MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
TRAVEL POLICY

The following travel policies are established for the use by individuals who are required to travel in-state and out-of-state on official Mississippi Department of Education government business. These policies are based on the guidelines established by the State Department of Finance and Administration (formally the State Fiscal Management Board) in accordance with Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code Annotated (1972).

Receipts
Please refer to the specific areas within this section for details and exceptions concerning when receipts are required to be reimbursed for travel expenses. The procedures for recording and documenting expenses are also provided throughout this section. Generally, receipts are required for the following items:

Receipts are required for:
- Lodging
- Business Telephone Calls
- Registration Fees
- Rental Cars
- If over $10.00:
  1. Taxi,
  2. Gasoline (Rental Car)
  3. Parking Fees
     a. Hotel
     b. Airport
     c. Tolls
     d. Other Fees

Tips
- Meals - The actual amount of tips paid up to 20% of the daily actual or allowed meal amount, whichever is less, will be reimbursed.
- Taxis/Shuttles - Tips shall not exceed 20% of the fee.
- Baggage Handling - Tips should be limited to a reasonable amount ($1.00 per bag).

In-State Meals
Receipts are not required for meals. To be reimbursed for meals, an overnight stay (Hotel/Motel or Relative) is required. If you depart from your duty station prior to 6:00 a.m., please state "Early Departure" to obtain breakfast amount. If you arrive back at your duty station after 8:00 p.m., please state "Late Arrival" to obtain dinner amount. Each employee must pay for his/her meal costs and then request reimbursement. Meal costs within the employee's duty station are not reimbursable. Report actual amounts spent on each meal (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner).

Please refer to the Federal Per Diem Converted Rates link below for travel reimbursement amounts. If the in-state location you are looking for is not included in the table, then the reimbursement amount is $41.00

Meal reimbursement requests that are not associated with overnight stay will not be reimbursed.
Out-of-State Meals
Individuals will be reimbursed for the actual cost of meals not to exceed the DFA approved rate for the destination of travel. (Click the link below to see the Domestic Meal Reimbursement Rate Table)

The attached link to DFA’s website will direct you to the updated Domestic Meal Reimbursement Rates for high cost areas in each state. If you cannot find the city you are looking for, locate the county and use the amount listed in the far right column of the table. If neither the city nor county is listed, the maximum state reimbursement is $41.00.

http://www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/Travel/convertedrates.pdf

Lodging
Reimbursement for overnight lodging will be made when travel circumstances prevent departure and return travel in one day. Reimbursement for lodging expenses will be made for the amount actually paid, when supported by a receipt. When an individual has a choice, good judgment should be exercised in selecting the lodging to avoid unreasonable charges. General government rates should always be requested at the time the reservation is made or confirmed and again when checking into the hotel. If unacceptable motel accommodations are available at the work destination, the Mississippi Department of Education may approve travel to the nearest town where acceptable accommodations are available. If the nearest town is out-of-state, no out-of-state travel form will be required; however, approval must be obtained. An individual may elect to stay overnight with friends or relatives within a 30 to 40 mile radius of the worksite. Such lodging is not a reimbursable expense; however, travel to and from the lodging site and the work site in lieu of a motel expense shall be allowable.

All reimbursable expenses for lodging should be billed to the individual and not the Mississippi Department of Education. Lodging expense will not be reimbursable without a receipt, which is marked paid, showing a zero balance or accompanied by a credit card receipt. Only standard single room rates are allowable. If the individual utilizes or requires a rate other than the single occupancy rate, the hotel must certify the current rate for a single unit on the paid receipt. If two or more individuals share a motel room, separate invoices should be obtained which reports each individual's pro-rata share of the room costs. If the individual chooses to extend his or her stay for pleasure, he or she must note the leisure dates and hotel rate not authorized as official state business on the paid receipt. Lodging within the city of the individual's official place of residence is not an authorized expense.

Private Automobile Travel
Actual mileage shall be calculated from the official place or residence and back or actual miles traveled, whichever is less. The most direct route to a destination should be claimed for reimbursement purposes. The travel voucher must indicate if any intermediate stops were made. Specific sites visited must be noted on the voucher in lieu of "Vicinity Travel" if actual mileage claimed exceeds the map mileage. All actual and necessary travel will be reimbursed at the rate of $0.565 cents per mile. Travel from a motel to a restaurant and back to the motel is not a reimbursable expense.

Travel Voucher
All travel vouchers for in-state travel should be prepared in ink or typed and should be delivered to the Mississippi Department of Education. Only actual expenses shall be claimed on the travel voucher. Any claims above actual expenditures constitute fraud. In addition, any claim for reimbursement of an expense when the expense was actually paid by another constitutes fraud.

Travel vouchers must be submitted in the individual's name and signed with legal name. Vouchers will not be accepted with signature of nickname or other than legal name. Travel vouchers must show individual's Federal Identification Number, if applicable, or Social Security Number.