If a meeting in Cheyenne adjourns at 4:30 p.m., a legislator living in Laramie or Wheatland clearly would not be expected to request an additional travel day, whereas a legislator living in Cody would. The answer is not, however, always so clear, e.g., a meeting ends at 4:30 p.m., the legislator has a 2.5 hour drive home, it has been snowing all day and the roads are expected to be icy. In this situation an additional travel day might be warranted. The Legislative Service Office considers meal and travel break times, map mileage, geography and prudent speed, weather, road and other driving conditions faced by the member in determining reasonableness.

In all questionable circumstances, the final determination will be left to the discretion of the committee chairman. **Please make a note** of the special circumstances on the voucher to alert the LSO Fiscal Officer.

IF I ATTEND A COMMITTEE MEETING AND INCLUDE A PERSONAL OR BUSINESS TRIP EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER THE MEETING, HOW DO I INDICATE THAT ON MY TRAVEL EXPENSE VOUCHER?

State the date(s) of the personal or business trip, as well as your departure and arrival dates at your city of residence on the reimbursement schedule.

IF I TRAVEL TO A MEETING WITH ANOTHER LEGISLATOR IN HIS CAR, AM I STILL ENTITLED TO MILEAGE?

No. When two or more legislators travel together in the same vehicle, only the member whose vehicle is actually used for the trip is entitled to submit a claim for reimbursement. (See Management Council Policy 08-02(a)(iv)). (Management Council Minutes 1/4/2016)

WHAT IF I COMPLETE MY TRAVEL VOUCHER AND STATE THAT I PLAN TO GO HOME THE DAY OF THE MEETING AND AM STOPPED HALF-WAY BY ROADS CLOSED TO SNOW, OR BY SOME OTHER NATURAL HAZARD?

When you return home, call the LSO Fiscal Officer or leave a message that you did not return as planned and the reason. Your voucher will be altered accordingly.

HOW DO I INDICATE THAT I WISH TO DECLINE PER DIEM WHEN THE MEETING OCCURRED IN MY HOME CITY OR WITHIN ONE DAY'S TRAVEL?

Simply write the statement on the reimbursement schedule. If you are declining per diem, write "NO PER DIEM REQUESTED"; if declining salary, write "NO SALARY REQUESTED"; if declining mileage, write "NO MILEAGE REQUESTED"; if declining both per diem and mileage, write "NO TRAVEL REQUESTED". Note: you can also decline portions of reimbursement, e.g., "1/2 day salary only requested."

WHAT IF I AM OVER OR UNDER PAID ON SOME PORTION OF A TRIP?

Call the LSO Fiscal Officer concerning the error so it may be corrected. Unless the overpayment is extreme, cash the check. Adjustments may be made on the next meeting you attend or on another voucher.

IF I ATTEND A COMMITTEE MEETING FOR THE GOVERNOR OR ANOTHER BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT AND THEY REIMBURSE ME, MUST I ALERT LSO THAT I TOOK THE TRIP?

It is a good idea to alert the LSO Fiscal Officer who can coordinate with the agency to ensure that you are not reimbursed by two state agencies for the same day. Also, it is more economical to the state if taxable items, i.e. salary and federally taxable mileage, are placed on the Legislatures' special payroll.

HOW SOON WILL I RECEIVE COMPENSATION FOR ATTENDING THE MEETING?

Normally within five (5) working days for items which are not subject to federal tax. However, salary and taxable per diem are reimbursed on the payroll only on the last day of each month.

B. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING OUT-OF-STATE MEETINGS.

WHAT TYPE OF RECEIPTS MUST I RETAIN TO ATTACH TO THE TRAVEL VOUCHER FOR AN OUT-OF-STATE MEETING?

The original motel/hotel bill and air receipt are required. Receipts are also required for meals and any incidental expenses including parking fees, taxis, shuttles, etc., over \$15.00. If you do not have a vendor's itemized receipt for an expense over \$15.00 contact the LSO fiscal officer to obtain a "sworn statement" form that will satisfy Part E.2 of these travel regulations.

I LOST THE HOTEL BILL, HOW DO I GET REIMBURSED?

You must contact the hotel and request a copy. The only other alternative is to request per diem in lieu of actual expenses if the hotel room is low enough that you could cover the room and meals with the per diem.

IF I TAKE A GUEST, HOW IS REIMBURSEMENT HANDLED?

Note on the hotel bill the additional cost for the room and the tax which applies. If there is a special group rate for single or double, please note that as well.

Reimbursement is not allowed for: Meals for spouse or any other guests; liquor; in-room movies; transportation for personal entertainment; and meals included in the registration fee. Do not include costs of meals or other expenditures paid for another legislator.

THERE ARE BIG SAVINGS IF I STAY OVER A SATURDAY NIGHT, BUT MY MEETING IS OVER BEFORE THAT. MAY I STAY OVER TO GET THE LOWER AIRFARE?

Yes. The guideline is "Whatever is the lesser ..." Savings in airfare have been up to \$500 in some cases, which more than compensates for

the cost of the room and meals to stay over another day. If the hotel room is \$160 and the airfare savings \$145, the answer would be no, because it would cost more to stay over.

MAY I MAKE MY OWN MEETING REGISTRATION? HOW?

While LSO is willing to do this for you, you may, of course, complete your own registration form. Do not pay the registration fee for yourself, just mark "bill the state" in the "voucher/purchase order" box, and enclose your check for any guests.

It is imperative that you notify the LSO Fiscal Officer that you have made your own registration so she can add your name to the registration voucher eliminating the billing cost. In some cases the Fiscal Officer also needs this information in order to pay the registration fee before the cut-off or discount date.

Remember you will only be reimbursed for registration fees at the lowest amount offered for advance registration, so watch for the early registration cutoff.

WILL LSO MAKE MY AIR AND HOTEL RESERVATIONS?

No. LSO is not authorized to guarantee your hotel reservation and cannot make travel arrangements.

WILL LSO REIMBURSE MY AIR FARE IN ADVANCE OF THE TRIP?

Yes. You must provide a copy of the itinerary and proof that you have paid for the ticket. Note: most travel agencies will bill the LSO directly for airline tickets.

MAY I STAY OVER TO INCLUDE A PERSONAL TRIP AFTER THE MEETING?

Yes. However, as with in-state meetings, state the dates of the personal trip on the reimbursement schedule. The personal days will be listed as such on the voucher and no reimbursement will be made for that portion of the trip.

MAY I FLY TO ANOTHER CITY ON MY RETURN TRIP?

Yes. However, ask your travel agent to give you a note of the amount due only for the official legislative trip if you pay the entire fare. If

the fare is billed to LSO, the amount due for official business and the amount due for the personal trip must be clearly noted.

WHAT IF I HAVE TO CANCEL A FLIGHT AT THE LAST MINUTE?

If the cancellation is due to a personal reason, you cannot be reimbursed. However, if you are ill and unable to fly or there is a tragedy in your family, reimbursement may be possible. See Part B.2. b.viii of these travel regulations relating to cancellation of air travel.