

# MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

## TRAVEL, MEALS, AND ENTERTAINMENT POLICY

### Travel Expenses

With Department Director<sup>1</sup> approval, MaineHousing will reimburse or advance funds to employees for travel and meal expenses that are reasonable and necessary to accomplish MaineHousing's mission including lodging, meals, transportation, tolls, parking, and other expenses directly related to business travel as set forth below.

### **Meals in Travel**

If an employee departs on and returns from a business trip during the same day, MaineHousing will not reimburse the employee for any meal expenses except for dinner in the evening if the nature or location of business will prevent the employee from returning to their residence before 8:00 pm.

If an employee departs on a trip requiring overnight lodging accommodations for one or more nights, MaineHousing will reimburse meal expenditures during the trip.

The maximum reimbursement for meals is as follows:

#### **In-State Meals**

Breakfast = \$12

Lunch = \$20

Dinner = \$30

#### **Out-of-State Meals**

Breakfast = \$25

Lunch = \$25

Dinner = \$48

### **Lodging**

Reasonable commercial lodging accommodations for business travel at the single occupancy room rate may be reimbursed. Employees should choose convenient, safe, and reasonably-priced accommodations whenever practical. Government rates should be requested whenever available. When attending a conference, employees may stay at the conference hotel.

### **Mileage**

MaineHousing employees may be reimbursed for miles traveled on official MaineHousing business, provided the most practical, direct route is used. Business travel includes travel from MaineHousing's office to the place of business and return. Mileage does not include mileage between the employee's residence and MaineHousing's office. The following rules apply in determining reimbursable business mileage.

- If an employee leaves their residence and travels to a work location other than MaineHousing's office, the reimbursable mileage will be the lesser of:

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<sup>1</sup> Travel and meal expenses of Department Directors are approved by their direct supervisor. Travel and meal expenses of the Director are approved by the Internal Auditor. Travel and meal expenses of a Senior Director and the Deputy Director are approved by the Director. Travel and meal expenses of the Internal Auditor are approved by the Deputy Director.

1. mileage from the residence to the work location, or
  2. mileage from MaineHousing's office to the work location
- Mileage between various work locations and between a work location and MaineHousing's office is fully reimbursable.
  - If an employee leaves a work location and returns directly to their residence without returning to MaineHousing's office, then the reimbursable mileage will be the lesser of:
    1. mileage from the work location to their residence, or
    2. mileage from the work location to MaineHousing's office.

Mileage for the use of a personal vehicle will be reimbursed at the then-current IRS rate. MaineHousing may require employees driving on a long trip or doing extensive traveling to use a state fleet vehicle. Employees who are traveling to the same location are encouraged to carpool.

### **Meals with Outside Parties**

MaineHousing will reimburse employees for reasonable and necessary meals with partners or other persons who are not MaineHousing employees when the meal is directly related to MaineHousing business. The maximum reimbursement rate is the in-state maximum rate for meals for employees who are traveling. MaineHousing will not pay for meals of partners or other persons unless the meals are included in a training program or other function hosted by MaineHousing.

### **MaineHousing Meetings**

MaineHousing may provide staff or Commissioners with food in connection with board meetings, all staff days, all staff breakfasts, all staff holiday gatherings, and other meetings provided they are reasonably priced and infrequent.

### **Entertainment Expenses and Other Expenses that are not Reimbursed**

Expenses for entertainment, alcohol, parking tickets, motor vehicle violations, or Central Fleet late fees are not paid by MaineHousing.

### **Documentation**

Reimbursement requests must be accompanied by an itemized receipt. MaineHousing will make an exception for amounts equal to \$5 or less for an item for which a receipt is unavailable such as tolls, parking fees, or hotel staff tips. All expense reimbursement requests need to clearly define the business purpose of the expenditure.

### **Budget and Reporting**

The annual budget approved by the Commissioners will include a line item for meals plus mileage reimbursement and other travel costs in connection with employee training and conferences, and property inspections; a line item for travel and meals in connection with partner trainings and meetings; a line item for meals in connection with board meetings and staff events such as all staff breakfasts, all staff days, department team building/strategic planning sessions (limit 1 per department/team per year), and all staff holiday gatherings; and a line item for leased vehicles. MaineHousing will include a report of travel and meal payments in the budget variance report provided to the Commissioners monthly.

Effective July, 2017