

VII. REIMBURSEMENT

In order to maintain accurate financial records, employees traveling on IHLS business must have approval by their supervisor and the Executive Director. All travel arrangements will be handled in the IHLS Finance department. Approved travel expenses for employees or officers is supported when it is to complete official system business or when the education or information obtained is for the betterment of the system in some capacity. Most budgeted travel arrangements are preapproved by the Executive Director.

With an economic mindset, IHLS conducts travel in the most cost-effective manner. Expenditures for travel cannot exceed budget limitations or the predetermined maximum without IHLS Board approval. Actual travel time to get to and from meetings and conferences should be recorded as work time.

While there is no objection to being accompanied by a spouse or family member on an official out-of-town trip; their presence should not detract from the employee's job duties. Please note, all expenses attributable to the family member is paid by the employee.

A. Transportation

Travel throughout the state is normally accommodated by train, car, or bus. With locations in Carbondale, Champaign, and Edwardsville, travel between the employee's home and the employee's business destination will be reimbursed if it is not travel to or from the employee's normal work location. When an IHLS vehicle is not available, private vehicles may be used, providing that the employee has personal vehicle liability insurance. The maximum mileage reimbursement will be based on the prevailing current IRS rate.

All travel outside the IHLS service area, will be handled in the Finance Department. All travel is structured around the most economical mode of transportation available considering travel time, cost and work requirements.

IHLS vehicles should be used whenever possible. When traveling to major metropolitan areas, public (Uber, Lyft, etc.) transportation should be considered as a less expensive mode. Employees who feel more comfortable using their personal vehicle to conduct IHLS business is able to do so. IHLS will reimburse the employee for the cost of fuel only which is based on the miles driven and the average cost of fuel.

B. Food

Costs of meals for employees or officers for each day of travel for IHLS business will be covered by IHLS at the per diem rate given by the Finance Department. Should an employee incur cost during their travels, the employee will be reimbursed contingent on proper documentation. Costs for meals cannot exceed the maximum daily per diem rate established by the United States Internal Revenue Service. Any amounts over the daily rate will be the responsibility of the employee.

Under normal circumstances, reimbursement will not be made for meals consumed in IHLS service areas during a regular working day. The following will be exceptions to this rule:

1. When a staff member attends an evening meeting in addition to a full working day or works in excess of 9 ½ hours in a full working day.
2. When IHLS staff acts as host to a visitor.
3. Other meal reimbursements will be evaluated before being deemed necessary. All reimbursements are evaluated and administered in a manner consistent with established limits.

C. Hotel

The IHLS Finance Department considers the average single room rate of adequate hotel or motel accommodations for the nearest the destination. Employees may be given single room without a roommate. If an employee or officer shares lodging with a family member or spouse, the employee or officer will be responsible for paying any differences.

D. Special Expenses

IHLS will reimburse employees or officers for the actual cost of other reasonable travel expenses, such as but not limited to:

1. Fares for taxis or other types of transportation between the airport, train or bus station and the hotel, the hotel and the work location, or from one place of business to another;
2. Tips paid for services related to any allowable expense;
3. Other similar ordinary and necessary expenses related to business travel such as transportation to a meal when out of town and conducting IHLS business, printing materials for distribution at a meeting, or the purchase of incidental materials needed to make a presentation;
4. Conference meal costs above the per diem meal limit, when it is clear that the excess meal cost was required.

IHLS will **not** reimburse employees for the cost of personal expenses, such as:

1. Transportation if the employee is provided with a ticket or is riding free as a result of a frequent traveler or similar program;
2. Alcoholic beverages;
3. Personal telephone calls;
4. Coat check;
5. Late checkout and room guarantee charges (unless special circumstances exist and approval has been obtained from the Executive Director);
6. Valet parking service; unless location does not allow for any other parking option.
7. Entertainment includes, but is not limited to, shows, amusements, theaters, circuses, sporting events, or any other place of public or private entertainment or amusement, unless ancillary to the purpose of the program or event.;
8. Repairs or towing of private vehicle;
9. Parking tickets or other traffic tickets;
10. Charges associated with locksmith service;
11. Tips exceeding 20%.

E. Personal Incurred Expenses

IHLS will purchase cellular phone service and equipment and assume responsibility for vendor terms and conditions of the cellphone. IHLS will decide plan choices, service features, and calling areas that meet the requirements of the job. This includes termination clauses, and paying all charges associated with the cellular service and device, unless damage to the device is incurred due to negligence of the employee.

IHLS will review job function changes that eliminate or significantly reduce the business need for a cell phone to the employee's supervisor within 5 business days of this change. Employees are urged to refrain from using the cellular phone for work related purposes while operating a motor vehicle, machinery or in other dangerous situations. Employees are also required to comply with all IHLS policies, including those pertaining to data security, acceptable computing use, and email.

In the event employment is terminated, by the choice of the employee or IHLS, the employee will be required to return all cellular items distributed to them based on the needs of their job description. Should an employee fail to return the position assigned items, the employee will be responsible for the cost incurred for the replacement of the items.

F. Documentation

No expenses shall be reimbursed without a reimbursement request form completely filled out with receipts attached. In the event that travel expense is prepaid, actual receipts must be turned in and attached to the reimbursement request form within 30 days of the completion of travel. Any amount paid in excess of the actual receipts filed must be repaid to IHLS within 30 days, arrangements can be made through payroll deduction if approved by the Executive Director.

IHLS is not responsible for losses due to an employee's own negligence or losses due to theft unless the theft was a result of the IHLS' negligence. Where supporting documentation is nonexistent, missing, or lost, the employee shall submit a signed statement regarding any such receipts.

Any member of the governing Board or any officer or employee that exceeds the maximum allowed for travel may only be approved by a roll call vote at an open meeting of the governing Board. The reimbursement request form is the minimum documentation that must first be submitted, in writing, to the governing Board.