

OCTOBER 1, 2016



# TRAVEL POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

UPSHUR COUNTY, TEXAS

FILED  
TERRI ROSS  
COUNTY CLERK

2016 OCT 14 AM 10:33

UPSHUR COUNTY, TX.

BY

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "T. Ross", is written over a horizontal line.

DEPUTY

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### TRAVEL POLICY & PROCEDURES

<b>General Provisions</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Preamble .....	2
Objectives .....	2
Authority .....	2
Applicability .....	2
Travel Classifications .....	2
Travel Expense Forms .....	3
<b>Local Mileage Reimbursement</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Preamble .....	4
Local Mileage Reimbursement Form .....	5
<b>Out-of-County Travel Reimbursement</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Introduction .....	6
Provisions .....	6
Overpayments / Reimbursements .....	7
Lodging .....	7
Meal Reimbursement .....	8
Transportation Costs .....	9
Out-of-County Travel Expense Form .....	10
<b>Law Enforcement Prisoner Transport &amp; Investigative Expense Reimbursement</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Preamble .....	11
Applicability .....	11
Provisions .....	11
Law Enforcement Transport or Investigative Travel Form .....	13

## GENERAL PROVISIONS

### PREAMBLE

The intent of this policy and procedure manual is to state the guidelines governing Upshur County employees while traveling on official county business and the associated reimbursement of actual, reasonable, and necessary traveling expenses. Procedures are provided for authorizing travel, determining expenses, and completing the reports needed to ensure proper reimbursement.

### OBJECTIVES

These travel policies and procedures have been established to meet four (4) main objectives:

1. To ensure that travel costs are met as economically as possible.
2. To ensure that travel policies are best suited to the particular needs of county departments.
3. To ensure the timely payment of travel costs to avoid interruption of governmental operations.
4. To ensure that the travel and expense procedures conform to the Internal Revenue Code, State laws, and Upshur County policies.

### AUTHORITY

Section 152.011 of the Texas Local Government Code gives the Commissioners Court the authority to set travel expenses and other allowances for all county officials and employees. The County Commissioners' Court allows reimbursement of travel expenses for county officials and employees who travel on official business when funds have been allocated in departmental budgets for that purpose.

After any department's travel budget expense line item has been depleted in any fiscal year, reimbursement travel expense and other allowances for that Department's official or employees shall only be made upon approval of a budget amendment by the Commissioner's Court.

### APPLICABILITY

These policies and procedures will apply to all County departments and State agencies where the County is fiscally responsible.

### TRAVEL CLASSIFICATIONS

For applicability of policies and procedures to the different types of travel, Upshur County has classified official business travel into three (3) main types:

1. **LOCAL MILEAGE** – expenses incurred from traveling within the county on official county business. Generally, this type of travel would include mileage reimbursement for use of the employee's personal vehicle while on official county business within the county.

2. **OUT-OF-COUNTY TRAVEL** – expenses incurred from traveling outside the county while on official county business. This type of travel would include travel for official educational seminars and conferences. Appropriate out-of-county travel expenses include conference registration fees, lodging, meals, and transportation costs.
3. **LAW ENFORCEMENT TRANSPORT/INVESTIGATIVE TRAVEL** – expenses incurred by UCSO or DA employees during prisoner transport or an out-of-county investigation. These expenses may include meals, lodging, and toll charges.

#### TRAVEL EXPENSE FORMS

Upshur County utilizes three (3) forms for travel expenses:

1. **Local Mileage Reimbursement Form** - used when requesting reimbursement for miles driven in the county in a vehicle not owned by the county.
2. **Out-Of-County Travel Form** - used when requesting advance funding or reimbursement for travel expenses for official business or education outside the county.
3. **Law Enforcement Travel Form** - used when requesting reimbursement for expenses incurred during prisoner transport or out-of-county investigation travel.

## LOCAL MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

### PREAMBLE

Some County departments require their employees to travel within the county on official county business. When a county employee uses a personal automobile for this purpose, the employee may be reimbursed for use of their personal auto at the state mileage reimbursement rate.

Before an employee may be reimbursed for local travel, there must first be a department budget allocation for local travel. This allocation will be made during the budget hearings or through a budget amendment made by Commissioner's Court.

The county employee requesting reimbursement for local travel expense must complete the *Local Mileage Reimbursement Form* and submit the form to the County Auditor for reimbursement. A copy of the current version of the *Local Mileage Reimbursement Form* may be obtained from the County Auditor's office.

The employee requesting reimbursement should use MapQuest to determine the shortest route rounded to the nearest tenth of a mile. The MapQuest printout does not have to be attached to the local mileage reimbursement form as long as the point of origin and the destination address are clearly indicated on the request form. The County Auditor will perform random verifications to ensure that employees are claiming reimbursement based on the shortest route. Any employee who fails to use the MapQuest shortest route, or fails to provide sufficient information for the verification process will be asked to resubmit their request. After repeated violations, the employee will be required to start attaching MapQuest printouts with their request in order to receive reimbursements.

Generally, point-of-origin is the employee's regular office location during regular business hours M-F 8-5. Under certain circumstances, point-of-origin may be deemed to be the employee's home address.

#### Example of a Properly Completed Form:

Date	Miles	Description
9/1/16	12.7	Magistrate - From home to jail & back
9/5/16	1.0	From Courthouse to post office and back
9/12/16	10.8	Inquest - From home to 615 US Hwy 271 N and back
9/27/16	13.7	Deliver Election supplies to Pritchett polling place and back to courthouse

Local mileage reimbursement forms should be completed as often as practical but for periods not to exceed a single fiscal quarter (January-March, April-June, July-September, October-December) and must be submitted no later than 30 days following the end of the period.

**UPSHUR COUNTY, TEXAS**

**LOCAL MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT FORM**

**NOTE: THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED IN DETAIL AND SUBMITTED TO THE County Auditor to claim reimbursement for use of personal auto for official local county business travel.**

**DATE OF REQUEST:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DEPARTMENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSON SUBMITTING REQUEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MILES</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL MILES THIS REPORT**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **LESS PERSONAL MILES**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL COUNTY MILES X \$** \_\_\_\_\_ **RATE = \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**"I hereby swear that the above is a true and correct statement of use of my personal auto for official local county business travel and request reimbursement for the same."**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Signature of Person Submitting Report**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **Department Head Approval**

**Charge to Account Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

## OUT-OF-COUNTY TRAVEL

### INTRODUCTION

County officials, department heads, and/or employees may be occasionally required to travel on official county business and accrue expenses to be reimbursed by the County. Travel of this type generally includes official educational seminars and conferences.

### PROVISIONS

All county-reimbursed travel must be for **OFFICIAL COUNTY BUSINESS ONLY**. Elected Officials and Department Heads are expected to plan the out-of-county travel for themselves and their employees to achieve maximum economy and efficiency. The Department head and traveling employee should make every effort to get county checks issued prior to the travel.

Travel advance forms must be properly completed and signed by both the employee and Department Head/Supervisor before being presented to the County Auditor for approval. The travel advance form must be received no later than 1 week prior to the Commissioners' Court meeting date at which the payment needs to be issued. Incomplete travel forms will be returned, resulting in delay of payment.

**Purchase orders are not required for travel advances.** However, if an employee fails to request an advance in a timely manner, then a purchase order **IS** required **PRIOR TO THE TRAVEL** in order to encumber the necessary funds.

All reimbursement requests made after the travel has occurred **WILL** require actual receipts, including additional, unanticipated costs that an employee may have incurred even after receiving a travel advance. If no travel advance was requested, only documented expenses will be reimbursed, subject to the maximum per diem rate. Reimbursements made directly to an employee will only be made after proof of payment. **Reimbursement claims made without a purchase order or without receipts may be rejected by the County Auditor.**

**Out-of-county travel requests will not be processed without an agenda of the event attached.** All requests for payment, including lodging, must have supporting documentation in order for the expenses to be approved. Requests made without sufficient documentation will be returned to the employee.

It is the responsibility of the Department Head to make a request to the Commissioner's Court and receive permission for all **OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL** (except for law enforcement transport or investigative travel). Without such prior approval no reimbursement shall be allowed.

**The County will pay cover the basic price of the conference, but will not pay for optional activities.**

## OVERPAYMENTS / REIMBURSEMENTS

In certain circumstances, events may occur which cause the employee to owe the county a refund of advanced funds. Examples of this are, including but not limited to: receiving an advance for mileage, then carpooling with another employee, returning from a conference a day early, or cancelling a business trip altogether. In the event an official or employee of the county receives such an overpayment, that overpayment should immediately be reimbursed to the County Treasurer upon return of the employee to the county or cancellation of travel plans.

It is the responsibility of the Department Head/Supervisor to ensure that all reimbursement forms to the State of Texas, or any other reimbursing agency other than the county, are promptly submitted to the reimbursing agency. When reimbursements are received they should see that those funds are deposited with the County Treasurer and copies of the receipts sent to the County Auditor.

## LODGING

The County will cover the actual cost of lodging while traveling on official county business. It is the responsibility of the traveling employee to request payment for lodging in plenty of time in order for a county check to be issued. **Lodging charges made on an employee's personal credit card may not be reimbursed.**

Travel which requires the employee to be away from the county for less than 12 consecutive hours is not considered to require an overnight stay and as a result, meals and lodging will not be approved.

Depending on travel arrangements, the county will cover the cost of a maximum of one-day lodging prior to the start of a conference or seminar and lodging through and including the last day of the conference or seminar.

The start of a conference is defined as the earliest event listed on the conference agenda, and the end of a conference is defined as the latest event listed on the agenda.

If the traveling employee is able to leave their home by 6:00 a.m. and reach the destination on time, it is not considered to require an additional night's stay prior to the start of the conference, as defined above. The County Auditor will consider distance, average speed, traffic load en route and at destination site, and sufficient break and meal times in using discretion of whether or not the trip can be made in the stated amount of time.

If the event ends at such a time as to allow the employee to arrive at home by 10:00 pm using MapQuest estimated travel time, the employee will be expected to return on that day. Any additional lodging will be at the expense of the county employee unless proof is presented that the additional lodging is a result of extended county business. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on an individual basis by the County Auditor.



If possible, County employees are encouraged to book lodging at the hotel at which the conference, seminar or training session is held. The quantity of these rooms are limited so booking immediately upon notice of the conference is imperative. If this is not possible, the traveling employee should always obtain lodging where a "conference or government rate" is offered. The county employee will obtain a hotel confirmation that includes the room rate and any additional fees, which will be submitted with the Travel Expense Form.

Certain items on hotel statements which the County **WILL NOT** pay for are:

- Valet Parking
- Meals (covered by daily per diem)
- Personal expense items such as cleaning or laundry
- Alcoholic beverage charges
- Recreation Facilities use charges
- Movies and personal phone calls (each employee will be allowed one "safe arrival" personal call per trip, limited to no more than 3 minutes)
- Additional charges for non-employee traveling companion(s).

**MEAL REIMBURSEMENT**

The traveling employee will be compensated for meals at no more than the current per diem rate as approved by the Commissioner's Court. (Currently \$40 per day, effective October 1, 2016.)

The County will reimburse for county employee meals only.

Meals for trips that do not require an overnight stay will not be reimbursed. The only exceptions are addressed in the law enforcement transport and investigative travel section of this policy.

**MEAL REIMBURSEMENT RATES**

	morning meal	noon meal	evening meal
	\$10	\$12	\$18

If a meal is provided by the conference or a vendor, as reflected in the event agenda, the employee's per diem will be reduced by the amount for that meal. It is allowed to request morning meal per diem allowance even if the hotel provides a continental breakfast.

For trips that require an overnight stay either the night before the conference begins, or the night that the conference ends, the employee will be paid 75% of the established per diem rate for the travel-only days, or if an advance was not requested, they will be reimbursed for their actual receipts for meals purchased on travel days, up to a maximum limit of 75% of the established per diem.

**TRANSPORTATION COSTS**

**Business Use of Personal Automobile** - The County will pay the traveling county employee the current state rate for each mile of use of their personal automobile while traveling on official county business. The mileage payment will be based on the shortest route, as calculated by MapQuest, from the address of the county office of employment, whichever is shortest, to the destination where the county business takes place. No other automobile expense will be paid to the traveling county employee other than the fixed price per mile as approved by Commissioner's Court.

**County-Owned Transportation** - The County will only reimburse actual expenses paid by an employee, such as gas, oil or other such maintenance items. Receipts are required for all these items.

**Automobile Rental** - When it is more economical or necessary to rent a vehicle than to utilize public or personal transportation and with prior Commissioner's Court approval, the traveling county employee is entitled to reimbursement for the actual cost of renting the vehicle, including fuel and oil. The County will reimburse for a full size car only up to a maximum daily \$50.00, plus fuel costs. Car rental agreements and receipts, along with copies of receipts for fuel and other auto expenses must be submitted to the County Auditor on the Travel Expense Form for reimbursement.

**Commercial Airlines** – When traveling on a commercial airline, county employees are encouraged to take advantage of reduced rates of advance reservation. Airline tickets may be paid for in advance if the county employee submits the travel advance form along with the flight reservation. The county will reimburse at the lowest available airline fare for the most direct airline route.

**Taxi/Bus Fares/Tolls** - The traveling county employee will obtain receipts for taxis, bus fares or tolls and will be reimbursed by the county for those fares related to county business. If receipts for these services are lost, a sworn statement from the traveling county employee relating to individual taxis, bus fares or tolls in relation to official county business will be accepted by the County Auditor after approval of the Elected Official or Department Head. Receipts or statements will be submitted to the County Auditor along with the travel expense form, upon return to the county.

**Traffic violations or late fees on toll charges are the responsibility of the employee and WILL NOT be paid for by the County.**

## UPSHUR COUNTY, TEXAS OUT OF COUNTY TRAVEL EXPENSE FORM

PERSON SUBMITTING REQUEST: \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT: \_\_\_\_\_ PURPOSE OF TRAVEL: \_\_\_\_\_

DESTINATION: \_\_\_\_\_ TRAVEL DATES: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: This form must be completed along with a copy of the conference agenda, hotel confirmation, MapQuest, and any other supporting documentation and turned in to the County Auditor no later than one week prior to the Commissioner's Court meeting at which payment must be issued.

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION** Charge to Acct. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Attach conference registration invoice: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: \_\_\_\_\_

**LODGING** Charge to Acct. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Is this the host hotel? Yes / No Will a family member be traveling with you? Yes / No

Dates of lodging \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEAL & INCIDENTAL EXPENSE (M&IE)** Charge to Acct. No. \_\_\_\_\_

(Breakfast \$10, Lunch \$12, Dinner \$18)

Date	Amount Claimed	
_____	_____	
_____	_____	
_____	_____	
_____	_____	Total \$ _____

Make check payable to: \_\_\_\_\_

**TRAVEL & TRANSPORTATION** Charge to Acct. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Auto \_\_\_\_\_ miles @ state rate per mile \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Auto rental, airline, bus, train, etc. (attach proof of payment) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Elected Official or Department Head

"The above named employee is hereby authorized to submit this Travel Expense Form for the purpose stated hereon. I certify that the expenses as shown on this form are true and correct statements of expenses while traveling on official county business."

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Official or Department Head

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## LAW ENFORCEMENT PRISONER TRANSPORT AND INVESTIGATIVE EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

### PREAMBLE

Upshur County Sheriff's Office and District Attorney's Office employees are often required to travel on short notice, on frequent one-day trips to transport prisoners, or to investigate cases outside of Upshur County. Since it is impractical for travel authorization to be obtained through the normal travel policy, alternative policies are required to govern this type of unscheduled travel.

### APPLICABILITY

This policy states the guidelines specifically governing Upshur County Sheriff's Office and District Attorney's Office transport employees and investigators and is in accordance with the Upshur County Employee Travel Policy for the reimbursement of expenses.

### PROVISIONS

#### **Trips that Do Not Require an Overnight Stay**

Any Sheriff's Office or District Attorney's Office employee that must travel out of the county to transport a subject or to perform investigative work that will be out of the county for a minimum of 4 consecutive hours is authorized to receive a daily stipend to compensate them for the increased cost of meals while away from their home area. Currently, the daily stipend is set at \$20 per day (effective October 1, 2016.)

Because these trips do not require an overnight stay, the IRS states that these County-provided meals are taxable fringe benefits. Therefore, these payments will be paid through payroll and will be considered taxable income to the employee.

The employee must complete a Law Enforcement Travel Form monthly and submit it to the County Auditor no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the following month in order to receive their stipend on their mid-month paycheck. The required form is attached.

**Unless for an inmate meal, credit cards SHALL NOT BE USED for meals on trips that do not require an overnight stay.** If a credit card is used for an employee meal on this type of trip, the employee will be required to reimburse the county for the amount of the meal charged on the card.

### **Transports or Investigative Trips that Do Require an Overnight Stay**

The rules governing travel days or partial days in the regular out-of-county travel section of this policy also apply to the overnight law enforcement section of this policy. This means that a travel day will only be paid at 75% of the per diem amount.

Per Diem rates will be considered collectively as a total for the entire trip.

**Example 1:** Officer leaves on one day and returns the next.

Departure day: \$30                      Return day: \$30

Officer will be allowed a total of \$60 in meals charged to the county credit card.

**Example 2:** Officer leaves one day, and returns two days later.

Departure day: \$30                      Middle day: \$40                      Return Day: \$30

Officer will be allowed a total of \$100 in meals charged to the county credit card.

Credit cards may be used for meals while on overnight transports subject to the rules for regular out-of-county travel up to a maximum of the per diem rates.

The County's policies for out-of-county travel remain in effect with the use of cards. Inmate transfer reports along with documentation and itemized receipts are still required.

The employee will be responsible for any expenses incurred above allowable limits, or for any unallowable expenses incurred.

In any situation not specifically discussed in the Law Enforcement section of this policy, the regular out-of-county travel rules apply.

## UPSHUR COUNTY, TEXAS LAW ENFORCEMENT TRANSPORT OR INVESTIGATIVE TRAVEL FORM

NOTE: THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED IN DETAIL AND SUBMITTED TO THE County Auditor to claim a meal reimbursement stipend for official county business travel.

DATE OF REQUEST: \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

PERSON SUBMITTING REQUEST: \_\_\_\_\_

TRAVEL DATE	DEPART TIME	RETURN TIME	DESTINATION (Include SO # for Transports, Case # for Investigations)

2016 OCT 14 AM 10:33  
 UPSHUR COUNTY, TX.  
 BY \_\_\_\_\_  
 DEPUTY  
 FILED  
 TERRI ROSS  
 COUNTY CLERK

\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL DAYS X \$20.00 STIPEND = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

"I hereby swear that the above is a true and correct statement of my travel while on official county business and request reimbursement for the same."

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Person Submitting Report

\_\_\_\_\_ Department Head Approval

Charge to Account Number: 100-(Department #)-1650