



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

ISSUED	REVISED	NO.
12/01/1988	12/26/18	Page 1 of 18

APPROVED

*Natalie Robottom*

#### 1.0 POLICY:

Parish Officers and employees of St. John the Baptist Parish Council may charge against Parish accounts normal and reasonable travel and travel-related expenses incurred for a Parish business purpose.

#### 2.0 TRAVEL REGULATIONS:

Pursuant to the authority extended by the Louisiana Constitution, the following travel regulations have been established by the St. John the Baptist Parish Council. The regulations and allowances contained herein pertain to travel of Parish Officers, Parish employees, and Parish Council Members on official Parish business, the expenses incurred thereon and the maximum claims for reimbursement that will be allowed. These regulations apply to all Parish agencies, boards, and commissions created by the Parish Council and operating from funds whether appropriated, dedicated, self-sustaining and/or federal funds.

#### 3.0 DEFINITIONS:

For the purposes of this section, the following words have the meaning indicated:

**Authorized Persons** - Advisors and consultants. Reimbursement of travel expenses for authorized persons shall require prior written approval from the Parish Council.

**Conference/convention** – A meeting (other than routine) for a specific purpose and/or objective. Non-routine meetings can be defined as a seminar, conference, convention, or training. Documentation required is a formal agenda or program, or Letter of Invitation, or registration fee. Participation as an exhibiting vendor in an exhibit/trade show also qualifies as a conference. For a hotel to qualify for conference rate lodging, requires that the hotel is hosting or is in “conjunction with hosting” the meeting. In the event that the designated conference hotel(s) have no room availability, a Department Head may approve to pay actual hotel cost not to exceed the conference lodging rates for other hotels located near the conference hotel.

**Extended Stay** – Any assignment made for a period of 31 or more consecutive days at a place other than the official domicile.



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

ISSUED 12/01/1988	REVISED 12/26/18	NO. Page 2 of 18
----------------------	---------------------	---------------------

APPROVED

**High Cost Areas** – Areas designated by the Internal Revenue Service as requiring higher than normal lodging and/or subsistence costs.

**In-State Travel** - All travel within the borders of Louisiana or travel through adjacent states between points within Louisiana when such is the most efficient route.

**International Travel** – Travel to countries or territories outside of the United States.

#### **Official Domicile**

1. Except where fixed by law, official domicile of a Parish officer or employee assigned to an office shall be St. John the Baptist Parish.
2. The official domicile of a person located in the field (not in St. John the Baptist Parish) shall be the city or town nearest to the area where the majority of the work is performed, or such city, town, or area as may be designate by the agency head, provided that in all cases such designation must be in the best interest of the agency and not for the convenience of a person.
3. Every Parish officer, employee, or authorized person, except those on temporary assignment, shall be, assigned an official domicile. A Parish Officer or employee whose residence is other than the official domicile of his office shall not receive travel and subsistence while at his official domicile nor shall traveler receive reimbursement for travel to and from his residence. The head of an agency or department may provide reimbursement for transportation necessary for effective operation of the agency within the official domicile.

**Out-of-State Travel** - Travel outside of the borders of Louisiana to other states or territories within the United States.

**Parish Employee** - Employees whose positions are classified below the level of Parish Officer.

#### **Parish Officer**

- Parish Elected Officials
- The appointed head of a Parish Agency or Department
- Members of Boards or Commissions

**Per Diem** – a flat rate paid in lieu of travel reimbursement for travelers.



**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH**

**FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS**

<b>ISSUED</b> 12/01/1988	<b>REVISED</b> 12/26/18	<b>NO.</b> Page 3 of 18
-----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------

**APPROVED**

**Senior Leader** – For purposes of this policy, the Parish’s executive management team consisting of the Parish President, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), and Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

**Temporary Assignment** - Any assignment made for a period of less than thirty-one (31) consecutive days at a place other than the official domicile.

**Travel Period/Status** – a period of time between the time of departure and the time of return.

**Travel Routes** – the most direct and usually traveled route must be used by official Parish travelers.

**Traveler** - A Parish officer, Parish employee, or authorized person when performing authorized travel.

**4.0 TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND APPROVAL:**

Travel expenses shall be limited to those expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of a public purpose authorized by law or regulation and must be within the limitations prescribed. Under normal circumstances, travelers should use the most appropriate form of transportation available, book the least expensive fares, and stay in and eat at moderately priced establishments.

Upon determining that a trip (including single-day travel) is necessary, a “Travel Authorization” (T/A) form (See Exhibit A) must be filled out. T/A forms shall be submitted for approval as follows:

**Requestor**

- Parish Employees
- Council Office Personnel
- Department Heads
- Chief Financial Officer
- Chief Administrative Officer
- Advisory Board/Commission Members

**Approval Authority**

- Department Head; respective Senior Leader
- Parish Council Chairperson
- Respective Senior Leader
- Parish President
- Parish President
- Department Head; respective Senior Leader

With the exception of Council travel, all out-of-state or international travel must be approved by the Parish President prior to travel commencing or expenses incurred.



**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH**

**FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS**

<b>ISSUED</b> 12/01/1988	<b>REVISED</b> 12/26/18	<b>NO.</b> Page 4 of 18
-----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------

**APPROVED**

All out-of-state or international travel for Council members must be approved by the Council Chairperson and submitted to the CFO.

Travel requests shall be submitted to the appropriate approval authority at least ten (10) business days in advance of travel. Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis and only with proper justification.

While the Parish President and the Parish Council control their own travel approvals, travel arrangements shall not exceed budgeted amounts.

A file shall be maintained on all approved travel authorizations and related travel expenses at the departmental level and by the Finance Department.

**5.0 ELIGIBILITY FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES:**

All Parish Officers and employees are eligible to receive reimbursement for travel and subsistence only when away from "official domicile" on temporary assignment.

Temporary assignment will be deemed to have ceased after a period of thirty-one (31) days, and after such period, the place of assignment shall be deemed to be his official domicile. He shall not be allowed travel and subsistence unless permission to extend the thirty-one (31) day-period has been previously obtained from the Parish Council.

Parish Officers and employees will be reimbursed on an actual expense basis except in cases where other provisions for reimbursement have been made by statutes and/or cited herein. In cases where actual expenses are claimed, all Parish Officers and employees will cooperate to the extent that all records of travel will be clear and complete. Receipts and other supporting documents must accompany the request for reimbursement.

All mileage or usage credits awarded by transportation, credit card, or other travel service companies are to be assigned to St. John the Baptist Parish Council.

Any travel expenses considered unreasonable under the circumstances will not be paid or reimbursed and are the traveler's personal responsibility. No Parish Officer or employee will be reimbursed for the travel expenses (including lodging and meals) of his/her spouse (or any other non-Parish employee/Officer) accompanying him/her while traveling. The only exception shall be when a non-Parish employee/ Officer who has an interest in Parish business accompanies a Parish Officer or employee on official Parish business, as outlined in Section 12.0 - Entertainment Expenses.



**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH**

**FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS**

<b>ISSUED</b> 12/01/1988	<b>REVISED</b> 12/26/18	<b>NO.</b> Page 5 of 18
-----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------

**APPROVED**

No reimbursement will be made when there is no cost incurred by traveler. This includes but is not limited to reimbursements for any lodging and/or meals furnished by any other party at no cost to the traveler. In no case will a traveler be allowed mileage or transportation when he/she is gratuitously transported by another person.

**6.0 ADVANCE PAYMENTS:**

Persons traveling on official Parish business will provide themselves with sufficient funds for all routine expenses. No cash advances for travel expenses will be made with the exception of meals and incidental expenses. All other travel expenses will be covered by the traveler and will be promptly reimbursed upon completion of approved travel and submission of appropriate documentation. The advanced rates for meals allowances and incidental expenses shall be determined by Sections 8.3 and 11.0, respectively, for the number of days in travel status.

Payment of conference registration fees may be requested in advance and such registrations will be made out to the organization sponsoring the conference. Likewise, payment of lodging expenses may be requested in advance and payment shall be made out to the hotel. (See Section 8.2 "Travel with Overnight Stay" regarding lodging expenses.) In cases where more than one Parish traveler occupies the same hotel room, the entire lodging cost will be advanced to one traveler.

Employees, Department Heads, Chief Financial Officer, and Chief Administrative Officer may request advance payment of meal and incidental expenses using the "Request for Travel Advance – Form A" (See Exhibit B). Similarly, the Parish President and Parish Council Members may request advance of meal and incidental expenses using the "Request for Travel Advance – Form E B" (See Exhibit C).

"Request for Travel Advance" forms (Form A or B, as applicable) should be submitted to the office of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) at least ten (10) working days prior to the date of approved travel. The Finance Department should then receive the approved request form from the Chief Financial Officer's (CFO's) office within seven (7) working days prior to the date of approved travel for funds to be disbursed timely through the accounts payable process. Travelers should plan ahead to meet the accounts payable cutoff deadlines for processing checks.

In cases where funds were advanced to traveler for meals and incidentals, or where a check was issued to the hotel for lodging expenses, traveler shall submit receipts to the office of the



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

ISSUED	REVISED	NO.
12/01/1988	12/26/18	Page 6 of 18

APPROVED

CFO within five (5) business days of returning from approved travel. Additionally, any excess funds must be returned to the Parish at that time.

In cases where a traveler uses a personal credit card to purchase air, bus, or train fare for approved Parish travel, reimbursement by the Parish may be made prior to travel commencing to avoid personal inconvenience or hardship to the traveler. The following conditions must be met:

- Ticket is purchased in the traveler's name; and
- Credit card statement substantiating the purchase is presented.

#### 7.0 PARISH CREDIT CARDS:

All Parish-issued credit cards are the property of St. John the Baptist Parish Council and are to be used for Parish-related expenses only. Credit card issuance, expenditures, and approval levels are subject to the process outlined in the Parish's credit card policy as adopted by the Parish Council. Under no circumstances shall personal expenses be charged to a Parish credit card, even if the intent is to reimburse the Parish. (Refer to Section 13.0 for non-reimbursable expenses.)

#### 8.0 LODGING AND MEALS:

##### 8.1 Single Day Travel

Meal reimbursements will be made for trips with overnight travel. However, exceptions may be made for work meetings on a case-by-case basis.

Meal reimbursement when there is no overnight travel is a taxable fringe benefit to the employee, as per Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations.

Employee's Department Head is to determine reasonableness of when an overnight stay is justified

##### 8.2 Travel with Overnight Stay

Hotel reservations made with a Parish credit card for approved travel for Department Heads and employees shall be coordinated through the office of the



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

ISSUED	REVISED	NO.
12/01/1988	12/26/18	Page 7 of 18

APPROVED

Chief Financial Officer. Payment of lodging expenses may be requested in advance and payment shall be made out to the hotel.

In cases where Parish Officers or employees use personal credit cards to cover lodging expenses, actual lodging expenses shall be reimbursed when the request for reimbursement is supported by an original receipt. The rate of reimbursement for lodging while attending a conference, convention, or seminar shall not exceed the special rate charged at the hotel of the conference, convention, or seminar site. If lodging at the special rate at the hotel of the conference, convention, or seminar site is not available, the rate of reimbursement shall be based on reasonableness. Reimbursement for lodging without adequate supporting documentation, as required by the IRS, shall be made at a rate not to exceed the applicable IRS Federal Lodging Rate.

In an effort to obtain the most reasonable and cost-efficient rates when considering hotel accommodations, the traveler should choose sites within reasonable vicinity of the location where Parish business is being conducted. Government rates should be requested whenever possible. Also, as a political subdivision of the State of Louisiana, the Parish is exempt from payment of state sales taxes on hotel lodging charges that are directly reimbursable by the Parish, with the presentation of a current "Governmental Employees Hotel Lodging Sales/Use Tax Exemption Certificate" (on file in each Parish department). Some states will recognize and grant the exemption but are not required to. Therefore, travelers should mention the tax-exempt status at the time of the booking and provide a copy to the hotel at the point of check-in.

Any and all miscellaneous hotel room expenses shall be borne by the traveler, with the exception of business-related long-distance calls and telephone access charges on all calls if charged by the hotel. Personal telephone calls to advise members of the employee's/Parish Official's family of his/her safe arrival, change in official travel plans, or delay in arrival due to inclement weather are considered a business expense for purposes of this policy, but are limited to one call of reasonable duration for each 48-hour period. A "reasonable duration" for this purpose would be five (5) minutes. Costs for longer calls will be paid by the employee with the amount determined on a proportional basis.

It is the responsibility of the traveler to cancel any room reservation he/she will not be using. A record of the cancellation number should be kept, in case of billing disputes. **NOTE:** Cancellation time deadlines are based on the location of the property (e.g., Eastern Time Zone when the property is in Washington, D.C.; Pacific



**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH**

**FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS**

<b>ISSUED</b> 12/01/1988	<b>REVISED</b> 12/26/18	<b>NO.</b> Page 8 of 18
-----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------

**APPROVED**

Time Zone when the property is in Las Vegas, NV, etc.).

If a Parish Officer or employee fails to cancel a reservation in a timely fashion, he/she may be held responsible for any cancellation fees. A written explanation for any failure to cancel must be filed.

(See Exhibit D for tips when making hotel reservations and checking into hotels.)

**8.3 Meals with Overnight Stay**

Travelers may be reimbursed for actual meal expenses not to exceed the rates listed below, or the State-approved rates, whichever is higher. In the alternative, travelers may request a per day allowance for meals and tips not to exceed \$73.00 per day (or the State-approved rate, whichever is higher) prorated on a full day basis with the following amounts assigned:

Breakfast (typically between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.) .....	\$14.00
Lunch (typically between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.) .....	\$21.00
Dinner (typically between 5:00 pm to midnight) .....	\$38.00

Tips are considered to be included in the above meal reimbursement rates.

(See section 6.0 regarding advance payments for meals).

Prorated meal allowances will not routinely be given when provided meals, such as in-flight meals and meals included as part of registration fees, are available. If a prorated meal allowance is claimed when a provided meal is available, a statement explaining the circumstances must accompany the Expense Statement.

Any request for reimbursement exceeding the per diem rate (not to exceed 25% over the above-listed rates) must be substantiated with original receipts for the total expense along with a statement justifying the overage and may be approved on a case-by-case basis, such as when travel is in High Cost areas as identified by the IRS.

**9.0 TRAVEL ROUTES:**

The most direct and usually traveled route must be used for official Parish travel, except



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

ISSUED  
12/01/1988

REVISED  
12/26/18

NO.  
Page 9 of 18

APPROVED

in the case of non-direct flights in the interest of cost-savings to the Parish. Any significant expense caused by deviation from the most direct route must be substantiated by appropriate documentation.

When side trips are made along with authorized trips, expenses will be allowed for the most direct and usually traveled route.

#### 10.0 METHOD OF TRANSPORTATION:

The most cost-effective method of transportation that will accomplish the purpose of the travel shall be selected. A common carrier (airplane, bus, or train) should be used for out-of-State travel.

##### 10.1 Air Travel

###### 10.1 (a) Commercial Airlines

Air travel for Department Heads and employees for approved travel using a Parish credit card shall be coordinated through the office of the Chief Financial Officer. Air travel for Parish Officers and employees will only be provided or reimbursed at coach or economy-class rates. Air travel reservations should be made in such a manner as to secure the best available fare (i.e., made as far in advance as possible; non-direct flights, etc.).

In cases where a Parish Officer or employee uses a personal credit card to arrange air travel at first-class air rate, the difference between the air coach or economy-class rates and first-class air rates will be paid by the traveler. If space is not available in less than first-class air accommodations in time to carry out the purpose of the travel, the traveler will secure a certification from the airline indicating this fact. This certification will be attached to the expense statement.

When use of privately-owned automobiles for out-of-state travel is approved by the Department Head or Chief Financial Officer in the case of employees, the traveler shall be reimbursed travel cost (transportation, lodging, meals while en route) not to exceed the cost of travel by coach/economy-class air rates. Employees should schedule vacation or compensatory time off if extra time off the job is required to accommodate their preference not to use a common carrier.



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

ISSUED  
12/01/1988

REVISED  
12/26/18

NO.  
Page 10 of 18

APPROVED

Any unused tickets purchased using a Parish credit card (or in the case of an e-ticket, a hardcopy of the reservation, including flight information) must be promptly returned to the Finance Department.

#### 10.1 (b) Privately-owned Aircrafts

Use of a privately-owned aircraft is permitted. Travel by a privately-owned aircraft is authorized if the traveler can certify that: (1) at least one hour of working time will be saved by such travel; and (2) no other form of transportation, such as commercial air travel will serve this same purpose.

Reimbursement for use of a privately-owned aircraft under the above guidelines will be made using the State-approved rate.

#### 10.2 Motor Vehicle

Travelers using either Parish-owned vehicles or personally-owned vehicles on official Parish business will be reimbursed for storage and parking fees; ferry fares; and road, bridge, and tunnel tolls. Receipts are required and must accompany expense statement. Department Heads may waive in writing the parking receipt requirement when employees utilize parking areas where receipts are not given. Examples are: parking meters and parking lot boxes where individual inserts the parking fee. The employee shall prepare a statement giving the reason the exception to the regulation is needed and state the parking method used [i.e. parking meter (street address must be shown); parking garage/lots where no receipt is given (lot name and address must be listed)]. The statement shall be approved by the Department Head and attached to the travel Expense Statement or Mileage Report.

##### 10.2 (a) Parish-owned (–leased) Vehicles

No Parish Officer or employee may operate a Parish-owned vehicle without having in his/her possession a valid State of Louisiana Driver's License, or in violation of any state or local laws.

All accidents, major or minor, involving Parish-owned vehicles must be reported immediately to the Parish's Dept. of Public Safety (or designee). An incident



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ISSUED	REVISED	NO.
12/01/1988	12/26/18	Page 11 of 18

APPROVED

report describing the incident, including the names and addresses of all available witnesses, must be provided within two (2) days of an incident.

Travelers in Parish-owned vehicles in need of repair who purchase parts and/or incur repairs while on travel status, shall make use of all fleet discount allowances and Parish bulk purchasing contracts where applicable and invoice repairs. Each department shall familiarize themselves with the locations of such firms doing business with the Parish by contacting the Purchasing Office.

No Parish official or employee shall carry unauthorized passengers in Parish-owned vehicles.

Employees assigned take-home vehicles are hereby advised that this is a taxable fringe benefit to the employee, in accordance with IRS guidelines.

#### 10.2 (b) Personally-owned Vehicles

A mileage allowance shall be authorized for travelers approved to use personally-owned vehicles while conducting official Parish business. Mileage shall be reimbursed using the State-approved rate. Mileage shall be computed by one of the following options:

- On the basis of odometer readings from point of origin to point of return, or;
- By using a website mileage calculator or a published software package for calculating mileage such as Trip maker, MapQuest, Google Maps, etc. Traveler is to print the page indicating mileage and attach it to his/her travel expense form.

All personally-owned vehicles being used on official parish business must not be in violation of state and local laws, including those mandating automobile insurance coverage and valid vehicle safety inspection certificates.

All accidents, major or minor, involving personally-owned vehicles occurring while being used on official Parish business must be reported immediately in writing to the Parish's Risk Manager. A written report containing the names and addresses of all available witnesses must be provided within two (2) days of an incident.



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ISSUED	REVISED	NO.
12/01/1988	12/26/18	Page 12 of 18

APPROVED

When two or more persons travel in the same personally-owned vehicle, only one charge will be allowed for the use or expense of the vehicle. The person claiming reimbursement shall report the names of the other passengers.

If a Department Head is required to use his/her personally-owned vehicle for Parish activities in the immediate vicinity of his/her official domicile, the Parish President may authorize Department Heads to receive a lump sum allowance for transportation (mileage) in lieu of a Parish-supplied vehicle. Likewise, the Council may authorize its members to receive a lump sum allowance for transportation. The Parish President's lump sum allowance for transportation shall be determined by Parish ordinance. For travel to Parish business outside of the traveler's official domicile, mileage reimbursement using the State-approved rates, may be requested.

If the Parish President chooses to use his own personal vehicle in lieu of a Parish-supplied vehicle, the Parish President will receive a lump sum fee each month. All lump sum travel allowances will be allocated in the Parish's annual operating budget.

A traveler shall never receive any benefit from not living in his/her official domicile. In computing reimbursable mileage to an authorized travel destination from a Parish Official's or employee's residence outside of the official domicile, the individual is always to claim the lesser of the miles from his/her official domicile or from his/her residence. If an employee is leaving on a non-work day or leaving significantly before or after work hours, the department head may determine to pay the actual mileage from the employee's residence.

The department head may approve an authorization for routine travel for an employee who must travel in the course of performing his/her duties; this may include domicile travel if such is a regular and necessary part of the employee's duties, but not the attendance at infrequent or irregular meetings, etc. within city limits where his/her office is located.

The traveler shall be required to pay all operating expenses of the vehicle including but not limited to, fuel, repairs, replacement parts, and insurance.

#### **10.2 (c) Rented Motor Vehicles (Receipts Required)**



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ISSUED 12/01/1988	REVISED 12/26/18	NO. Page 13 of 18
----------------------	---------------------	----------------------

APPROVED

Under most circumstances, adequate ground transportation and shuttle services are available to and from the airport to the point of destination. Every effort should be made to use these modes of transportation before renting a vehicle. If there are no acceptable alternatives, rental vehicles may be allowed for use on official Parish business at a destination outside of the domicile of the Parish Officer or employee.

**Approvals.** Written approval of the CFO prior to departure is required for vehicle rentals. Such approval may be given when it is shown that vehicle rental is the only or most economical means by which the purposes of trip can be accomplished.

**Vehicle Rental Size.** Only the cost of a compact model is reimbursable, unless (1) non-availability is documented, (2) the vehicle will be used to transport more than two persons, or (3) the cost of a larger vehicle is no more than the rental rate for a compact. When a larger vehicle is an option as stated in (1) or (2) above, the upgraded vehicle shall be the next smallest size necessary to accommodate the number of persons traveling and equipment needed for conducting Parish business. Traveler shall obtain a government rate whenever possible.

**Personal Rental Days.** Any personal rental days on a vehicle rented for official Parish business is not reimbursable and shall be deducted from expense statement or reimbursed to the Parish if payment or charge to the Parish has been made.

**Gasoline (Receipts Required).** The Parish's preference is to purchase gasoline at reasonable cost from a local gasoline station prior to returning the rental. Pre-paid Fuel Options are only to be allowed when the traveler can document that the pre-purchased amount was necessary and that the amount charged by the rental company is reasonable in relation to local gasoline cost.

**Insurance for Rental Vehicles.** Due to periodic changes in the Parish's insurance coverage, the Risk Manager should be contacted at 985-652-9569 prior to travel if traveler plans to rent a vehicle and seek reimbursement for rental. Should a collision occur while on official Parish business, the accident should be reported to the Risk Manager as soon as possible.



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ISSUED 12/01/1988	REVISED 12/26/18	NO. Page 14 of 18
----------------------	---------------------	----------------------

APPROVED

The Parish is not responsible for the loss of personal items stolen taken from rental vehicles.

### 11.0 INCIDENTAL EXPENSES:

The following expenses incidental to travel may be advanced to traveler at a rate not to exceed fifty dollars (\$50) per day:

- Communication expenses relative to official Parish business
- Storage and handling
- Taxi, shuttle, limousine, ferry, train, bus or other public transportation fares
- Vehicle rental when determined to be necessary
- Tips (excluding meal tips)
- Parking and tolls \*
- Laundry

Travelers should exercise prudence to avoid excess baggage charges by airlines as much as possible.

Travelers may be reimbursed for actual incidental expenses not to exceed \$50.00 per day. In the alternative, the traveler may request a per day advance for incidentals not to exceed \$50.00 per day. (See section 6.0 regarding advance payments for incidentals).

Any request for reimbursement exceeding the per diem rate (not to exceed 25% over the \$50.00 limit) must be substantiated with original receipts for the total incidental expenses along with a statement justifying the overage and may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

*\*Reimbursable on either the Expense Statement or the Mileage Report*

### 12.0 ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES:

Entertainment expenses are considered conducive when the activity, i.e. meals or hospitality gatherings, are directly related to, associated with, or considered conducive to official Parish business. Fiscal prudence should be the guide for all such activity.

Entertainment of individuals who have an interest in Parish business may be conducted by Parish Officers. Where circumstances justify entertainment by employees other than those



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ISSUED 12/01/1988	REVISED 12/26/18	NO. Page 15 of 18
----------------------	---------------------	----------------------

APPROVED

specified, the prior approval of the employee's Department Head and the Parish President's Office must be obtained.

In the case of employees, requests for reimbursements of entertainment expenses must be approved and/or justified by Department Head and submitted to the Finance Department for reimbursement along with documentation of prior approvals.

Each voucher shall contain a detailed itemization of expenses incurred and a statement of the date, place and the nature of business conducted as well as the names of those present and their business relationships to the Parish. Vouchers for expenditures must be accompanied by detailed restaurant/entertainment receipts (as opposed to stub-receipts).

Expenses for entertainment of a personal nature are not allowable as a Parish expense, and reimbursement will be denied in such cases.

## 13.0 NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

### 13.1 Personal Expenses

Certain travel expenses are considered as personal and not essential to the transaction of official Parish business and therefore not reimbursable. Such non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- alcoholic beverages
- tobacco products
- airline club dues
- passport fees for international travel
- rental car club membership fees
- in-room movies
- transportation costs to or from places of entertainment or other similar personal activities (e.g., tours, dances, golf tournaments, etc.)
- personal telephone calls (except as provided elsewhere in this policy)
- damage costs caused by employee's/official's actions
- fines for traffic/parking violations
- purchase of clothing or other personal items
- shoe shines, spa, beauty salon or barber services
- car washes
- expenses for child/elder care, pet care, home and property care



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ISSUED 12/01/1988	REVISED 12/26/18	NO. Page 16 of 18
----------------------	---------------------	----------------------

APPROVED

- insurance on life, travel, or personal property while traveling
- mini-bar refreshments (**NOTE:** Mini-bar refreshments eaten instead of a meal may be covered as one of the day's meals. Prudence and common sense should be used.).

Personal telephone calls home, if away from home for more than a 48-hour duration, are considered a business expense, but are limited to one call of reasonable duration for each 48-hour period. A "reasonable duration" for this purpose would be five (5) minutes. Costs for longer calls will be paid by the employee with the amount determined on a proportional basis.

#### 13.2 Combining Parish Business Travel with Other Travel

The Parish will only reimburse the portion of the trip related to official Parish business when the trip is combined with personal vacation travel. Only receipts from the business portion of the trip must be submitted.

#### 13.3 Spouse/Family/Companion Travel

Payment or reimbursement of travel expenses of spouse/family/companion travel is not allowed. When a Parish Officer's or employee's spouse, family member or other companion accompanies him/her on a Parish business trip, the difference between a single and double room rate shall be borne by the Parish Officer or employee. No advance funds will be given to a Parish Officer or employee to cover expenses of a spouse, family member, or other companion accompanying traveler.

#### 14.0 EXPENSE REPORTING:

Requests for reimbursement of travel-related expenses must be submitted using the form entitled "St. John the Baptist Parish Travel Expense Statement" (See Exhibit E). Public purpose for incurring expense shall be stated on the form. Travel Expense Statement and receipts supporting claim must be submitted to the CFO's office within thirty (30) days of incurring the expense or upon return from travel, with the exception of mileage reimbursements. Failure to submit expense reports and supporting documentation within this timeframe will make the claim(s) ineligible for reimbursement.



**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH**

**FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS**

<b>ISSUED</b> 12/01/1988	<b>REVISED</b> 12/26/18	<b>NO.</b> Page 17 of 18
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**APPROVED**

Where funds were advanced to traveler, or where a check was issued to a hotel for lodging expenses in advance, traveler must submit a Travel Expense Statement and receipts to substantiate the expense to the office of the CFO within five (5) business days of returning from travel, along with any excess funds. Failure to provide Travel Expense Statement, receipts, and return any excess funds will make traveler ineligible for future advances until such documents (and excess funds if applicable) are submitted. Also, where advanced funds cannot be substantiated by traveler, any unjustified amount will become due and payable by traveler within thirty (30) days of written notice from Parish. Reimbursement to the Parish for such unsubstantiated advanced funds may be withheld from the traveler's payroll check(s) with written approval from the traveler.

In the case of mileage reimbursements, form entitled "St. John the Baptist Parish Mileage Report" (See Exhibit F) should be used to request reimbursement for mileage. Public purpose for incurring expense shall be stated on the form. Mileage Report form should be submitted no more frequently than once per month; however, not later than January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year. Failure to submit mileage expense reports by the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline will result in the claim being ineligible for reimbursement.

**15.0 APPROVALS**

Approval levels for Expense Statements and Mileage Reports shall be as indicated below:

**Traveler**

- Parish Employees
- Council Office Personnel
- Department Heads
- CFO
- CAO
- Parish President
- Parish Council Members
- Parish Council Chairperson
- Parish Board or Commission Members

**Approval Authority**

- Department Head
- Council Chairperson
- Respective Sr. Leader
- Parish President
- Parish President
- CFO
- Parish Council Chairperson
- Finance Committee Chairperson
- Department Head

The person submitting the Expense Statement and/or Mileage ~~Travel~~ Report shall be responsible for making a copy of the form(s) with all attachments to be kept on file at the departmental level. (Travelers are encouraged to make a copy for his/her personal records as well.) Employees must obtain the Department Head's approval signature prior to submitting form(s) for reimbursement.



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH

### GENERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS

## FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ISSUED 12/01/1988	REVISED 12/26/18	NO. Page 18 of 18
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APPROVED

The Parish shall not be responsible for the claimed travel expenses if the original expense claim form and/or attachments are misplaced and a copy cannot be provided to substantiate the expense.

A Travel Expense Report must be approved by the Department Head and/or Sr. Management prior to reimbursement to employee.

### 16.0 VERIFICATION

The Finance Department shall ultimately be responsible for reviewing all Expense Statements to verify that all of the required receipts, details, and names of participants have been provided and that said Expense Statements comply with the rules and regulations of the Parish and the laws of the State of Louisiana.

### 17.0 FRAUDULENT CLAIMS

Any person who submits a claim pursuant the aforementioned regulations and who willfully makes and subscribes any such claims which he/she does not believe to be true and correct as to every material matter or who willfully aids or assists in or procures, counsels or advises the preparation or presentation of a claim which is fraudulent or false as to any material matter shall be guilty of official misconduct. Any person receiving an allowance or reimbursement by means of a false claim shall be criminally or civilly liable within the provisions of state law.

### 18.0 REPAYMENT OF UNAUTHORIZED REIMBURSEMENTS

The Finance Department shall seek repayment of expenses from the person to whom reimbursement was made whenever an audit or subsequent review of travel expense reimbursement finds that such expenses were reimbursed contrary to the provisions of this policy or applicable law.

### 19.0 CHANGES TO POLICY

Minor changes including typos, numbering, formatting, etc., can be made administratively and as needed without Council approval.



# Exhibit A

## Travel Authorization (T/A) Form

This form shall be submitted for any training, workshop, or conference event, whether or not it requires an overnight stay, at least 10 days PRIOR to departure.

To be eligible for reimbursement or payment, an APPROVED COPY must be attached to all expense statements, travel advance forms, or purchase orders associated with the event. Registrations and reservations made prior to receiving approval do not constitute travel authorization and are the responsibility of the individual making them.

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Employee #:</b>
<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Department:</b>

Check One:

	<b>Assigned to Attend By:</b>
	<b>Self-Initiated Request To Attend. Rationale:</b>

### LOCATION & DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

Include purpose, sponsor & how it relates to your job. Attach a copy of event brochure, agenda, or additional justification.

<b>Location:</b>	<b>Description:</b>
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<b>No. of Days:</b>	<b>From (Date):</b>	<b>To (Date):</b>
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### TOTAL ESTIMATE OF EVENT COSTS

Include registration fee(s), transportation, hotel accommodations, meals, etc.

<b>REGISTRATION</b>	<b>Registration Fee(s):</b>	\$
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b> (check all that apply):	___ Personal Vehicle–Mileage Reimbursement Estimate: ___ miles @ .___	\$
	___ Parish Vehicle (Fuel purchases while out of the parish)	\$
	___ Rental Vehicle	\$
	___ Airline (include taxes, baggage fees, etc.)	\$
	___ Bus, Train, Taxi, Other Specify: _____	\$
<b>HOTEL</b>	<b>No. of Nights</b> _____ <b>at \$</b> _____ <b>per night + taxes</b>	\$
<b>MEALS</b>	<b>(Number of/Rate)</b>	\$
<b>OTHER</b>		
<b>Total Estimated Cost</b>		\$

<b>Requested By (Traveler's Signature):</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Department Head's Approval:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Senior Leader's Approval:</b>		<b>Date:</b>



**Exhibit B**

**REQUEST FOR TRAVEL ADVANCE - Form A**  
 (To be used by Employees, Department Heads, CAO and CFO)

Date Submitted	<b>IMPORTANT NOTICE</b> By signing and submitting this form you agree that the requested funds will be used for the purposes stated on this form.
Traveler's Name	
E-mail	
Phone	
Department	
Destination	
Public Purpose of Travel	
Departure Date	
Return Date	

Anticipated Expenses				
TYPE OF EXPENSE	DESCRIPTION OF EXPENSE	DAILY EXPENSES	# of DAYS	TOTAL EXPENSES
Meals and Tips		\$		\$
Incidentals (including ground transportation)		\$		\$
<b>Total Advance Requested</b>		<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$</b>
<b>Traveler's Signature</b>		<b>Date Signed</b>		
<b>Department Head's Printed Name</b>				
<b>Department Head's Signature</b>		<b>Date Approved</b>		
<b>Approval Signature (CFO or Parish President)</b>		<b>Date Approved</b>		

NOTE: Approved Travel Authorization form must be attached to this form for approval and advancement of funds.



## Exhibit C

### REQUEST FOR TRAVEL ADVANCE - Form B

(To be used by Parish President and Council Members only)

<b>Date Submitted</b>	
<b>Traveler's Name</b>	
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Phone</b>	
<b>Department</b>	
<b>Destination</b>	
<b>Public Purpose of Travel</b>	
<b>Departure Date</b>	
<b>Return Date</b>	

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
By signing and submitting this form you agree that the requested funds will be used for the purposes stated on this form.

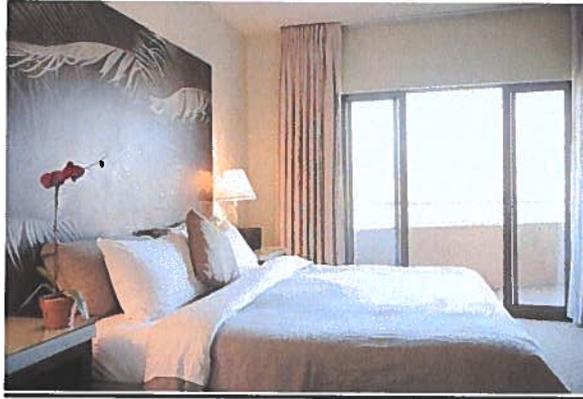
#### Anticipated Expenses

TYPE OF EXPENSE	DESCRIPTION OF EXPENSE	DAILY EXPENSES	# of DAYS	TOTAL EXPENSES
Meals and Tips		\$		\$
Incidentals (including ground transportation)		\$		\$
<b>Total Advance Requested</b>		<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$</b>
<b>Traveler's Signature</b>		<b>Date Signed</b>		
<b>Approval Signature</b> (CFO or Council Chairman)		<b>Date Approved</b>		

NOTE: Approved Travel Authorization form must be attached to this form for approval and advancement of funds.

## Exhibit D

### TIPS FOR WHEN MAKING HOTEL RESERVATIONS AND CHECKING INTO HOTELS:



- Request government rate.
- Find out if hotel will honor tax exempt status. Bring tax exempt form to avoid paying sales tax. You should present this form to the hotel upon arrival. (A tax exempt form is available in the Finance Office.)
- Make sure that you know the hotel's cancellation policy. (If you do not cancel a reservation you may be charged the first night's stay.)
- Be sure you know what your booked rate includes (breakfast, free local phone calls, etc.) to make sure you are getting the best rate.
- Guaranteed reservations with a credit card means that the hotel will hold the room until you arrive, no matter what time. It also means that if you don't cancel according to the hotel's policy, you will be charge for one night's stay.
- The minimum time allowed for cancellations is shown on your itinerary; the time marked is the time at the hotel's city, which could possibly be a different time zone than where you live (e.g., Eastern Time Zone if the hotel is located in Washington, D.C.; Pacific Time Zone if the hotel is located in Las Vegas, NV).
- A confirmation number is proof of reservation. Provide this number to the front desk attendant and demand to be accommodated if there is a problem with your reservation.
- Review and initial your room rate prior to your check-in.



