



## **ADMINISTRATIVE AND PERSONNEL POLICY EMPLOYEE REIMBURSEMENT**

### **I. PURPOSE**

- A. The purpose of the Employee Reimbursement Policy is to establish policy and procedure for employee compensation and travel expense reimbursement for attending professional development events, such as conferences, training, and continuing education and other official business.

### **II. GENERAL**

- A. Agency employees attend meetings of national, state and local associations that are relevant to the function of the Agency and shall consider attendance as an opportunity for in-service training. Agency employees are encouraged to attend educational conferences and professional meetings when the purpose of such activities is to improve BBARWA's operations and provide insight.
- B. Travel expense reimbursement is authorized for conferences, education and training events, meetings, tours and other functions from which employee attendance provides a specific benefit and serves a BBARWA-related purpose.

### **III. POLICY**

- A. BBARWA employees are to receive hourly wages while attending seminars and training pertaining to their job description and other approved functions. This includes compensation for time spent traveling to and from the seminar, lunch and attendance at the seminar. Overtime will be paid at time and one-half for any prior approved function in excess of eight hours in a workday.
- B. If an Agency employee is required to travel outside a two hour radius from BBARWA, within high traffic areas, the employee may receive authorization from the General Manager to stay overnight the evening prior to the event start date when the event is scheduled to begin at 9:00 am or earlier.
- C. The General Manager must receive authorization by a Governing Board member prior to attendance at a conference, seminar or other event.
- D. Reimbursement will not be provided for attendance at social events or local government agency meetings unless a request is made by the employee's supervisor.
- E. Reimbursement is not available for BBARWA employees taking "junkets" (i.e., tours or journeys for pleasure, without an official purpose).
- F. BBARWA employees attending conferences, training, meetings, tours and other official business shall actively and fully participate in such events.



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- G. All work-related, incidental expenses will be reimbursed by the Agency when receipts are provided, including facsimile, parking, and other business related.
- H. BBARWA employees are encouraged to attend the closest available seminar unless other arrangements have been approved by the General Manager.
- I. BBARWA employees must always travel using the least expensive, most practical option.
- J. BBARWA employees may be required to pay for any last minute seminar requests, if not submitted fifteen days prior to attendance, unless otherwise authorized by the General Manager. The Agency will reimburse all pertinent seminar costs following authorization, proof of payment, and completion of a Travel Expense form (see attached).
- K. Training for classes that lead to State grade advancements will only be authorized after the BBARWA employee has applied for testing. The Agency will only pay for testing one time. If the BBARWA employee fails the test, they will be responsible for the cost of future testing. BBARWA will pay the certification fee for OIT through Grade V.
- L. Training and testing expenses of OIT through Grade III are authorized for all Treatment Plant operators. The Senior Operator, Plant Superintendent and General Manager are authorized through Grade V. The authorization for testing may change due to an operator's job description. The laboratory personnel will be authorized at management discretion, based upon the needs and benefits to the Agency.
- M. BBARWA Employees attending evening college courses will not receive per diem or hourly wages for time of attendance or travel, unless they are required by BBARWA to take a particular course and the course is offered only during the evening. BBARWA will provide an Agency vehicle for the attendance of evening college courses.

**IV. PROCEDURE**

- A. Conferences, Seminars and Training Events. A Training Request form (see attached) must be completed and submitted to the Finance Department 15 working days prior to the start date of the conference or seminar.
- B. Travel Expenses. Once the Finance Department receives the Training Request form, all costs are estimated including registration, per diem, hotel, airfare, rental car, and shuttle or taxi expenses. Most travel expense is paid for by the Agency and handled



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- by the Finance Department prior to travel. Travel expenses not paid for in advance by the Agency should be submitted for reimbursement as soon as possible but no later than two weeks after attendance by completing the Travel Expense form.
- C. Lodging. Whenever possible, Agency employees shall make use of special lodging rates offered in connection with the event being attended.
- D. Vehicle Usage. Agency vehicles should be used when traveling on Agency business. Exceptions to this policy must be authorized by the General Manager in advance. When personal vehicles are used, mileage will be reimbursed at the standard Internal Revenue Service mileage rate in effect.
- E. Air Travel. For air travel, the least expensive tickets (coach, economy or government rate) as recommended by staff, are to be used whenever possible. Travel by private or BBARWA vehicle will be authorized in lieu of air travel when the vehicle travel does not necessitate reimbursement greater than would have been required if air travel had been used, taking into consideration mileage, meals and lodging expenses. The total travel cost shall be computed on direct route distances, but in no case shall the expense exceed the round trip cost by air. If an Agency employee uses a higher-priced ticket than the one recommended, the Agency employee will be required to pay the difference in cost between the two tickets. Airport parking is reimbursable at the daily rate available for the least expensive parking that is in a reasonably accessible, secure parking area.
- F. Meal Reimbursement, Per Diem. The following guidelines apply for payment of meal reimbursement or per diem. Please note there will be no reimbursement or per diem if the meal is included in the cost of the event.
- a. If attendance at the function requires travel time prior to 8:00 a.m., reimbursement or per diem will be paid for breakfast.
  - b. Lunch per diem will be reimbursed, in the event the function is held during normal lunch hours.
  - c. If attendance at the function requires travel time after 4:00 p.m., reimbursement or per diem will be paid for dinner. The General Manager may authorize meal reimbursement in excess of the allowed per diem in cases where the meal exceeded the per diem due to high-cost localities (i.e., San Diego, San Francisco, etc.) or special dietary requirements. Such approval, if warranted, will follow a review of expenses by the Finance Manager and the General Manager. If applicable, BBARWA will reimburse an employee the maximum allowed phone per diem during an overnight stay
- G. Per Diem Rates. Per Diem is provided for breakfast, lunch, dinner, phone calls, and approved mileage. All per diem rates will be adjusted annually on July 1<sup>st</sup>, based on the May Cost of Living Adjustment as determined by the Consumer Price Index, Urban Wage Earner of Los Angeles, Riverside and Orange County, California areas.