

MSACROA Travel Policy

Philosophy

Travel related expenses will be paid by the Association if they are deemed to be reasonable, appropriately documents, properly authorized and within the guidelines of this policy.

*** MSACROA places responsibility on all travelers to find the most cost effective means and length of travel when conducting Association business.***

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide broad guidelines and establish procedures for those individuals incurring official travel and business expenses on behalf of MSACROA. This is intended to be an information resource and guide to make travel arrangements and to process travel and other related expenses.

Scope

The Travel Policy applies to members of the Executive, LAC, and Program, and all other officially recognized Committees of the Organization. MSACROA assumes no responsibility to reimburse for expenses that are neither association nor business related, or uncompliant with this policy.

Guidelines

Travelers must report and substantiate the amount, date, and business purpose of all expenses within 60 days using the standard MSACROA Travel Expense Form upon which they will be approved by the Treasurer for reimbursement. Receipts must be provided to substantiate all claims exceeding the amount of \$25. Unsupported expenses may not be reimbursed.

PERMITTED EXPENSES

Hotels

Travelers should make every effort to utilize a hotel stay for only the length of time required to conduct Association business. Additional nights may be approved if member travel time exceeds 4 hours one-way, or if reasonable travel opportunities aren't available for the intended day of travel. The organization will cover the cost of the lodging under these conditions.

Transportation

The base compensation rate for any form of travel is equivalent to the cost of a coach or economy class airline ticket. Travelers may use any form of transportation to travel to their destination, but will be reimbursed for the less expensive of that method, or an economy class airline ticket. Exceptions to this rule will be reviewed by the Treasurer and President on an individual basis.

Private Vehicles – Travelers may use their personal vehicles for business purposes if it is less expensive than other methods or if it saves time. It is the personal responsibility of the owner of the vehicle to carry adequate insurance. When driving a personal vehicle, the Association will reimburse a mileage rate calculated on a per mile basis for the actual miles traveled. This rate covers all transportation and operating costs of the vehicle, including gasoline, and is based on the stated IRS rate in effect at the time of travel. Current rates can be found at <http://www.irs.gov/2014-Standard-Mileage-Rates-for-Business,-Medical-and-Moving-Announced>.

Additional reimbursement will be made for turnpike tolls, bridge tolls, and reasonable parking fees with supporting documentation. The Association will not reimburse for parking tickets, fines, moving violations, or vehicle repair costs.

Rail Travel – A coach class seat on these trains may be the least expensive mode of rail transportation. Rail travel will be reimbursed at the lower of the cost of rail fare or an economy airline ticket.

Airline Travel – Whenever possible, coach or economy class service should be used and travelers should take advantage of advanced purchase rates. Furthermore, flights should be booked using the least expensive fare via the most direct route, or other reasonable routing that results in a lower fare. Travelers may retain frequent flyer benefits, but the Association will not reimburse travelers for tickets purchased with frequent flyer miles.

Ground transportation – The most economical mode of transportation, such as shuttle services and public transportation, should be used to and from air, rail, or bus terminal, whenever possible. Private car services should be avoided unless there are enough people travelling together to make the expense more economical than the other modes of transportation.

Rental Cars – Travelers should use a rental car when other transportation is not available or when their use results in cost savings. The size of the rental car should be the least expensive model consistent with the number of travelers.

Meals

Business meals are defined as meal expenses incurred when conducting Association business. Travelers will not be reimbursed for personal meal expenses.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

Spouse/Partner/Dependent Event Attendance and Travel – MSACROA will not pay or reimburse business travel expenses for family members who accompany MSACROA travelers on Association business. Exceptions must be approved in advance, in writing, with the Treasurer and President.

Extended Travel – Reimbursement for meals, lodging, and other expenses will normally be limited to expenses incurred by the traveler during normal business activity. However, additional expenses may be reimbursed with approval from the Treasurer and President.

REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES

Forms and Documentation – Travel Expense Forms should be used for travel-related expense and can be found here <http://www.msacroa.org/about/forms.html> and must be submitted within 60 days of travel. All reimbursements will be made by check, payable to the traveler.

Missing or Lost Receipts – If an acceptable duplicate cannot be provided, a written explanation detailing the costs in question must be provided while stating the original receipts have been lost. The Treasurer may contact the traveler to clarify. While every effort should be made to include all receipts, any request for any single reimbursement over \$25 must include some form of substantiation.