

Chapter 10 - Travel

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10.30 Lodging

10.30.10 What is the basis for reimbursing lodging costs?

10.30.10.a The Agency may reimburse lodging expenses at actual costs, **as evidenced by a receipt**, up to the specific daily maximum allowable lodging rate in effect at the time of travel for the specific area or locality, unless:

- An exception is specifically provided by the Agency Head or the Office of the State Controller, or
- Authorized by Subsection 10.30.20.

Refer to Subsection 10.20.30 for the maximum allowable lodging rates for the Continental USA (CONUS).

Travelers may be reimbursed taxes paid on lodging in addition to the Maximum Lodging Amounts contained in Subsections 10.90.10 and 10.90.20. Code the payment of taxes on lodging as lodging expense. Refer to Subsection 10.90.10.d for rules on lodging taxes for the Non-Continental USA and foreign locations.

10.30.10.b Travelers requesting reimbursement for staying in commercial lodging facilities must obtain original receipts and attach them to their Travel Expense Voucher.

10.30.20 Exceptions to the maximum allowable lodging rates

10.30.20.a **In the following situations**, the maximum allowable lodging amounts may not be adequate, and the agency head or authorized designee may approve payment of lodging expenses not to exceed the applicable maximum per diem amounts listed in Subsections 10.90.10 and 10.90.20 by more than 10%:

1. When a traveler is assigned to accompany an elected official, a foreign dignitary, or others as authorized by law, and is required to stay in the same lodging facility.
2. When costs in the area have escalated for a brief period of time either during special events or disasters.
3. When lodging accommodations in the area of the temporary duty station are not available at or below the maximum lodging amount, and the savings achieved from occupying less expensive lodging at a more distant site are consumed by an increase in transportation and other costs.

4. When the traveler attends a meeting, conference, convention, or training session where the traveler is expected to have **business interaction** with other participants in addition to scheduled events. Further, it is anticipated that maximum benefit will be achieved by authorizing the traveler to stay at the lodging facilities where the meeting, conference, convention, or training session is held.
5. In order to comply with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (refer to Subsection 10.10.40), or when the health and safety of the traveler is at risk (refer to Subsection 10.10.35)

10.30.20.b

In the following situations, the agency head or authorized designee may approve payment of lodging expenses in excess of the applicable maximum per diem amount for the location:

- The traveler is required to attend a meeting, conference, convention, or training session where the traveler is expected to have **business interaction** with other participants in addition to scheduled events;
AND
- It is anticipated that maximum benefit will be achieved by authorizing the traveler to stay at the lodging facilities where the meeting, conference, convention, or training session is held; AND
- The lowest available advertised lodging rate at the lodging facility exceeds the applicable maximum per diem amount for the location. Documentation supporting the lodging rates is to be attached to the travel voucher or its file location referenced.

10.30.20.c

When any exception to the Maximum Allowable Lodging Amount is used, the traveler is to select the most economical room available under the circumstances.

10.30.20.d

Include the written approval for the exception, signed by the agency head or authorized designee, as part of the payment document. Also provide an explanation describing why an exception was necessary.

10.30.20.e

Agencies may request in writing an exception to this regulation from the Bureau when special duties or conditions of an assignment result in unusually high expenses.

10.30.25 Lodging for state employee meetings, conferences, conventions, and training sessions

Maximum allowable lodging amounts may not always be sufficient for state agencies to rent properties with the facilities needed to host a meeting, conference, convention, or training session for state employees. When this occurs, agencies may increase the lodging reimbursements up to 10% of the applicable maximum allowable lodging rates contained in Subsections 10.90.10 and 10.90.20.

10.30.30 What types of lodging costs are reimbursable?

10.30.30.a Reimbursable lodging expenses include the basic commercial lodging cost and any applicable sales taxes and/or hotel/motel taxes on that amount. Lodging costs in excess of the allowance and the associated taxes on the excess will be paid by the traveler.

Airbnb accommodations are not considered commercial lodging and therefore are not reimbursable.

10.30.30.b **50-Mile Rule**

Reimbursement is allowed for lodging expenses when the temporary duty station is located more than fifty (50) miles (most direct route) from the closer of either the traveler's official residence or official headquarters.

Under one of the following conditions, reimbursement for lodging expenses is allowed when the temporary duty station is located within fifty (50) miles (most direct route) of the closer of either the traveler's official residence or official headquarters:

1. An overnight stay in a commercial lodging facility to avoid having a traveler drive back and forth for back-to-back late night/early morning official state business.
2. When the health and safety of travelers is of concern as provided for in Subsection 10.10.35.
3. When an agency can demonstrate that staying overnight is more economical to the state.

Written supervisory approval for the first and third conditions and cost analysis documentation for the third condition is to be attached to the traveler's Travel Expense Voucher. Approval and documentation requirements for use of the second condition are contained in Subsection 10.10.35.

- 10.30.30.c Costs incurred by a traveler during occupancy of a commercial lodging facility rented on other than a daily basis, such as on a weekly or monthly basis, may be reimbursed not to exceed the total obtained by multiplying the number of days involved times the applicable daily lodging amount(s) as stated in Subsections 10.90.10 and 10.90.20.

10.30.40 Certain lodging costs cannot be reimbursed

- 10.30.40.a Reimbursement of lodging expenses incurred at a lodging facility located at either the traveler's official headquarters or official residence is prohibited except:
1. As an allowable moving cost.
 2. Extraordinary emergency situations that require an employee to remain at his/her work station.
 3. When an employee, acting in a custodial or leadership role must, as a part of their duties, lodge with clients of the agency.
- 10.30.40.b Lodging expense incurred at a lodging facility or temporary duty location located within 50 miles of either the official residence or official headquarters, except as provided in Subsections 10.30.30.b, and 10.30.40.a.
- 10.30.40.c Reimbursement for lodging expenses is not to be authorized when an employee does not incur lodging expenses at a commercial lodging facility.

10.30.50 Lodging expenses for the normal return night may be reimbursed in certain situations

- 10.30.50.a The agency may reimburse a traveler for lodging expenses for the normal return night (as defined in the glossary) to allow the traveler to remain overnight away from the official headquarters or official residence under one of the following three conditions:
1. When the overnight stay is more economical to the state. Complete justification should be referenced or attached to the traveler's Travel Expense Voucher.
 2. The health and safety of travelers (as defined in Subsection 10.10.35) is considered advantageous to the state and can be used to justify an overnight stay. Approval and documentation requirements are contained in Subsection 10.10.35.
 3. Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is considered advantageous to the state and can be used to justify an

overnight stay (refer to Subsection 10.10.40). The Travel Expense Voucher should be annotated that the extra costs were incurred to comply with the ADA.

- 10.30.50.b When the traveler does not return to his/her official residence or official headquarters on the normal return night, the traveler is to promptly return the next day or as soon as possible thereafter.

10.30.60 How to purchase lodging accommodations

- 10.30.60.a The preferred method for purchasing lodging accommodations while on official state business is through the use of either the agency travel card via the agency Travel Coordinator or the authorized corporate state travel card for individual employees. If using the individual travel card, travelers are to attach original lodging receipts to the Travel Expense Voucher for all lodging reimbursements or to reference the location where the receipt is filed.

- 10.30.60.b Agencies **must apply** for all exemptions offered by state or local governments to governmental travelers. Reference the GSA federal website for a listing of possible tax exempt sites. Also, agencies must apply for various tax rebates offered for business travel to the provinces of Canada.

5 MRSA Ch 155 1812-G Payment for hotel rooms

A hotel, motel or other establishment that provides lodging may directly bill a state agency in connection with a state employee who travels on state business. A state agency may use a purchase order to procure lodging.

10.30.70 Using a travel trailer or camper

- 10.30.70.a When used for the employee's convenience, lodging reimbursement is limited to actual space rental costs (**as evidenced by a receipt**) not to exceed the daily maximum non-high cost location lodging rate displayed in Subsection 10.90.20.

The employee is not to be reimbursed for the rental or lease cost of the travel trailer or camper.

- 10.30.70.b The agency head or authorized designee, with the traveler's concurrence, may authorize the use of a privately-owned travel trailer or camper when all of the following conditions exist:

- Suitable commercial lodging is not available;
- State lodging is not provided; and
- There is a benefit to the state for the traveler to remain at the temporary

workstation.

In this situation, the traveler is to be reimbursed at an agency determined rate not to exceed the applicable lodging per-diem rate for the temporary assignment.