



TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
ADULT EDUCATION DIVISION
LOCAL PROGRAM POLICY

TRAVEL EXPENSES

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POLICY SUMMARY

1. Local AE staff may be paid for work-related travel expenses at the current government-designated rates; staff must be conservative and select lower-cost options.
2. Local AE staff must have TDLWD approval before traveling out of state.
3. Meals and incidentals can only be claimed when overnight stays are involved; first and last days of travel can only be claimed at 75% of the full amount; when two or more meals are provided in a day, the cost of the meals must be deducted.
4. Mileage reimbursement is based on miles driven beyond a regular commute to and from a designated official workstation.
5. Local providers must use their agency's internal processes and controls for approving and paying travel expenses; travel records must be maintained.

REVISIONS SUMMARY

- Removed specific payment rates and replaced them with links to the U.S. General Services Administration website where current rates can be found.

POLICY

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1. Allowable Travel Expenses

Local Adult Education (AE) staff may be paid for travel expenses incurred while carrying out the program’s activities. Only expenses related to AE activities may be paid by the AE grant. In general, the following travel expenses may be relevant to AE staff:

- Mileage reimbursement for employees who drive their own car
- Lodging
- Meals and incidentals
- Parking
- Air travel and shuttles/taxis/rideshares for out-of-state conferences

The AE grant will only pay for expenses up to the amount of the current government-designated rates for mileage, lodging, and meals and incidentals. These rates are found at:

- Mileage: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-a-trip/transportation-airfare-rates-pov-rates-etc/private-owned-vehicle-pov-mileage-reimbursement>.
- Lodging and Meals & Incidentals: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>. If a hotel stay is required that exceeds the government rate and no other options are feasible, advance approval from TDLWD is required.

Local providers may choose to be more restrictive than the designated payment rates, but AE staff must be treated consistently with the other employees of the agency.

Travel expenses must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable. When traveling, staff must be as conservative as circumstances permit, and the lower-cost options must be selected whenever practical.

2. Out-of-State Travel Rules

Local staff must receive approval from TDLWD prior to making plans to travel out of state for conferences or any other AE-related purpose.

3. Meals & Incidentals Rules

The AE grant will only pay for meals and incidentals if there is overnight stay involved. For the first and last day of multi-day trips, the grant will only pay 75% of the meals and incidentals per diem. If two or more meals are provided on a given day at a state-sponsored event, then the cost of those meals must be deducted from per diem claims.

4. Mileage Reimbursement Rules

The AE grant will only pay for mileage reimbursement based on the rules outlined below:

- Normal commuting between an individual's home and designated official workstation is not reimbursable. The official workstation should be the place where an individual typically spends a majority of their work time—not counting work-from-home. Official workstations must be designated for employees to use as a starting/ending point for calculating mileage.
- On a given workday, if an individual drives to locations besides (or in addition to) their official workstation, they may be reimbursed for the additional mileage that exceeds the number of miles typically traveled for their commute. (Example: If it's 25 miles between home and the official workstation, but duties on a certain day require driving to several locations across the service area, such that a total of 100 miles are driven, reimbursement can be requested for 50 miles—100 miles driven minus 50 miles for a typical roundtrip commute.)
- If an individual does not have a readily apparent official workstation due to the nature of their work (e.g., they teach in multiple locations across the service area or administer testing across the service area), then the program director must designate a practical official workstation for the purposes of calculating mileage (e.g., if a teacher teaches at three locations, one location could be their designated official workstation; a test administrator could have the office where testing materials are kept as their designated official workstation).
- Program directors must use their best judgment in determining official workstations and approving mileage reimbursements. Program directors should consider what is reasonable, practical, and fair for employees, and can change the designated official workstations as the need requires.

5. Internal Processes & Controls

Local providers must use their agency's internal processes and controls for approving and paying AE-related travel expenses—AE staff must follow the same processes as the agency's other employees. These processes and controls must include oversight and documentation of travel approvals and payments.

The agency must maintain records that indicate who received payment, how much they were paid, what travel categories they were paid for (e.g., mileage, hotel, etc.), the purpose of the travel, and the date the travel occurred. The agency must also maintain verifying documents—either paper or electronic—to support travel payments (e.g., a map or description of places driven for mileage reimbursement, a hotel bill, a parking lot receipt, etc.).

GOVERNANCE

Local program directors are responsible for disseminating this policy to their staff members and for providing staff with associated training, checking for understanding, enforcing compliance, and seeking technical assistance from TDLWD staff as necessary. Program directors must ensure that the agency's travel expense and payment processes are followed and that employees do not abuse travel-related payments for their personal advantage.

To ensure compliance with this policy, TDLWD staff will (1) inspect expenditure reports, payments, and supporting documents related to travel; and (2) review local providers' internal controls and processes related to travel expenses.