

9206

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE relating to travel authorization and expense reimbursement; establishing rules and procedures governing such and repealing Ordinance 809, as amended and Ordinance 866, Section 3 and KCC 3.20.010-.030; Ordinance 5237, Section 1 as amended and KCC 3.28.030; Ordinance 2030, Section 2 as amended, and KCC 3.20.040; Ordinance 2615, Section 1 and Ordinance 5356, Section 1 as amended and KCC 3.24.010-.020; and Ordinance 6171, as amended, and KCC 3.20.050.

PREAMBLE:

This ordinance establishes King County's official business travel authorization and expense claim policy as empowered by King County Charter Section 220.20 and RCW 42.24.090.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

NEW SECTION. SECTION 1. Definitions.

All words shall have their ordinary and usual meanings except those defined in this section which shall have the meaning set forth below.

A. "County Agency" shall mean any office or department of the executive branch responsible to the county executive, the departments of judicial administration, and assessments, the office of the prosecuting attorney, the council and subordinate units of the legislative branch, and the components of the judicial branch.

B. "Travel" shall consist of lodging, subsistence, transportation, seminar/meeting attendance and related activities in the conduct of official county business.

C. "Official county business" shall mean, but not be limited to:

1. conducting legitimate county business such as fulfilling normal job functions, negotiating agreements, inspecting or purchasing equipment, coordinating with other governmental agencies, serving on interview or judging panels, and providing consultation; or

2. obtaining information or training directly related to a person's official function; or

3. serving as an official representative of King County.

D. "Presiding Elected Official" shall mean the county executive, the

1 county assessor, the prosecuting attorney, the chair of the county council,
2 and the presiding judges of the superior and district courts.

3 NEW SECTION. SECTION 2. Persons Eligible for Travel Expense Reimbursement.

4 Within budgetary constraints, the following persons are eligible for
5 travel expense reimbursement in conformance with this ordinance and are
6 likewise responsible for compliance with terms of this ordinance and any
7 implementing procedures:

8 A. County officials and employees;

9 B. Members of boards/commissions or uncompensated volunteers
10 participating in county business if authorized by the enabling legislation
11 or appointing authority;

12 C. Candidates for county employment for any position above pay range
13 fifty-four in non-legislative branches governed by the county personnel
14 system's pay range schedule or as authorized by the council chair for
15 legislative branch positions, subject to the following restrictions:

16 1. For travel to a designated place from their place of residence to
17 be interviewed.

18 2. Maximum of five interview trips for a given position during any
19 twelve month period.

20 3. No person is eligible for more than two separate interview trips
21 for a given position.

22 4. Limited to the five highest-ranked candidates.

23 5. Approval required before invitation to interview is issued:

24 a. For positions at pay range fifty-five through eighty,
25 approval is required of the county council's administration and justice
26 committee or its successor.

27 b. For positions above pay range eighty, approval is required of
28 the appointing authority and the county personnel manager.

29 D. Persons authorized by the respective elected official or department
30 director to incur travel and subsistence expense to partake in official
31 county business provided that the total of such costs shall not exceed \$200
32 per person and a complete description of the county business purpose and
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1 necessity to incur the costs is provided with the reimbursement claim.
2 Authorization for such expenses in excess of \$200 shall, in addition, be
3 approved by the presiding elected official.

4 E. Persons otherwise authorized by law, grant or contract, given that
5 any other travel reimbursement policy specified by such authority would
6 prevail.

7 NEW SECTION. SECTION 3. Prior Authorization of Travel and Reimbursement.

8 Authorization to travel and for reimbursement of travel expenses shall
9 be obtained prior to commencement of the travel activity as follows. Even
10 if the county will not be funding the travel expense, travel authorization
11 is required if the person is to maintain official employment/business
12 status during the travel.

13 A. In-State Travel. Travel within the State of Washington shall be
14 approved under an established policy of the respective branch of county
15 government, except that internal organization activities qualifying under
16 Section 8.D.1 must receive prior approval of the respective department
17 director, or elected official if the director is a participant.

18 B. Out-Of-State Travel. Travel outside the State of Washington shall
19 be approved as follows:

20 1. Travel plans of employees, officials, judges and persons
21 traveling on behalf of the county shall be authorized in advance by the
22 respective presiding elected official or designee, and in accordance with
23 established procedures of that branch of government.

24 2. Presiding elected officials shall ensure that a copy of their own
25 county business travel plans, which provides a record of official activity
26 during the period of travel, is filed in their respective offices and is
27 accessible in case of administrative necessity.

28 NEW SECTION. SECTION 4. Standards for Approval of Travel and Expense
29 Reimbursement.

30 Persons responsible for authorizing travel or approving expense claims
31 shall neither be subordinate to or of a lower job classification than the
32 requestor/claimant. Said person shall ensure that the traveler is provided
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1 adequate information about the applicable travel and reimbursement policies
2 prior to travel and shall apply, as a minimum, the criteria outlined below
3 in making decisions on granting or denying such requests:

4 A. The purpose of the requested travel shall be for the conduct of
5 official county business. It must be demonstrated that there is a direct
6 relationship between the purpose of the travel and the employee work
7 functions. The request for travel must indicate what benefit the county
8 will receive from the travel and demonstrate such by attaching any
9 available printed material or description indicating the overall content
10 and quality of the event.

11 B. Budgeted monies for reimbursement must be available and authorized.
12 Expenditure plans must be necessary and reasonable. Excessive or
13 unnecessary expenses shall not be approved or reimbursed.

14 C. The number of persons engaging in a given travel activity shall be
15 the minimum necessary in consideration of the expected benefit.

16 D. Travel requests and reimbursement claims shall conform to
17 provisions of this ordinance and other applicable laws, grants, contracts
18 or policies.

19 E. The approving authority of reimbursements for expenses shall employ
20 careful judgment to ensure that one political subdivision does not pay
21 expenses properly attributed to another, in violation of RCW 43.09.210.

22 NEW SECTION. SECTION 5. Reimbursable Expenses and Allowances.

23 All persons are to exercise prudent judgment to avoid unnecessary
24 county expense.

25 A. For attendance at seminars or professional meetings involving some
26 personal interest as opposed to directed travel, travel may be authorized
27 with reimbursement at less than the rates otherwise authorized, provided
28 that the reduced reimbursement rates are acceptable to the employee prior
29 to the travel.

30 B. The county shall not provide funding of a travel event or item of
31 expense where a source of reimbursement to the traveller other than the
32 county is specified in county, state or federal law or policy. In cases.
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1 where reimbursement is available from another source, the county may, at
2 the option of the approving authority, pay the differential between what
3 county policy would allow for the total travel activity and the total
4 reimbursed from the other source, but shall not selectively reimburse for
5 only specific items with differing reimbursement rates between the county
6 and the other source.

7 NEW SECTION. SECTION 6. Transportation Costs.

8 King County will pay the actual and necessary costs of transportation
9 in the course of official county business as follows:

10 A. Normal and usual means of conveyance are to be used. Public
11 transportation shall be used where practical. Where a private mode of
12 transportation is used in lieu of another more normal and usual form of
13 transportation, travel reimbursement shall be the lesser of the two costs.

14 B. Where automobile transportation is necessary, a county vehicle
15 shall be used where practical. Authorized use of a private automobile
16 shall be reimbursed at the rate of twenty-one cents per mile, except as
17 provided by a collective bargaining agreement, prevailing law or contract.
18 This rate shall change annually on July first in increments of one cent
19 when the effect of compounded annual general county non-union
20 cost-of-living adjustments, as applied to this figure, results in the given
21 amount reaching the next even cent, subject to the limitation of never
22 exceeding the current IRS tax-exempt mileage reimbursement rate for
23 business transportation paid by an employer to its employees. The 1989
24 COLA will be the initial factor considered. The office of financial
25 management shall be responsible for administering and announcing such rate
26 changes.

27 C. The excess cost of first class or business coach fare for a given
28 mode of travel shall not be reimbursed where less expensive fares are
29 available.

30 D. If an indirect route is taken for personal reasons, all extra
31 costs of such travel are not reimbursable.

32 E. The starting and ending locations of official travel are the
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1 official work place or the residence, depending on the work schedule at
2 that point in time.

3 NEW SECTION. SECTION 7. Lodging Costs.

4 Lodging costs actually incurred are reimburseable only as follows:

5 A. When travel requires leaving King County for at least twelve hours,
6 unless otherwise justified and approved in writing by the respective
7 elected official or department director.

8 B. From the night before the authorized event starts through the night
9 before it ends, unless reasonable and timely return transportation is not
10 available, thereby necessitating additional lodging and subsistence costs.
11 If, with the consent of both the traveller and the approving authority, the
12 duration of the trip is extended beyond county business needs and this
13 results in a reduction of airfare ticket costs, the additional related
14 lodging and subsistence costs will be reimbursed consistent with provisions
15 of this ordinance, but up to a maximum of the documented airfare ticket
16 savings.

17 C. When one employee is involved, the receipt shall identify the
18 respective single occupancy rate.

19 NEW SECTION. SECTION 8. Meal Costs.

20 A. Meal cost allowances or reimbursements are payable for official
21 county business purposes only when:

22 1. The duration of travel exceeds three hours outside King
23 County, or

24 2. Meals are necessary and integral to conducting official
25 county business including training, job candidate interviews, seminars or
26 business meetings with non-county employees, or

27 3. Performance of assigned duties by an overtime pay exempt
28 employee requires overtime, either extending at least three hours beyond
29 the start or end of a scheduled workday of at least seven hours or
30 consisting of at least four hours call-out on an unscheduled workday and
31 unreasonably delaying access to normal subsistence, as approved by the
32 respective department director or elected official.

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1 B. Meal costs are not payable when:

2 1. The expense of the respective meal is included in a
3 registration fee, air fare or another county expense, or

4 2. Meals are incurred in the normal course of the employee's job,
5 including staff meetings and consultation with subordinates or between
6 employees, or

7 3. The meal occurs in the proximate location of the employee's
8 normal place of work where the employee's normal means of subsistence can
9 be reasonably accommodated, or

10 4. The county, at its option, provides a meal.

11 C. For partial day travel status, fixed amount allowances will be paid
12 as payment in full for authorized meals if in an eligible status during the
13 designated times, as follows:

14 Breakfast (7:00 a.m.) - eight dollars, Lunch (12:00 noon) - nine dollars,
15 Dinner (6:00 p.m.) - eighteen dollars.

16 For full day travel status, a fixed amount allowance of thirty-five
17 dollars will be paid as payment in full for meals.

18 These amounts shall change annually on July first in increments of
19 one dollar when the effect of compounded annual general county non-union
20 cost-of-living adjustments, as applied to these figures, result in the
21 given amount reaching the next even dollar. The 1989 COLA will be the
22 initial factor considered. The office of financial management shall be
23 responsible for administering and announcing such rate changes.

24 D. An exception to these fixed rates shall be to reimburse actual
25 restaurant or food service costs, which may include service tips of up to
26 15% or a fixed rate established by the restaurant for group billings, for:

27 1. County staff retreats or training programs which qualify under
28 the criteria cited in subsections A and B of this section and receive
29 written justification relating to county business and cost approval of the
30 respective department director, or elected official if the director is a
31 participant.

32 2. Approved participation in meals which are an integral activity
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1 on the agenda of an external organizational function related to county
2 business. This includes community organization meetings, banquets,
3 receptions and celebration events where the cost does not exceed triple the
4 respective fixed amount allowance cited in Section 8.C, above. Any amount
5 exceeding that figure shall be treated as a contribution expense in its
6 entirety.

7 3. Extenuating circumstances, where there exists: an uncontrollable
8 business necessity, a circumstance related to a particular meal or specific
9 event that results in having to significantly exceed the applicable fixed
10 amount allowance cited in Section 8.C., a receipt detailing the expense
11 accompanied by written justification explaining the necessity to exceed the
12 fixed amount allowance, and specific undelegated approval of the presiding
13 elected official.

14 E. Another exception to the above rules is that meal expenses incurred
15 on behalf of another agency which reimburses King County for the expense
16 shall be reimbursed according to the rules specified by the funding agency.

17 NEW SECTION. SECTION 9. Miscellaneous Reimbursable Expenses.

18 Miscellaneous expenses related to official county business travel which
19 are considered essential and reimbursable include, but are not limited to:

20 A. Registration fee of convention, banquet, luncheon, seminar or
21 similar organized program.

22 B. Rental of hotel room or other facility.

23 C. Parking, ferry/bridge tolls, taxi fare, subway fare, airport bus
24 service and rental car.

25 D. Stenographic or typing services.

26 E. Telephone calls necessary for the conduct of official business or
27 to advise of a change in official travel plans.

28 F. Laundry, if the trip exceeds one week or with special approval of
29 the respective department director or elected official.

30 G. Traveler's checks and baggage handling service, when necessary.

31 NEW SECTION. SECTION 10. Non-Reimbursable Personal Expenses.

32 Certain expenses are considered personal and therefore non-reimbursable
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1 including, but not limited to:

2 A. Laundry and personal telephone calls except as provided for in
3 Section 9.

4 B. Entertainment, television rental, clothing, personal sundries,
5 transportation to places of entertainment and similar personal items.

6 C. Room service and valet service, unless unusual circumstances are
7 cited to justify business necessity.

8 D. Personal "trip insurance" and medical or hospital services.

9 E. Transportation between the employee's home and official
10 workplace.

11 F. Alcoholic beverages and tobacco products.

12 G. Tips and gratuities, except as related to actual meal costs
13 provided for in Section 8.D.

14 NEW SECTION. SECTION 11. Leave of Absence During Travel.

15 A. When leave of absence of any kind is taken while in a travel
16 status, the exact hour of departure and return to duty status shall be
17 shown on the travel expense claim voucher. Except as provided in the
18 following paragraph, expense reimbursement, including transportation to and
19 from the post of duty, shall not be granted for such period.

20 B. Whenever a traveler takes leave of absence because of
21 incapacitation due to illness or injury not due to the employee's own
22 misconduct, the authorized reimbursement for lodging and subsistence may be
23 continued during the leave period, but not to exceed in total the
24 authorized cost for return to the employee's official station or residence,
25 whichever is closer, and then back to the assignment.

26 NEW SECTION. SECTION 12. Lobbyist Per Diem in Lieu of Reimbursement.

27 A. Any expense for which a King County officer or employee would
28 otherwise be reimbursed shall be a legal obligation of and expenditure by
29 King County when incurred in the course of "lobbying", as defined in
30 RCW 42.17.020(18), or in the course of providing requested information to
31 an official or officials of another government agency.

32 B. Any employee of the county council, when assigned to a session of
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1 the Washington State Legislature as a full time "lobbyist" as defined in
2 RCW 42.17.020(19), shall be authorized to receive, in lieu of meal and
3 lodging cost reimbursements provided for in this ordinance, an allowance
4 for each and every consecutive day of a session at a rate equivalent to
5 that authorized for members of the Washington State Legislature in
6 accordance with RCW 44.04.120.

7 NEW SECTION. SECTION 13. Procedure For Obtaining Reimbursement.

8 A. Travel expense reimbursement claims shall be submitted in detailed
9 account citing time, place, business purpose and participants in accordance
10 with procedures established by and forms approved by the office of
11 financial management.

12 B. Receipts prepared and issued by the service provider or copies of
13 endorsed checks are required wherever this policy provides for actual cost
14 reimbursement, except that receipts are not required for expenses of less
15 than ten dollars.
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SECTION 14. Repealer.

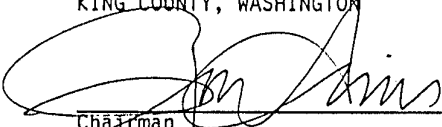
The following ordinances are hereby repealed:

Ordinance 809, as amended and Ordinance 866, Section 3 and
KCC 3.20.010-.030; Ordinance 5237, Section 1 as amended and KCC 3.28.030;
Ordinance 2030, as amended, and KCC 3.20.040; Ordinance 2615, Section 1 and
Ordinance 5356, Section 1 as amended and KCC 3.24.010-.020; and Ordinance
6171, as amended, and KCC 3.20.050.

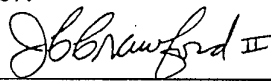
INTRODUCED AND READ for the first time this 15th day
or May, 1989.

PASSED this 13th day of November, 1989.


KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Chairman

ATTEST:


Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this 22 day of November, 1989.


King County Executive