



Board Document

OVERVIEW			
PRESENTATION NAME	Approval of Updated Board Travel and Expense Policy	DOCUMENT NO.	300045
ACTION OR INFORMATION	Action		
STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION PLAN GOAL	Financial Stewardship and Resource Management;		
RESOLUTION	Yes		
EXECUTIVE OWNER			
EXECUTIVE TEAM OWNER	Ellison, Jennifer;		
ORGANIZATION	Corporate Secretary		
DOCUMENT INITIATOR	John S. Pasek		
OTHER INFORMATION			
COMMITTEE	Board/Board Office Only	COMMITTEE DATE	6/26/2025
PURPOSE/KEY HIGHLIGHTS	This action updates the Board's Travel and Expense Policy, last revised in 2018, to reflect changes in the travel and transportation industries and to align with requirements under Metro's new travel management system.		
DISCUSSION	The Board of Directors' Travel and Expense Policy was last updated in 2018, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and does not reflect significant changes in the travel and transportation landscape brought about by the pandemic, and also does not include transportation options such as rideshare or bicycle/scooter rentals.		



Board Document

	<p>Other changes to the policy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Specific guidance on planning and reimbursement procedures for travelers requiring accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act.- Clarification of requirements for advance booking of travel and guidance around request for seat upgrades for flights with total duration greater than three hours.- Revisions to policies on international travel to provide for per diem, rather than actual expense reimbursement for certain expenses, following State Department guidance on international travel and to more closely align Metro's reimbursement policies for international and domestic travel. <p>The policy has also been reorganized and streamlined for ease of use and to remove sections or references to policies that are no longer applicable.</p>
INTERESTED PARTIES	None
RECOMMENDATION/NEXT STEPS	Approval of updated Board Travel and Expense Policy to take effect in Fiscal Year 2026, which begins on July 1, 2025.
FUNDING IMPACT	No impact to funding. Reimbursement for travel or other miscellaneous expenses is allocated from the Board Corporate Secretary's office budget.

PRESENTED AND ADOPTED: June 26, 2025

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF UPDATED BOARD OF DIRECTORS' TRAVEL AND EXPENSE POLICY

2025-19

**RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

WHEREAS, In Resolution 2018-36, the Board of Directors revised its Travel and Expense Policy (Travel Policy); and

WHEREAS, Revisions to the Travel Policy are necessary to reflect changes in the travel and transportation industries; and

WHEREAS, The Board also desires to update the Travel Policy to improve its clarity and provide enhanced guidance for Board Members and Board Corporate Secretary staff in planning and administering travel and business expenses;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors adopts the revised Board of Directors' Travel and Expense Policy, attached hereto as Attachment A; and be it further

RESOLVED, That, as this Resolution deals solely with internal management action, it shall be effective immediately.

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,



Patricia Y. Lee
Executive Vice President, Chief Legal Officer and
General Counsel

WMATA File Structure No.:
2.5 WMATA Policy Instructions

**Motioned by Ms. Kline, seconded by Mr. Letourneau
Ayes: 7- Ms. Santos, Mr. Goldman, Ms. Kline, Ms. Worth, Mr. Letourneau, Mr. Drummer and Ms. Martin-Proctor**



Revisions – June 2025

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' TRAVEL AND EXPENSE POLICY

Board Approved: June 26, 2025

PREFACE

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Board of Directors' Travel and Expense Policy serves as the guiding framework for the management of official travel and expense reimbursements for Board Members and employees of the Board Corporate Secretary's Office. This Policy outlines the standards and procedures for approved travel undertaken for WMATA business, as well as guidelines for the reimbursement of related and non-travel expenses.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS' TRAVEL AND EXPENSE POLICY

CHAPTER 1 - GENERAL PROVISIONS

1-1 Purpose

- a. WMATA recognizes the value of attending transit-related conferences as a way to stay informed about industry developments and best practices. These events offer meaningful insights that benefit WMATA's mission, and Board Members are encouraged to participate when their schedules allow.
- b. As stewards of the public trust, Board Members are expected to exercise sound judgment when incurring expenses related to official business and travel. Travel arrangements, including transportation and lodging and other expenses incurred for WMATA business, should be cost-effective while reasonably meeting the needs of the business purpose.
- c. Board Members shall coordinate all official travel through the Office of the Board Corporate Secretary.

1-2 Authorization of Travel

All travel must be authorized in advance, except in rare or extenuating circumstances. Travel authorization requests should be submitted as early as possible to secure the most cost-effective options. The Office of the Board Corporate Secretary is responsible for obtaining written approval from the appropriate authorizing official.

1-3 Authorizing Officials

All Board Member travel must be approved by the Board Chair, except for the Chair's own travel, which shall be approved by a Vice Chair of the Board.

Travel requests for the Board Corporate Secretary shall be approved by the Inspector General. Travel requests for Board Secretary's staff shall be approved by the Board Corporate Secretary.

1-4 Funding of Travel Expense

Travel is funded through the Office of the Board Corporate Secretary's annual budget.

1-5 Travel Reservations

Lodging and transportation arrangements shall be made either by Board Members or through the Office of the Board Corporate Secretary.

1-6 Exceptions to Policy

All policy exceptions require written justification by the requesting Board member and written approval by the Board Chair (or Vice Chair for Chair requests).

1-7 Coordination with Code of Ethics

Board Members shall adhere to the WMATA Board of Directors Code of Ethics, which includes provisions related to fiduciary responsibilities, proper use of official position, conflicts of interest, and acceptance of gifts. In accordance with the Code, Board Members are prohibited from accepting travel or lodging expenses from Interested Parties.

Any questions regarding these provisions should be directed to the Board Ethics Officer.

CHAPTER 2 - REGISTRATION AND OTHER FEES

2-1 Registration Fees

The Office of the Board Corporate Secretary will arrange for the payment of conference registration fees. Members are encouraged to take advantage of early registration discounts.

2-2 Conference Event Fees

Conference event fees in excess of standard registration costs are eligible for reimbursement only when the event is directly aligned with the conference and Board Member responsibilities (e.g., city or facility tours with a professional focus). Events that are primarily social in nature or not directly connected to the conference or Board duties—such as networking events, fundraisers, or social gatherings—are not eligible for reimbursement.

2-3 Requirement for Cancellation of Travel

Board Members shall notify the Office of the Board Corporate Secretary of any cancellations as early as possible and make every effort to avoid or minimize cancellation fees.

CHAPTER 3 - TRANSPORTATION

3-1 Cost-Effective Travel

Travelers are expected to secure the most cost-effective travel arrangements that reasonably meet the requirements of official business. Reimbursement will be limited to the most economical option available, taking into account factors such as travel schedule, advance-purchase savings, and non-refundable fares. Reimbursement shall cover only the days necessary for official business travel.

3-2 Transportation Options

Travelers who incur transportation expenses exceeding the most cost-effective option—such as taking an indirect route or extending their stay—shall be personally responsible for any additional costs resulting from those choices.

a. Air Travel

Air travel must be booked at least 14 days in advance. Any airfare booked fewer than 14 days prior to travel requires written justification submitted to the Office of the Board Corporate Secretary at the time of booking to be eligible for reimbursement. WMATA is not eligible for GSA airfare rates.

i. **Travel Upgrades**

Board members will be reimbursed for the equivalent of coach/economy travel only. For flights with a total duration of three hours or more, Board members may select the lowest-cost option that provides additional legroom and will be reimbursed accordingly.

ii. **Allowable air travel expenses**

- Coach/economy fare or its equivalent
- Necessary and reasonable parking fees;
- Necessary and reasonable check baggage fees; and
- Internet (business related).

b. **Train**

Train travel is encouraged for regional meetings when practical. Reimbursement is limited to economy and business class fare.

c. **Vehicle Usage- Personal or Rental**

Personal: When travel by personal vehicle is authorized in advance, reimbursement will be provided at the prevailing federal mileage rate and will be based on round-trip mileage between the WMATA Transit Zone and the destination. When multiple Board Members travel together in one vehicle, only one mileage reimbursement will be issued. (See: [Standard mileage rates | Internal Revenue Service](#))

Rental: Rental vehicle use requires written justification and prior approval from the Board Chair (or a Vice Chair in the case of the Chair's request) to be eligible for reimbursement. Rentals will only be authorized when necessary for official business and when alternative transportation options are unavailable or impractical. When applicable, long-term rental rates should be pursued to minimize costs. Drop-off fees for one-way rentals should be avoided when possible by securing a vehicle based in the destination city.

d. **Additional Transportation Options While on Out-of-Town Travel**

Board Members are encouraged to utilize mass transit and conference-provided transportation services. Other allowable modes of transportation include Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), taxis, bicycles, and scooters.

e. **Transportation Options for Local Travel**

- i. Local travel within the WMATA Transit Zone that is conducted for official business purposes does not require advance authorization.

- ii. The use of mass transit for local transportation is encouraged. Other approved modes of transportation include Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), taxis, bicycles, and scooters.

3-3 Alternate Origin or Destination

- a. When a traveler elects to depart from or arrive at a city other than the official business travel origin or destination, any additional cost above the most cost-effective point-to-point itinerary shall be the sole responsibility of the traveler. A point-to-point itinerary refers to the most direct and cost-effective travel route between the official business origin and destination, without personal detours, stopovers, or alternate cities. It reflects the standard travel cost for fulfilling business obligations only.
- b. To qualify for reimbursement, travelers must submit documentation of the most cost-effective point-to-point itinerary at the time travel is authorized.

3-4 Travel Upgrades

Travelers will be reimbursed for coach or economy class travel only. For air travel with a total flight time of three hours or more, travelers may select the lowest-cost option that includes additional legroom.

CHAPTER 4 – LODGING

Whenever feasible, lodging should be booked at hotels offering conference, government, or corporate rates. For extended stays, efforts should be made to obtain discounted weekly or monthly rates when justified. Reservations shall be made for single-occupancy rooms and may include one night before and/or after the event as needed.

CHAPTER 5 – MEALS: EXPENSE ALLOWANCE

5-1 System of Reimbursement

WMATA follows the federal per diem guidelines for Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE), which provide a daily allowance in lieu of submitting itemized receipts for meals and related incidental costs. Lodging is reimbursed at actual cost, unless otherwise stated in this policy. Federal cost standards, as published at www.gsa.gov/perdiem, govern the applicable per diem and lodging rates.

Travelers are not required to submit receipts for meals or incidental expenses when the federal per diem is used. Any meals or incidental charges listed on a lodging receipt will be considered part of the M&IE per diem and will not be reimbursed as part of the lodging cost.

Incidental expenses related to subsistence are:

- Fees and tips related to meals or lodging; and
- Costs of laundry and dry cleaning.

5-2 Conference Meals

When meals are provided as part of a conference or event, those meals are not eligible for per diem.

Travelers are prohibited from accepting meals from Interested Parties, as defined in the Board Code of Ethics.

CHAPTER 6 – REIMBURSEMENT

Travelers are expected to select the most cost-effective travel option that reasonably accommodates official business needs. Reimbursement is limited to the most economical option, factoring in available savings such as advance-purchase or non-refundable fares, as well as scheduling considerations. Reimbursement will cover only the days required for official business travel. **Reimbursement requests must be submitted within 60 days of completion of travel, as WMATA will not reimburse expenses beyond this timeframe.**

6-1 Transportation

- a. Reimbursement for local transportation other than mass transit is limited to the actual fare plus gratuity, or the approved mileage rate for personal vehicle use, along with reasonable parking or toll expenses. Travelers may be reimbursed for alternative modes of local transportation only when they represent the most practical option for the circumstances.
- b. For purposes of calculating reimbursement, the most direct route shall be used unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate official.

6-2 Lodging

The traveler will be reimbursed for the actual costs for lodging subject to the exclusions listed in Section 6-7.

6-3 Meals

Where the traveler is entitled to reimbursement for less than three daily meals, reimbursement shall be provided according to the applicable GSA Meals & Incidental Expenses rate.

- a. Meal expense for one day, out-of-area trips for periods lasting at least 12 hours shall be 75% of the applicable GSA Meals & Incidental Expenses rate. (Out-of-area travel of less than 12 hours shall be limited to transportation costs).
- b. Meal expense for a period of 24 hours or more are reimbursed at the applicable daily GSA Meals & Incidental Expenses rate as follows:
 - Day of departure: 75%
 - Full day on travel: 100% (less any conference/event-provided meals)
 - Last day of travel: 75%

6-4 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodations

WMATA is committed to providing equal access to professional development opportunities for all members, including those with disabilities. In compliance with ADA, reasonable accommodations will be made to ensure that travel is accessible for travelers.

Requests for ADA accommodations shall be submitted during the travel authorization process.

6-5 Travel by Family Members or Companions

WMATA will reimburse only those expenses that the traveler would have incurred if traveling alone. Expenses for individuals accompanying the traveler will not be reimbursed, unless their presence is required as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA.

6-6 International Travel Reimbursement

Reimbursement for international travel will be based on actual expenses, except for meals and incidental expenses, which are reimbursed according to the [U.S. State Department's Foreign Per Diem Rates](#). All expenses must be documented in U.S. dollars using the actual conversion rate paid by the traveler. If a credit card is used, the applicable exchange rate is the one charged by the credit card company at the time of the transaction. Necessary miscellaneous expenses incurred due to foreign travel are also eligible for reimbursement.

6-7 Non-Reimbursable Expenses

The following is an illustrative, but not exclusive, list of expenses that are not eligible for reimbursement:

- Nonessential items such as alcohol, gifts or personal entertainment;
- Car rentals not authorized in advance;
- Expenses for other persons unless allowed under Section 6-4;
- Airport lounge fees;
- Travel insurance fees;
- Parking and traffic violations;
- Tips and gratuities included as part of the per diem rate;
- In-room entertainment such as pay-per-view movies.

6-8 Special Circumstances

It is acknowledged that, in certain situations, strict adherence to standard travel reimbursement policies may cause undue hardship for travelers. Accordingly, exceptions to the standard policy may be approved by the authorizing official under the specific circumstances outlined below, provided the request is fully documented. Reimbursement for actual meal or lodging expenses may be permitted when higher costs are due to peak season rates, limited availability of reasonably priced accommodations near the event location, travel to remote areas, or attendance at legislative sessions. The traveler must

provide the required receipts and demonstrate that the expense resulted in a financial loss directly related to official travel, and that no reasonable alternative was available.

6-9 Documentation

All required supporting documentation, including the travel itinerary and lodging receipts, must be submitted with any reimbursement request. Unless otherwise specified in this chapter, travelers are expected to provide receipts for all expenses claimed.

CHAPTER 7 - NON-TRAVEL EXPENSES

Board Members and staff may incur expenses while performing their official WMATA duties. They are expected to make every effort to minimize the use of WMATA funds. Reimbursement will be provided for actual expenses that are reasonable and directly support WMATA's interests, such as stakeholder meetings or events that advance WMATA's mission. Whenever possible, Board Members and staff should use WMATA-provided assets and equipment (e.g., cell phones, laptops, iPads), as expenses related to personal devices are not eligible for reimbursement.

Board Members must obtain approval from the Chair (or from the Vice Chair for expenses incurred by the Chair) before incurring any expense exceeding \$50 per occurrence. Appropriate documentation must be submitted to receive reimbursement. If prior approval is not obtained, reimbursement will be at the discretion of the Chair (or Vice Chair for Chair expenses).

Board members will not be reimbursed for any expenses related to:

- Interested Parties or Prohibited Source as defined in the [Board Code of Ethics](#)
- Expenses unrelated to their Board service; or
- Items not authorized for reimbursement under this policy.