



STATE BAR MISSION:
Preserve and improve
our justice system in
order to assure a free
and just society under
law.

ADMINISTRATIVE ADVISORY NO. 15-01

DATE: January 7, 2015
TO: All State Bar Staff
FROM: Robert Hawley, Deputy and Acting Executive Director
SUBJECT: **ADMINISTRATIVE ADVISORY NO. 15-01
TRAVEL AND BUSINESS-RELATED EXPENSE POLICY**

Quick Links: [Reporting](#) [Auto](#) [Air](#) [Taxi](#) [Lodging](#) [Meals](#) [Advances](#) [Bus Exp](#)

I. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy document sets forth the standards and procedures used to identify and reimburse legitimate travel and business-related expenses incurred while conducting necessary, authorized business of the State Bar.

II. SCOPE

Except as noted otherwise, this policy is designed to cover all employees who seek reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses incurred while conducting State Bar business. Non-employee volunteers, such as the Board of Trustees, committee members, speakers and invited guests are governed by the same general travel policy. The policy document for [volunteers](#) is posted on the Committee & Commissions page and does not contain references to the use of Purchasing Cards ("Pcards") and Business Expense accounts. Certain business contracts *may* contain a link to a separate limited travel policy for outside [contractors](#), as necessary.

Out-of-pocket expenses include transportation, lodging, meal and incidental costs that are necessary, authorized and reasonable, incurred while conducting State Bar business. This policy applies to Pcard, Check Request and Expense Report usage. Authorization from the Executive Director/CEO ("Executive Director") is required to make any exceptions to this policy; and such exceptions should, whenever feasible, be obtained in advance of incurring any pertinent expense. Any incurred expense not specifically referenced in this policy will need to be reviewed by senior management on a case-by-case basis for further approval. For additional details and common travel scenarios, consult the Travel and Business-Related Expense Policy [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Should this Travel and Business-Related Expense Policy differ from the reimbursement provisions contained in a *Memorandum of Understanding* ("MOU") or in rules and regulations that are applicable to State Bar employees, the MOU or other rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Trustees shall govern, except that the rates established for lodging, meal reimbursement and mileage in this Travel and Business-Related Expense Policy will apply to State Bar employees where such amounts are greater than those provided in the MOU or other rules and regulations.

III. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- A. As a general rule, travelers are urged to travel economically. However, in the application of this general rule, extenuating circumstances such as the best economic use of the traveler's time may be taken into consideration in selecting transportation. Written explanations must be approved by senior management and accompany *Expense Reports* submitted to Finance.
- B. Each traveler is responsible for his/her own expenses and should not pay for another State Bar representative's expenses. There will be no reimbursement for the expenses of a spouse, guest or pet who accompanies a traveler on State Bar business. Separate travelers, even if related, should be

documented by individual Expense Reports, even if some aspects of the travel were otherwise shared.

- C. Except where noted otherwise, only when a person is on Travel Status are they eligible to seek travel reimbursement, charge travel expenses to a State Bar Pcard, or request a travel advance as stated in this policy.
- D. A person is on Travel Status when, in the course of performing duties for the State Bar, they travel to one or more destinations that are at least thirty miles, one way, from the person's primary workplace. A person's primary workplace is determined by the Office of Human Resources.
- E. Volunteers are not allowed to make purchases or render services for the State Bar. All purchases or services should be initiated by State Bar employees through Procurement.
- F. Business-related travel planned for any foreign destinations require express written approval from the Board of Trustees or its designee in advance of travel.
- G. Travel expenses for senior management and the Board of Trustees will be tracked and reported in summary form to the Board of Trustees

IV. REPORTING GUIDELINES

A. EXPENSE REPORT

1. Responsibilities: It is the responsibility of the traveler to submit to the approver a completed, legible *Expense Report* with supporting documentation for approval. Approvers must be in the traveler's direct reporting hierarchy within his/her area. Any additional explanation or justification memos required must be approved by the traveler's executive manager, unless noted otherwise.
2. It is the responsibility of approvers to assure that *Expense Reports* submitted for approval are complete, accurate, comply with this policy and are timely forwarded to Finance.
3. Expense Report /Check Request: The *Expense Report* form (example: [Appendix A](#)) is used to reimburse individuals for out-of-pocket travel expenses while conducting business for the State Bar. A firm or company other than an individual requesting reimbursement should use a *Check Request* form submitted to Finance with supporting documentation for payment. Independent Contractors with allowances for travel expense reimbursements should follow the terms of their specific executed agreements.
4. Travel Dates: Travelers can use the *Expense Report* for a maximum of two trips conducted within seven consecutive days. If a single trip goes over seven consecutive calendar days, a separate Expense Report is required. Monday's date of week one will be used for audit purposes when trips span more than a single calendar week.
5. Expense Report Receipts: Original issued receipts for any expense other than per diem meals must be attached to the *Expense Report*. Receipts for local transportation less than \$25 (that are indicated as lost and irreplaceable) and receipts for public transportation (where no receipt is provided) are reimbursable *if* amount claimed is deemed reasonable as compared to other similar travelers' expenses. Finance reserves the right to reduce or deny the request for reimbursement for any expense not substantiated by an itemized receipt. Reimbursement for *any items* claimed under Miscellaneous Expense will not be approved without a supporting itemized receipt. Receipts must contain itemized pricing and reflect appropriate travel detail (e.g., departure/arrival times, travel dates and location service class, upgrades, additional fees, etc.). Statement summaries and non-itemized credit card receipts **are not** acceptable substitutes for receipts but can serve as additional, supporting documentation for original receipts that naturally lack the desired information. If booking through third party vendors such as Travelocity, Orbitz, etc., and no receipt is provided by the vendor, traveler should include booking confirmations with equivalent detail. Electronically issued receipts for online purchases are considered original issued receipts.

To substantiate a charge for reimbursement, receipts for lodging or car rentals must be in the name of the traveler.

6. **Deadlines:** The deadline for submitting an *Expense Report* to an approval authority is 30 calendar days after the traveler incurs the expense. *Expense Reports* received by Finance after 60 calendar days will not be processed for payment unless expressly approved for late payment by the Executive Director or designee. Complete and approved *Expense Reports* submitted to Finance will be processed within 10 days of receipt per current MOU requirements. Incomplete, incorrect or illegible reports will be returned to the requestor for correction, which may result in delay or non-reimbursement of a specific item.
7. **Revisions:** *Expense Reports* must be verified for accuracy and properly approved by the responsible executive manager prior to submission to Finance. All modifications to a handwritten *Expense Report* must be individually initialed by the person making the correction. Any revisions necessary to correct or add to a previously submitted *Expense Report* must be clearly labeled as “revised” at the top of the form.
8. **Credits:** Previously paid credits issued for canceled air flights can be used to reduce the cost of other future airfare. However, gift-certificates, vouchers, coupons, points or other promotional “credits” cannot be used to increase traveler reimbursements.
9. **Gifts, tokens of appreciation and other non-travel related expenses** are not reimbursed under this policy. See Section VII, Business Expense Account.
10. Employees must utilize the current 2015 electronic *Expense Report* form to ensure policy compliance audit efficiencies. Dual versions of the *Expense Report* form will also be posted online for volunteers that are using older versions of Microsoft Office. Handwritten forms or forms from prior years will not be accepted from employees for 2015 travel.

B. PURCHASING CARD REPORTING

1. Pcards used for travel must be reconciled during the respective open statement period with appropriate original issued receipts and detailed documentation supporting each posted transaction. Failure to do so may result in the loss of Pcard privileges.
2. Pcard Statements not reconciled, approved and submitted within 30 days of period closing will be reported to the cardholder’s approver. Audit issues not cleared within 60 days of period closing will be referred to senior management to determine if Pcard privileges should be revoked.
3. **Pcard Receipts:** All original issued receipts for transactions charged to a Pcard must be attached to the Pcard Statement. An explanation memo with manager approval must be included to document all steps taken to replace any missing receipts. Receipts must contain itemized pricing and reflect appropriate travel detail (e.g., departure/arrival times, travel dates and locations, service class, upgrades, additional fees, etc.). Statement summaries and non-itemized credit card receipts **are not acceptable** substitutes. Electronically issued receipts for online purchases are considered original issued receipts.
4. Pcard Statements must be verified for accuracy and properly approved by the responsible approval authority prior to submission to Procurement. The Executive Director’s Pcard Statement must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees or its designee (CFO).

V. REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

While conducting authorized business, State Bar employees defined in the scope of this policy are eligible to be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses related to transportation, lodging and meal costs.

A. TRANSPORTATION

1. Personal Automobile

- a) Travelers required to use a personal automobile to conduct State Bar business will be reimbursed for mileage at the Internal Revenue Service approved rate regardless of whether Travel Status requirements are met, consistent with the following guidelines:
 - i) Reimbursable mileage is incurred when a traveler leaves the location of their primary workplace on State Bar business and returns to that same location.
 - ii) Reimbursable mileage is incurred when a traveler does not report to their primary workplace during the workday because of State Bar business.
 - iii) Reimbursable mileage is incurred while conducting State Bar business while on the way to or from home or from the primary workplace. Reimbursement will be for that mileage in excess of normal commute round trip mileage between home and the primary workplace.
 - iv) Travelers who elect to drive rather than fly to conduct State Bar business will not be reimbursed in excess of the most economical form of transportation. Travelers must complete the Alternate Travel Comp (*Expense Report* tab 2: [sample](#)) and attach dated documentation from the Concur travel site to *Expense Reports* to substantiate comparable travel expense (lodging, airfare, rental car). If comparable documentation is missing, Finance reserves the right to reduce the requested amount that is not deemed reasonable as compared to other similar travelers' expenses or other available historical travel benchmarks. Mileage reimbursement in excess of what comparable airfare would have cost is not reimbursable. Exceptions may be permitted when employees are required to drive in order to economically deliver materials that would otherwise be shipped at additional cost, or special accommodations are required. Written explanations must accompany *Expense Reports* and be approved by the traveler's executive manager.
- b) Fuel that is put into a private vehicle is not reimbursable and cannot be charged to a Pcard. The mileage rate is intended to reimburse fuel costs maintenance and other depreciation for private auto use.
- c) Damage to personal autos while being used on State Bar business is not covered because a portion of the mileage reimbursement is intended to defray the insurance cost to the individual.

2. Car Rental

- a) Rental cars may be used **only** when necessary and economically practical compared to other modes of transportation. All associated rental costs should be considered and compared to the equivalent taxi or other ground services available, including the taxes, surcharges, fuel expense, hotel parking and highway tolls. When a rental car is required to conduct State Bar business away from the individual's primary workplace, the State Bar will reimburse the expense in conformity with the terms and guidelines of this policy regardless of whether the Travel Status requirements are met.
- b) The State Bar does not maintain a master contract with any rental car agency; however, the California State Travel Program does maintain a master agreement with Enterprise Holdings (Enterprise, National) that offers reduced government rates to State Bar business travelers as well as personal rentals to employees (see [Appendix B](#) for booking details). As a general rule, automobiles rented should be limited to economy models, including sub-compact, compact and standard size cars only. Exceptions may be permitted when employees are required to drive a large vehicle (truck/van) in order to economically deliver materials, to accommodate a physical limitation, or when multiple travelers are driving together and need the additional space for passengers, luggage and other meeting materials. Exceptions may be permitted for a 4-wheel vehicle to provide safe transportation during inclement weather. Written

explanations must accompany *Expense Reports* and be approved by the traveler's executive manager.

- c) Reimbursement for car rentals will be made where it is a justified economical use of the traveler's time in the particular circumstances. Written justification must be provided for any car rental that exceeds a total of \$250 per rental period.
- d) Alternatives to a rental car should be evaluated based on cost and time. In some cases, it is less expensive and more convenient to use cab service, hotel shuttle or public transportation. Alternately, rental cars may be more economical than driving a personal vehicle for extended distances.
- e) The State Bar carries insurance that covers travelers (both employees and volunteers) when renting a vehicle while on State Bar business. Thus, travelers should not elect to carry the additional collision and liability coverage offered by rental agencies when traveling on State Bar business. All additional insurance elections will be deemed a personal expense chargeable to the traveler.
- f) Car rental and fuel used for combined personal and business purposes cannot be charged to a Pcard. When personal use and business use is combined, individuals must use their personal charge card for the total expense and seek reimbursement for the miscellaneous expense portion using the [Auto Rental Reimbursement](#) form.
- g) In the event a traveler rents a vehicle to be used for combined business and personal use, the traveler will not be covered by the State Bar's insurance when the car is used for personal purposes. To ensure the traveler's personal liability is addressed in such circumstances, travelers are encouraged to obtain the appropriate insurance for the period the traveler is using the car for personal purposes. All additional insurance elections will be deemed a personal expense chargeable to the traveler.
- h) Individuals are responsible for any car rental charges, fuel, insurance charges and liability while on personal business. The State Bar is not responsible for any costs, injuries or damages caused as a result of a rental car used for personal purposes.
- i) Whenever practical, travelers should return cars with a full tank of gas to avoid excessive refueling charges by car rental companies. Car rental companies offer a Fuel Purchase Option that allows for the purchase of a full tank of gas allowing the car to be returned with an empty tank. This option may be cost-efficient but should be used only if the car will be driven enough to exhaust close to a full tank of fuel.
- j) Fuel costs incurred for rental cars while on State Bar business are reimbursable, and may be charged to a Pcard. Fuel should be charged to the same Pcard account that was used to reserve the automobile rental, if possible.
- k) Additional charges for luxury-class-upgrades, SUV's, electric-cars, convertibles, sports-cars, or fees for frequent-flyer points will not be reimbursed beyond the standard economy rental available.
- l) Compliance with the rental car agency agreement is the responsibility of the traveler who signs the rental agreement. Please be aware of provisions in the rental agreement that prohibit any other person from driving the car.
- m) In the event of an accident, follow these steps:
 - Attend to any medical issues
 - Report to appropriate law enforcement agencies immediately
 - Consult the rental contract and follow its instructions
 - Promptly submit an accident report to the State Bar (attn: Risk Management)

3. Air Travel

- a) The State Bar continues to participate in the California State centralized travel program managed exclusively by the TravelStore. Agency booking fees other than the TravelStore will not be reimbursed. Please note this contract is up for re-award in spring 2015. Any changes will be disseminated to staff and volunteers once finalized.
- b) Travelers must contact the approved State Bar travel agency, the TravelStore, for all travel in excess of \$500 (round-trip fare) unless manager approval is obtained prior to the trip ([Appendix C](#)). For round-trip flights under \$500 (inclusive of all taxes and fees), travelers may use their discretion to determine whether to use the State program or to book tickets directly with the airline. For round-trip flights over \$500, travelers may book tickets directly with the airlines or another travel agency, but the rate booked must be as good as or better than the documented quote available from the TravelStore's online Concur travel portal. Documentation from this site of comparable quotes must be attached to each *Expense Report* to justify use of an alternate travel agency or direct-booked flights over \$500. Reimbursements for any other agency booking fees will be limited to the TravelStore's contracted rates (see Appendix C for booking fees). This \$500 threshold is not intended to be used as a maximum allowable cap on air travel.
- c) Compensation for air travel will be limited to the cost of coach or economy fare and any additional baggage fees, if required (per below). The cost of preferential seating, business-select services, pre-boarding or any other accommodation upgrade will be deemed a personal expense chargeable to the traveler. Any remaining Business Select fares booked on Southwest will be reduced \$22 per travel leg. Charges or fees incurred from change of flight schedule for personal convenience is not reimbursable, although may be permitted for business purposes if the reason for the business purpose accompanies the *Expense Report*.
- d) Many airline carriers have a policy charging extra for baggage during the airport check-in process. The State Bar's policy is to only pay for the cost of the ticket and one or two bags per traveler. If a baggage fee is paid at the airport, the traveler must submit the receipt with their *Expense Report* for reimbursement. For travelers requesting reimbursement for more than two bags for business-related purposes, a justification memo with manager approval must be attached (e.g., computer equipment, presentation handouts, tradeshow exhibits, etc.).
- e) Airline exchange ticket receipts are acceptable documentation and should be attached to the original flight booking receipt for reference, with a notation to specify which leg was modified.
- f) Travelers are to use the lowest refundable airfares available without regard to the accrual of personal frequent flyer miles, however, if the likelihood of cancelling or rebooking is low and the fare differential is substantial, non-refundable fares may be a more economical choice.

4. Rail Service

- a) Coach rail service may be used in lieu of air and/or ground transportation when necessary and economically practical compared to other modes of transportation. Reimbursements will be made based on the most (*reservable*) economical service class available. Preferential or other luxury upgrades are not reimbursable, even if the upgrade is less than coach air service or other ground transportation between the same city pairs.

5. Shuttle/Taxi/Car Service

- a) Shuttle van service may be used, time permitting, for trips both to and from the airport where economically feasible. Many shuttle services accept Pcards for payment. Actual cost including customary gratuity will be reimbursed. Tipping is optional, and as a general rule, tip should not exceed 15 percent of the total fare.

- b) Actual cost incurred for taxicab service, including customary gratuity, will be reimbursed when a less expensive service is not suitable. When taxi service is required to conduct State Bar business away from the individual's primary workplace, the State Bar will reimburse the expense in conformity with the terms and guidelines of the Travel and Business-Related Expense Policy regardless of whether the Travel Status requirements are met. Tipping is optional, and as a general rule, tip should not exceed 15 percent of the total fare for typical airport-to-meeting site transport. Tips for local cross-town trips are typically in excess of this 15 percent rule, depending on trip brevity. It is acceptable to round-up to even dollars to facilitate the transaction when tipping in cash. Pcards are now accepted by most major taxi service providers via self-service point-of-purchase devices. If paying by Pcard, select either the auto-15% button on the devices or manually enter an amount not to exceed 15% using the keypad. Airport trips may be covered by a fixed flat fee, and the metered fare or flat fee fare can be selected by the traveler at the payment point, whichever is more economical.
- c) Actual cost incurred for any other alternate ground transportation service, will be reimbursed when a less expensive service is not suitable. Alternate transportation provided by Uber, Lyft, Sidecar, etc. can be considered, where feasible, as an economical choice over a conventional taxicab service, provided the cost does not exceed either the flat fare or average fares from a comparable taxi service. Be aware that surge pricing and other "multipliers" can significantly boost your fare. Any premium service offered will be considered a towncar equivalent and subject to the limitations below. If tipping is included in fare (typically) any additional tipping is prohibited. Insurance coverage limits and exclusions may differ from provider to provider.
- d) A higher-cost limousine, towncar, or Uber-black car service is not reimbursable unless a less-expensive service is unavailable. Written explanations must accompany *Expense Reports* and be approved by senior management.
- e) Travelers are encouraged to share ground transport expenses if traveling in concert with each other. All limits and restrictions apply to the trip itself, and not "per head" (e.g., two travelers sharing a taxicab ride cannot "pool" their individual flat-fares together to justify a more expensive towncar service). Travelers should avoid "splitting" the fare into individual portions—one traveler should elect to pay the fare and claim the entire amount with the appropriate receipt claimed on a single Expense Report.

6. Transit Fees, Parking and Fines

- a) Tolls, parking fees and public transit fares incurred by travelers on State Bar business are reimbursable expenses and must be identified as such on *Expense Reports* under tolls/parking fees. When travel is required to conduct State Bar business away from the individual's primary workplace, the State Bar will reimburse these expenses in conformity with the terms and guidelines of this policy regardless of whether the Travel Status requirements are met.
- b) Pcard use for bridge tolls, parking fees or city transit must be directly related to active travel status and cannot be used to load transit passes for future travel. Use of the Pcard for routine commuting charges (BART, FasTrak, bridge tolls, parking fees, city transit) is prohibited.
- c) Parking tickets and traffic fines incurred by travelers will not be reimbursed.

B. LODGING

- 1. When lodging away from home is required to conduct State Bar business and Travel Status is not invoked, the State Bar will reimburse lodging expenses at the authorized rates ([Appendix D](#)) and in conformity with the terms and guidelines of this policy regardless of whether the Travel Status requirements are met.

2. Individuals engaged as speakers for State Bar sponsored programs may be reimbursed for the actual cost of a standard single accommodation hotel room per the individual custom contract terms and conditions.
3. Reimbursement for lodging expenses will be made for the actual expense of single accommodations, up to the maximum authorized rates or pre-negotiated meeting accommodations by State Bar staff. If no pre-arranged contract exists, travelers should request whether contract or government rates are available when reservations are made (be prepared to show State Bar identification upon check-in). The State of California and/or the State Bar negotiate favorable contract rates with various hotels ([Appendix E](#)). If available for your specific booking dates, the state government rates will automatically sort first when using the online TravelStore's Concur website.
4. Lodging must be provided by a commercial establishment in the travel accommodation industry (e.g., hotel, motel, executive leased apartments, etc.). No reimbursements will be made for stays at personal residences or other barter or in-kind arrangements.
5. Lodging expenses in excess of the current authorized lodging rates shall not be reimbursed unless a prior contracted group rate arrangement has been negotiated with the hotel or unless expressly authorized. This must be confirmed by the submission of a [Hotel Authorization](#) form with approval from either the travelers' executive manager or the senior management responsible for negotiating the contracted group rate for the event.
6. If an *Expense Report* is submitted without the necessary *Hotel Authorization* and the lodging rate is in excess of the authorized rate, the *Expense Report* will be returned to the traveler for correction, or reimbursement will be made for only the authorized maximum hotel rate for that city. Pcard charges not supported by a *Hotel Authorization* will be reported during the Pcard audit process.
7. The State Bar covers the cost of the hotel room and necessary business related telephone calls, parking, internet charges and business center expenses. Travelers should utilize their own wireless devices wherever feasible if more economical than using the hotels' services. Travelers are responsible for covering their personal incidental expenses including personal telephone calls, room service and other in-room self-service items. All hotel guests are asked to provide a personal credit card at the time of check in to cover the cost of personal incidentals. See section V.D., Communications & Incidentals.
8. Any charges resulting from failure to cancel lodging reservations are not the responsibility of the State Bar unless the reason for failure to cancel in time is business-related or due to an unavoidable personal emergency and a statement of same is included on the *Expense Report* and/or Pcard Statement. An occurrence of a volunteer no-show resulting in State Bar expense will be deemed a personal expense and will be collected from the traveler.
9. Optional, but reasonable gratuities offered for the handling of luggage, valet service, and accommodation maid service are reimbursable expenses but should not exceed an average of \$6.00 per travel day. Finance reserves the right to adjust deviations to standard tipping amounts claimed to reasonable and customary levels ([Appendix F](#)). Claiming a reimbursement for any gratuity not actually paid is prohibited. Gratuities cannot be claimed to offset another travel expense category.

C. MEALS

1. Travel Status Meal Guidelines

- a) Pcards may not be used for any individual meals, including meals while on Travel Status. Traveler should submit an *Expense Report* to seek reimbursement according to the authorized per diem meal rates.

- b) Individuals on Travel Status will be entitled to their own meal expenses up to the maximum amount allowed under the authorized per diem [meal rates](#). Payment will be made only for the traveler's own expenses. Each traveler is responsible for his/her own travel and meal expenses. One person may not use State Bar resources to pay for the meals of other travelers.
- c) If the cost of a meal exceeds the approved per diem rates, only the maximum per diem rate will be paid by the State Bar.
- d) Eligibility for meal per diems is based on the time(s) during which an individual is on Travel Status. The following guidelines apply:
 - Breakfast: Travel status before 7:00 a.m.
 - Lunch: Travel status at 12:30 p.m.
 - Dinner: Travel status after 7:00 p.m.
- e) The meal per diem may not be claimed when a meal is otherwise provided (e.g. a State Bar catered lunch, conference meals, etc.).
- f) Tips for restaurant service are considered to be part of the per diem rate and are not reimbursable beyond the per diem rate.

2. Non-Travel Status Meal Guidelines

- a) The cost of business-related meal expenses may be compensated when an individual is not on Travel Status if the meal was work related and in conditions beyond the individual's control. Examples include:
 - *An employee is not on Travel Status but is required by the State Bar to staff or attend an off-site meeting or internal project function where a meal is required under circumstances beyond the employee's control. This includes staffing the Bar examination.*
 - *An employee is not on Travel Status but is required by the State Bar to attend off-site training where a meal is required under circumstances beyond the employee's control.*
 - *An employee is not on Travel Status but is required by the State Bar to stay overnight away from home during authorized meal times.*
- b) A travel *Expense Report* should be used to report these expenses. The report must include the purpose of each business-related meal and the conditions that justify payment. Pcards are not to be used for this purpose.
- c) The above standards governing travel status meals (V.C.1. through 3., rates, tips, etc.) apply to non-travel status meal reimbursement, except for the requirement of being on travel status.
- d) Except as set forth in Section V.C., meal reimbursement is not allowed where State Bar representatives are not on Travel Status and have a meal together incidental to a State Bar function they are attending or staffing.

3. Catered Meals

- a) Refreshments and/or meals may be catered at State Bar expense at State Bar meetings and events provided that the attendees are not exclusively State Bar employees and the subject matter of the event is not routine internal State Bar business or staff meetings. Individuals (including members of the Board of Trustees, committee members, and State Bar employees) attending such activities as part of their duties are entitled to partake of the catered meal, regardless of whether they are on Travel Status. Meal per diem rates do not apply when a catered meal is provided.

- b) Catering is defined as an event-contracted food and beverage service. Catering can either be served on State Bar, hotel or convention site premises, or pre-booked contract meeting accommodations at a commercial restaurant (e.g., catering for Board of Trustees meetings in LA, SF or offsite). Individual meals ordered from a restaurant menu, absent a food and beverage contract with the provider, does not meet this definition of catering, whether for an entire committee or a subset of same.
- c) Catering may be provided to employees in lieu of their individual per diems in instances where the need to keep the team together for a “working lunch” or other special group project is the most efficient use of time and expense. The total amount of the catering cannot exceed the combined total of the participants’ collective per diem amounts and the manager must ensure that any per diem meals are not claimed on any individual expense reports of the participants. For example, a group of five employees working through the weekend on a system installation may be served pizza and beverages ordered by their manager for lunch up to an amount not to exceed \$55, including all taxes and delivery, but may not claim any separate reimbursement for the meal expense otherwise.
- d) In certain circumstances, a State Bar meeting or function may occur in which the cost of a meal or refreshments is included in the registration fee or is to be reimbursed by attendees individually, in which case traveler may not claim individual per diem reimbursement.

4. Alcoholic Beverages

- a) Alcoholic beverages or corkage fees cannot be charged to a Pcard.
- b) Alcoholic beverages or corkage fees are not reimbursable travel/business expenditures and can only be provided for events where the cost of the alcohol was included in the price of the ticket or charged to non-mandatory dues source.
- c) In limited circumstances, alcoholic beverages or corkage fees may be reimbursed as contracted food and beverage catering or as Business Expenses. Such charges must be reasonable both in cost and in consumption per person and charged only against non-mandatory fee revenues. See section VII. Business Expense Account.

D. COMMUNICATIONS & INCIDENTALS

- 1. Reimbursement is provided for reasonable expenses incurred in making business-related telephone calls and limited calls to the individual’s home resulting from the requirements of business. As long as the calls are required by State Bar business, the State Bar will reimburse these expenses in conformity with the terms and guidelines of the Travel and Business-Related Expense Policy regardless of whether the Travel Status requirements are met.
- 2. Any additional roaming services needed to accommodate State Bar communications while an employee is not on travel status (e.g., office communications while on vacation) must be approved and arranged through Procurement in advance of travel.
- 3. Expenses incurred incidental to State Bar business such as copying costs, remote internet connection fees, facsimile costs and other expenses required to conduct State Bar business will be reimbursed in conformity with the terms and guidelines of the Travel and Business-Related Expense Policy regardless of whether the Travel Status requirements are met.

VI. EXPENSE ADVANCES

- A. State Bar representatives who have a Pcard should use it for all travel and business-related expenses whenever feasible to reduce processing costs and maximize organizational efficiencies.

For State Bar representatives who do not have a Pcard, it is preferred that they use their personal funds for travel expenses and request reimbursement at the conclusion of the trip in conformity with this policy.

- B. Travelers may, under specific circumstances, request temporary travel advances by submitting a *Check Request* form to Finance at least three workdays prior to the requested disbursement date of the travel advance. Travelers are required to comply with the State Bar's [Travel Advance Policy](#). The *Check Request* must specify the trip purposes and duration, and be approved by the traveler's immediate supervisor, manager or other authorized designee for that cost center.
- C. The amount of the advance will be based on the nature and requirements of the trip. Eligible expense includes per diem, lodging and ground transportation, and under no circumstances shall the advanced amount exceed \$250 per day.
- D. All advances are "loans" and as such must be repaid or offset by properly approved *Expense Reports* within 10 calendar days after completion of the trip for which they were advanced. It is the responsibility of the traveler to advise Finance of any circumstances that will prevent timely settlement of the advance. Traveler must submit an approved *Expense Report*, original issued receipts for all expense items, and reimbursement for any unused funds in settlement of the advance to Finance.
- E. All travel advances are subject to a monthly audit. A list of employees with delinquent advances will be distributed to the employee's immediate supervisor and manager. Employees with past delinquent advances or who failed to comply with the Travel Advance Policy will be denied future advances and will be subject to collection methods as allowable by law.

VII. BUSINESS EXPENSE ACCOUNT

- A. Senior management may budget for "Business Expenses" (account code 40570). The amount in this account is determined by the Executive Director annually during the budget planning process and is to be funded with non-mandatory fee revenues. This account is to be used at the senior executive's discretion in the course of their duties to cover applicable business expenses for themselves and others. Reasonable expenses charged to this account and approved by the appropriate manager are exempt from this State Bar Travel and Business-Related Expense policy and its Catered Meals Guidelines.
- B. Only senior executives may authorize expenditures from this account, determining in each instance that there is a business purpose to permit the business meal expenditure. Expenditures by any senior management designee must be approved in advance of the event or expenditure.
- C. No reimbursement will be made against the Business Expense Account unless there is a sufficient amount budgeted in the account to cover the expense. Any Pcard charges that default to any other account must be reallocated to a budgeted 40570 account during the statement review period and reconciled before the annual fiscal close.
- D. Business Expenses that may be covered under this section include meals during which discussion of State Bar business occurs and there is a business need to keep participants together. Expenses for business meals will not be authorized for meetings where State Bar business is only nominally discussed or meetings with potential or existing vendors.
- E. Business Expenses may also include costs for a meal or nominal gifts intended to recognize non-employee volunteers for work-related accomplishments on behalf of the State Bar.
- F. Reimbursements will not be allowed under this section for attendance at entertainment or sporting events.