This manual provides guidance on expenditures authorized for travel in accordance with Section 112.061, Florida Statutes.

Expenditures properly chargeable to travel include but are not limited to:

- registration payments,
- reimbursements of mileage for use of privately owned vehicle,
- per diem,
- subsistence allowance (meals),
- actual lodging in lieu of per diem
- common carrier (airline, rental car, etc.) transportation and
- other expenses incidental to travel which are authorized by law.

Travel should be carefully planned in advance to ensure that the most economical and efficient method of travel and the most economical class of transportation is used.

Travelers shall be reimbursed for travel expenses pursuant to Section 112.061, F.S. However, travelers shall ensure that they have sufficient funds to cover out-of-pocket expenses. Except for meals and certain incidental expenses, travelers must retain receipts and other documentation necessary to obtain reimbursement (i.e., hotel, rental car, tolls, parking, etc.).

Seat belt use is mandatory while on travel status, regardless of whether the vehicle is a privately owned vehicle, or a rented vehicle. Failure to use a seat belt may be considered an improper use of a vehicle and may subject the traveler to disciplinary action. If an accident resulting in injury occurs, regardless of the use of a seatbelt, the injured party is responsible for the entirety of his or her medical, property damage, or other accident associated costs.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Actual Expenses:** An authorized traveler who is on Class A or B status can elect to be reimbursed for the actual out-of-pocket expenses for lodging instead of per diem.

**Actual Point of Origin:** The geographic location where the travel begins.

**Agency:** Any office, department, agency, division, subdivision, political subdivision, board, bureau, commission, authority, district, public body, county, city, town, village, municipality, or any other separate unit of government created pursuant to law.

**Authorized Person:** A person, Board of Directors member, or employee, as defined herein, whether elected or commissioned or not, who is authorized by the Executive Director or Board President and/or designee to incur travel expenses in the performance of official duties; a person who is called
upon by an agency to contribute time and services as a consultant or advisor; or a person who is a
candidate for an executive, or professional position, when performing authorized travel pursuant to
Section 112.061, F.S.

**Board of Directors:** Presiding body over the policies, by-laws, and other governing procedures of
the organization. The Board of Directors is comprised of members in accordance with the
organization’s by-laws.

**Board of Directors Meeting:** Meetings held a minimum of 3 times per fiscal year at a central
location to be announced in a reasonable time before the commencement of the meeting. All Board
of Directors members shall be reimbursed for travel, hotel, and/or subsistence as required by the
conditions outlined in this manual.

**Board of Directors President:** Elected to the lead position in long-term and visionary decisions of
the organization.

**Class A Travel:** Continuous travel of 24 hours or more away from official headquarters as defined
in Section 112.061, F.S.

**Class B Travel:** Continuous travel of less than 24 hours that involves overnight absences from
official headquarters as defined in Section 112.061, F.S.

**Class C Travel:** Travel for short or day trips that do not involve overnight absences from
official headquarters as defined in Section 112.061, F.S. SkillsUSA Florida will not provide per diem or
subsistence for Class C travel.

**Common Carrier:** Train, bus, commercial airline operating scheduled flights, or rental cars of an
established rental car firm, state aircraft, or private aircraft.

**Conference:** A gathering of persons with a common interest or interests for the purpose of
deliberation, interchange of views, or for the resolution of differences or disputes and for the
discussion of their common problems or interests. The term also includes similar meetings such as
seminars and workshops which are large formal group meetings that are programmed and supervised
to accomplish intensive research, study, discussion and work in some specific field or on a
governmental problem or problems.

**Convention:** The assembly of representative groups or persons coming together for the
accomplishment of a purpose of interest to a larger group or persons. A convention does not mean a
meeting between agency or interagency personnel.

**Employee:** An individual, other than an officer or authorized person, who is filling a regular or full-
time authorized position and is responsible to the Executive Director or Board President.

**Executive Director:** Person selected by the Board of Directors and committees (as applicable) who
is responsible for the overall day to day functions and operations of the organization; planning and
coordinating state conferences; satisfying Perkins Grant requirements; and other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

**Foreign Travel:** Authorized and approved travel outside the United States and its recognized territories and possessions.

**Incidental Expenses:** Other reimbursable expenses related to official travel such as taxi fares, parking fees, tolls, communication expenses, tips, etc.

**Map Mileage:** Current official highway miles as published by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

**Meal Allowance:** The amount authorized by Section 112.061(6)(b), F.S., for each meal during the travel period.

**Member:** A person who occupies a seat on the Board of Directors; the Executive Director; or other authorized person who is a registered member of SkillsUSA Florida.

**Most Economical Class of Transportation:** The class having the lowest available fare.

**Most Economical Method of Travel:** The mode of transportation, state owned vehicle, privately owned vehicle, common carrier, etc., designated by an Executive Director or Board President pursuant to Section 112.061, F.S. The Executive Director or Board President should designate the most economical method of travel for each trip considering: the nature of the business; the most efficient and economical means of travel (considering time of the traveler, cost of transportation and per diem or subsistence required); and the number of persons making the trip and the amount of equipment or materials being transported.

**Official Headquarters:** The official headquarters is normally the same city or town as that of the office to which the member is assigned. For a member located in the field where there is no established office, the headquarters will be the city or town nearest to the area where the majority of the employee’s work is performed, or such other city, town, or other area as may be designated by the Executive Director or Board President. In all cases of such designations, the location must be in the best interest of the agency and is not determined based upon the convenience of the employee.

**Organization:** Florida SkillsUSA Inc. (also SkillsUSA Florida)

**Per Diem:** Daily allowance for expenses incurred while traveling on official state business.

**Per Diem rate:** The greater of $80 or actual lodging cost at a single-occupancy rate plus permitted meal allowances.

**Point of Origin:** The geographic location of the traveler’s official headquarters or the geographic location where travel begins, whichever is the lesser distance from the destination.
**Purchasing Card:** A state issued credit card that can be used to pay for state authorized travel expenses and the purchase of commodities and services.

**Travel Day:** A period of 24 hours consisting of four quarters of six hours each.

**Travel Expense:** Necessary and actual expenses while traveling; actual expenses while traveling; the usual, ordinary, and incidental expenditures necessarily incurred by the traveler.

**Travel Period:** A period of time between the time of departure and the time of return pursuant to Section 112.061, F.S.

**Traveler:** An employee, Board of Directors member, or other authorized person, when performing authorized travel.

**Vicinity miles:** Miles incurred on official state business when travel is within the vicinity of official headquarters, the city limits of the city traveled to, or other areas traveled where map miles have not been identified, including miles incurred by travelers in excess of the FDOT published mileage charts.

**PRE-TRAVEL PLANNING**

It is the responsibility of each traveler to plan travel arrangements in advance, where possible, to ensure that the travel is within budget and that the most economical and efficient (for example, the time needed to pick up and return rental car or the proximity of a hotel to the meeting to be attended) methods are utilized. Generally, there will be a greater selection of travel times available and the traveler will get lower airline rates by making reservations at a minimum of 14 days prior to travel.

Class A and B travelers are allowed a per diem rate of $80 or the actual costs of lodging plus meal allowances, whichever is greater. Travelers should request the single occupancy rate for hotel or motel rooms, if claiming the actual cost of the room instead of per diem. Authorized travelers are reminded that obtaining economical hotel accommodations is a priority for in-state and out-of-state travel. Travelers should be prepared to justify situations where hotel costs appear excessive for the geographic area in which the traveler is staying. In determining whether a hotel rate is excessive, consideration should be given to geographic area, seasonal fluctuations, and distance from the intended assignment location. A justification should be provided for hotel expenses that exceed $150 per night (room rate only). All hotels utilized during official business travel should be provided a current copy of the tax exempt certificate for the organization.

Class C travelers, those taking trips in a single day, are paid for transportation (common carrier, rental car, or mileage) and reimbursable incidental expenses. Currently, travel within the vicinity of the headquarters or travel destination for official business shall not be reimbursed for mileage or meal allowance. Mileage will be paid for Class C travel between Official Headquarters and the travel destination at the approved rate.

Travelers are required to travel by utilizing the most efficient route, employing the most economical and efficient method of transportation, and requesting standard accommodations. If a more expensive route, method of transportation or accommodation is selected for personal convenience,
reimbursement will be based on the lesser of the actual total expense incurred and the amount of expense that would have been incurred had the traveler used the most efficient method. The reimbursement voucher must contain a comparative cost analysis statement differentiating the respective costs, as well as justification (as applicable).

In selecting a method of transportation, consideration should be given to the total cost, including per diem, number of persons traveling, amount of equipment or material being transported, and actual transportation cost. Methods of transportation authorized for official use include commercial airlines, passenger trains, taxicabs, buses, rental cars, and privately owned transportation.

**CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS**

No public funds shall be expended for attendance at conferences or conventions unless the main purpose of the conference or convention is in connection with the official business of the Organization and directly related to the performance of the duties and responsibilities of the member participating; or unless the activity provides a direct educational or other benefit supporting the work and public purpose of the person attending; or the duties and responsibilities of the traveler attending such meetings are compatible with the objectives of the particular conference or convention.

A traveler must be approved, in advance, to attend a conference or convention (See Travel Authorization Section). When a traveler is authorized to attend conferences, conventions, seminars, or workshops or when a registration fee is paid, a copy of the registration must be submitted with the Reimbursement Form. The traveler must provide on the authorization form or Voucher a statement documenting the benefits to the state. The traveler must attach a copy of the conference, convention, seminar, or workshop agenda to the Reimbursement Form.

When claiming reimbursement for conference or convention travel when no registration fee was required, the statement “no registration fee required” must appear on the travel voucher.

When a registration fee is required and no meals are included in the fee, the statement “no meals included” must appear on the travel voucher. When a meal is included in a registration fee, the meal allowance must be deducted even if the traveler decides for personal reasons not to eat the meal. A continental breakfast is considered a meal and must be deducted if included in the registration fee for a conference, convention, seminar, or workshop, or is included in a hotel stay.

If a traveler is claiming per diem for a day on which a meal is provided, the per diem rate for that day will be reduced by the meal allowance authorized.

**TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION**

The following types of travel must be authorized in advance by the President of the Board of Directors or the Executive Director:

- Conferences (including workshops, seminars)
- Conventions
- Out of state travel (including foreign travel).
The authorization for Travel Form is required for all Class A and Class B travel for which a reimbursement will be filed, except for:

- Board of Directors meetings
- Regional Leadership Training Workshops
- State Leadership Training Workshop
- Regional Leadership and Skills Conference
- State Leadership and Skills Workshop
- National Leadership and Skills Conference

The traveler must complete the entire form.

The Travel form is required for all Class A and B travel for which a reimbursement will be filed.

**TRAVEL ADVANCE**

Travel advances are available and must be approved by the Executive Director or Board of Directors President.

An advance must be requested in writing prior to travel, for 80 percent of the estimated travel expenses that will be ultimately reimbursed to the traveler. An advance will not be authorized for less than $50.

The traveler must complete a Reimbursement Form within 30 days of travel for which the advance was processed. If the travel advance was greater than the actual amount of travel expenses, the traveler will attach a personal check, money order, or certified check to reimburse the agency for the difference between the amount of travel advance and the amount of the actual travel expenses.

A traveler shall not have more than one travel advance outstanding at any time without written justification of circumstances that necessitate an exception to this restriction.

**TRAVEL**

The traveler must record on the Reimbursement form, the purpose of the travel, keep an accurate record of the point of origin for travel, the destination of travel for each day of the travel period, and the hour of departure from and return to the official headquarters or city of residence. The form must be submitted to the Executive Director for approval no later than 30 days after the conclusion of travel, or the reimbursement will be forfeited. A copy should be retained for the member’s records.

The traveler must indicate the mode of transportation on the form. This includes transportation provided by another traveler and the traveler must identify the name of the traveler that provided transportation. A traveler who is providing transportation to one or more other travelers must identify those travelers on the form.

The traveler must indicate on the Reimbursement form the purpose of travel or duties performed during each travel period and must attach the necessary documentation justifying the reason for travel when traveling outside the state or foreign travel or for conferences or conventions.
Any break in travel status for personal reasons in a travel period while performing travel must be explained on the form. The traveler will not receive reimbursement for any expenses occurring during the break in travel. The traveler must explain any instances when there is a break in travel and must state on the Reimbursement Form that the break is for personal convenience. The traveler shall assume all travel costs during the break in travel.

**Per Diem**

A traveler may not claim per diem or reimbursement for lodging for overnight travel within 50 miles of his/her official headquarters or residence unless the circumstances necessitating such overnight travel are fully explained by the traveler and approved by the Executive Director or Board President or their designee.

The traveler will be reimbursed for travel in the amount of $80 per diem, or the cost for hotel stay(s) per full day of travel for Class A and B travel.

**Actual Expenses**

The traveler may claim reimbursement for actual expenses or per diem for Class A travel on a day by day basis (midnight to midnight).

A traveler choosing actual expenses for Class A or B travel must attach the original hotel receipt to the Reimbursement form in order to receive reimbursement.

**Lodging**

Travelers will receive reimbursement of lodging expenses if the expenses are necessary, reasonable, are based on a single occupancy rate and are substantiated by paid receipts.

Authorized travelers are reminded that obtaining economical hotel accommodations is a priority for in-state and out-of-state travel. Travelers should be prepared to justify situations where hotel costs appear excessive for the geographic areas in which the traveler is staying. In determining whether a hotel rate is excessive, consideration should be given to geographic area, seasonal fluctuations, and distance from the intended assignment location. A justification should be provided for hotel expenses that exceed $150 per night (room rate only).

Receipts for lodging expenses must show the name and address of the establishment, the name of the traveler, the daily rate(s) paid, the dates of “check-in” and “check-out”, and the number of persons who occupied the room. Employees will not be reimbursed for additional occupancy charges for unauthorized members. Travelers should ensure they have a copy of the updated SkillsUSA Florida tax exempt certificate.

If a traveler shares a room with one or more other travelers, the traveler paying the bill shall request reimbursement for the total amount and note on the Reimbursement form that lodging was shared by one or more travelers. The other travelers sharing the room will also note on the Reimbursement
form that lodging was provided by another traveler. Per Diem and/or reimbursement for hotel stay cannot be claimed by those additional travelers sharing the same room.

If a safe charge is a mandatory charge by the hotel, it will be reimbursed. This should be listed as a separate charge on the travel voucher and it should be stated that the “safe charge was mandatory.” If the safe charge is optional, it is the responsibility of the traveler to have the charge removed or the charge for the safe will not be reimbursed.

If there is a mandatory hotel parking or valet parking charge, it should be included on the hotel receipt and should be noted on the travel voucher as a separate charge and should include a statement that the charge was a mandatory charge.

Meal Allowances

In addition to receiving reimbursement of actual lodging expenses, travelers will receive meal allowances according to departure and return times per the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meal</th>
<th>Traveler Must Depart Before:</th>
<th>And Return After:</th>
<th>To Claim Meal Allowance of:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>$19.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>6:00 a.m.</td>
<td>8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>$36.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is not necessary for travelers to submit meal receipts in order to claim reimbursement for meals. Meals for Class C travelers shall be reimbursed, provided the travel is greater than 50 miles from the Official Headquarters, and satisfies the schedule listed above.

Transportation

Travelers may use a common carrier, a privately owned vehicle, or a rented vehicle for transportation. Whether the traveler chooses one or a combination of modes of transportation, the traveler must use the most economical travel route and the most economical and efficient travel method. However, travelers are not required to use their privately owned vehicle. The use of a privately owned vehicle is voluntary and is contingent upon such use conforming to the requirements above.

Airline

Travel by airline, when authorized, shall be “coach class” accommodations only (free upgrades are allowed). “First class” accommodations are not authorized and will result in reimbursement of expenses at the lower “coach” rate. The traveler must attach a copy of the receipt.

When appropriate, travelers should make use of discount airfares; however, many discount offers are either non-refundable or require payment of a penalty if exchanged or canceled. Penalties for exchange or cancellation of discount airfares may be reimbursed only if the cause for cancellation is in the best interest of the state. Reimbursement will not be made if the change is made strictly for the
convenience of the traveler. A detailed justification for reimbursement of the exchange or cancellation penalty must be included on the traveler’s Reimbursement form.

Group travel will be coordinated by the Executive Director or Board of Directors President. In cases of group travel, any accommodations (for travel, method of travel, hotel stays, or otherwise) that are not included in the group travel arrangements will be billed separately. Any travel arrangements outside of the group travel arrangements must be approved by the Executive Director or the Board of Directors President prior to the beginning of travel.

The traveler must return any unused portion of an airline ticket to the organization. Documentation verifying that the unused ticket has been submitted to the agency must be included in the voucher requesting payment.

Charges imposed by air carriers for lost or stolen tickets because of employee negligence will not be reimbursed by the organization.

Privately owned vehicles

Travelers may use their privately owned vehicle and when doing so will be reimbursed for authorized business travel. Travelers using a privately owned vehicle will be reimbursed on a mile for mile basis at the rate authorized in Section 112.061, F.S ($0.445 per mile). Miles traveled between the traveler’s residence and official headquarters will not be reimbursed.

When two or more travelers are traveling together, mileage reimbursement will be paid only to the owner of the vehicle. The traveler claiming mileage must identify the names of each traveler carpolled in the privately owned vehicle and each of those travelers must state on their travel reimbursement form that another traveler provided their transportation. No traveler shall be allowed either mileage or transportation expense when another traveler who is entitled to mileage gratuitously transports that traveler.

Travelers will not be reimbursed for expenditures relating to the operation, maintenance, and ownership of a privately owned vehicle while on authorized travel.

Rental vehicle

Travelers are required to use “Class B” rental vehicles. Travelers will not be reimbursed for use of a car larger than the “Class B” on the rental car contract because of the size or stature of the individual unless the requirements of the ADA are met. Any upgrade to a rental car class other than “Class B” must be justified in writing as the most economical and efficient method based on the number of persons traveling together and/or the amount of equipment being transported and submitted with the travel reimbursement voucher. Inadequate justification may result in reimbursement at the “Class B” rate.

It is the traveler’s responsibility to ensure that he/she receives the appropriate rate under the terms of the contract and the appropriate class vehicle at that rate. The traveler must be diligent in ensuring that the vendor provides the vehicle in accordance with the terms of the contract.
Authorized members must verify prior to renting a vehicle that primary insurance is included in the rental. The traveler must purchase collision damage insurance if it is not included in the rental agreement and the charge will be reimbursed.

**Incidental Expenses**

Travelers must have a receipt for the following incidental expenses: taxi fares, all tolls, ferry fares, parking fees, and storage. Limousine services should not be used unless it can be shown that it is the most economical method of travel.

Parking or storage fees will not be reimbursed on a weekly or monthly basis for privately owned vehicles unless it can be established that such method results in a savings to the organization.

Charges for photocopies and communication expenses will only be reimbursed when it is required for official state business. Communication expenses to contact the traveler’s family or other non-business purposes will not be reimbursed.

Reasonable tips and gratuities may be reimbursed for actual tips paid to taxi drivers (not to exceed 15% of the fare), actual tips paid for mandatory valet parking (not to exceed $1 per occasion), and actual tips paid for portage of baggage (not to exceed $1 per bag and not to exceed $5 total per incident); additional tips will require justification. The number of bags must be included on the Reimbursement form. Tips for meals are reimbursable at the rate of 18% of the pre-tax total.

Other incidental travel expenses may be reimbursed upon presentation of receipt attached to the Reimbursement form and validation that the expense was incurred for official organization business. Actual laundry, dry cleaning, and pressing expenses will be reimbursed when official travel extends beyond seven (7) days and such expenses are necessarily incurred to complete the official business portion of the trip. Actual passport and visa fees will be reimbursed if it is required for official business. Actual and necessary fees for the purchase of traveler’s checks, fees charged to exchange currency, and the cost of maps will be reimbursed if it is documented that it is necessary for official state business.

Expenses related to lost keys or keys locked in a vehicle due to employee negligence are not reimbursable.
REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

The traveler must complete the Reimbursement form to receive reimbursement of travel related expenses.

Travelers are not authorized Class A or Class B per diem or actual expenses when the work assignment is within 50 miles from their official headquarters or residence. Exceptions to this restriction must be pre-approved by the Executive Director or Board President or their designee.

The traveler must submit a Reimbursement form within thirty (30) days after returning to their official headquarters, or at the completion of each 30-day travel period of continuous travel, or at the completion of each 30-day period of Class C travel trips.

Vouchers requesting reimbursement must be typed or completed in ink and must be legible. Vouchers that are not legible or that are incomplete will not be processed for reimbursement and will be returned to the traveler.

The traveler must provide his/her name, organization title, address, and phone number.

The traveler must complete the Reimbursement form with the purpose of travel, travel destination, travel times, and requested reimbursement of expenses as appropriate. Forms must be signed and dated by the traveler and their supervisor.

The traveler must attach the original non-purchasing card receipts or copies of purchasing card receipts for all travel related expenses listed to the Reimbursement form. Travel expenses that are not supported by receipts will not be reimbursed unless the traveler can provide a reasonable explanation as to why the receipt cannot be provided. It is the traveler’s responsibility to obtain and provide receipts for all travel related expenses.

Travelers are encouraged to retain a copy of the Approval for Travel form and receipts for their records. The reimbursement voucher should be submitted electronically.

SICKNESS OR INJURY

A traveler who becomes sick or injured while away from his or her official headquarters and is therefore unable to perform the official business of the agency may continue to receive a meal allowance during this period of illness or injury until such time as he or she is able to perform the official business of the agency or returns to his or her official headquarters, whichever is earlier.

TEXTING

A traveler may not under any circumstances compose or read text or email messages on any cell device while operating a motor vehicle on official business. Travelers must obey all state and local laws, as applicable to the area of travel.