

**Central States Air Resources Agencies
(CENSARA)**

TRAVEL AND TRAVEL ASSISTANCE AND REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

CATEGORY: TRAVEL

ORIGINATION DATE: 01/09/2014

**LAST UPDATED: this policy replaces
the 12/19/2006 (revised on 12/10/2011)
Policy.**

OVERVIEW:

This policy details practices utilized to ensure the best use of resources that are available for travel.

AUTHORIZED TRAVELERS: CenSARA Staff, CenSARA Contractors, CenSARA Membership, Inter-governmental Personnel Act (IPA) staff, and others requested to travel by the CenSARA Membership or the Executive Director.

**APPROVAL REQUIRED TO ACCEPT AND CHANGE THIS POLICY:
CenSARA MEMBERSHIP**

OVERALL INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORIZED TRAVELERS

Travel Approval

The CenSARA Executive Director is responsible for approving requests for travel assistance and travel reimbursements. The Executive Director has the authority to restrict travel assistance and reimbursements based on available funding.

Definition of Travelers

- “CenSARA staff” is defined as personnel who are officially on the CenSARA payroll as designated employees.
- “Contractors” are defined as individuals and organizations with which CenSARA has a valid contract.
- “CenSARA membership” includes representatives from the states of AR, IA, KS, LA, MO, NE, OK, and TX. Federally funded local programs are represented by two local agencies on the CenSARA Board.
- “Inter-governmental Personnel Act (IPA) staff” may be defined as CenSARA staff or Contractors, depending on the particular agreement between CenSARA and the other agency.
- “Others” are defined as persons not included in the above categories (ex: guest speaker at a CenSARA-sponsored conference).

Extent of Travel Assistance for CenSARA Staff

Assistance may include reimbursement for airfare or mileage (whichever is less), lodging, and registration fees. Reimbursement for meals, parking, rental cars, or incidental charges may also be included as detailed in this Policy. Staff shall use the electronic Travel and Credit Card Program database for all travel requests and reimbursements. All travel requests and reimbursements must be approved by the Executive Director.

Examples of official travel for CenSARA staff are: CenSARA business meetings, CenSARA special group meetings (i.e., training, emissions inventories, air modeling, air monitoring, etc.), Non-CenSARA business related meetings, conferences, training, course instruction, workshops and other travel as deemed necessary by the Executive Director.

CenSARA staff required to travel as a part of their normal job responsibilities will be issued a credit card for travel related expenses. Receipts for all purchases must be submitted to the Office/Grant Manager with the travel reimbursement form no later than one week following the travel.

Extent of Travel Assistance for Contractors

Assistance is detailed in the individual contracts and may include airfare, mileage, lodging, and per diem based on the federal rates for the identified location. Travel requests are approved by the CenSARA Contract Manager and/or the Executive Director. Reimbursement requests are approved by both the Contract Manager and the Executive Director. Contractors shall use the travel request and reimbursement guidelines as laid out within their respective contracts and this Policy.

Extent of Travel Assistance for CenSARA Membership

Assistance may include reimbursement for airfare or mileage (whichever is less), lodging, and registration fees. There is no reimbursement for meals, parking, rental cars, or incidental charges. The Travel Request Form (see Appendix A) shall be used when requesting travel to be paid by CenSARA. All travel reimbursement requests should be submitted on the form found in Appendix B.

Examples of official travel for CenSARA membership include: CenSARA business meetings, CenSARA special group meetings (i.e., training, emissions inventories, air modeling, air monitoring, etc.), and other events, such as EPA workshops.

The Executive Director may determine whether funds are available that are equal to travel assistance for one participant per state and one local participant from each EPA Region 6 and 7. Any funds above that level must be presented to the CenSARA Membership for its consideration and approval.

Extent of Travel Assistance for Others

Assistance may include airfare, mileage, lodging, and per diem based on the federal rates for the identified location. The Executive Director will determine the level of assistance to be provided.

Related Personal Travel and Traveling Companions for All Travelers

Any personal expenses incurred before, during, or after official CenSARA business are the responsibility of the authorized traveler. If the authorized traveler wishes to take a side trip before or after the official business trip, the authorized traveler is responsible for any additional expenses incurred.

Spouses/guests traveling with authorized travelers are responsible for paying their own expenses. Any additional costs associated with an authorized traveler's traveling companion cannot be charged to CenSARA and will be the sole responsibility of the traveler or traveling companion.

Personal/Agency Vehicle Travel for All Travelers

Whenever a personal vehicle is used, the approved reimbursement will be on a cost-per-mile basis in accordance with the current Internal Revenue Service rate. Tolls will also be reimbursed. When more than one (1) person travels in the same vehicle, only the owner of the vehicle shall be allowed mileage. The mileage allowance rate represents full compensation for the costs of operating the traveler's vehicle (including fuel). Mileage calculation is performed by the CenSARA Office using the departure address that the authorized traveler provides for either home or office to the arrival address and doubled. However, reimbursement will not exceed the amount of coach airfare and associated costs (e.g. transportation costs to and from the airport), unless traveling with CenSARA materials and/or equipment to training sessions, meetings, conference etc. In such situations, mileage will be based on actual miles traveled roundtrip and verified via a route planner.

CenSARA does not cover physical damage or loss to privately-owned vehicle and/or personal contents in the vehicle, thus, individuals should ensure they have adequate and up-to-date coverage with their personal auto insurer. Liability to others, including passengers, should also be covered by the traveler's private auto policy. For questions, the traveler should refer to their individual policy or contact their agent for coverage specifics relating to use of their private vehicle for business purposes.

Whenever a government agency vehicle is used, the approved reimbursement will include travel costs not covered by the agency (ex: tolls and fuel).

Air Travel for All Travelers

Authorized travelers are allowed to accumulate frequent flyer miles for their personal account. However, attempts to accumulate miles should not be a consideration in the price of tickets nor result in any unknown commitment by CenSARA.

All airline reservations must be made by CenSARA on behalf of the traveler or approved by CenSARA before the authorized traveler schedules a flight. Airline ticket arrangements should be completed no less than 14 calendar days prior to the event. Authorized travelers missing the 14-day advance purchase requirement will be responsible for making and paying for their own airline ticket then submitting the travel reimbursement form to CenSARA after the trip. In such situations, reimbursement is limited to the price of the airline ticket had it been purchased 14 days prior to the meeting and associated fees. Any exception, such as unexpected travel, must be reviewed by the Executive Director for full reimbursement approval.

Authorized travelers may purchase their airline tickets using an online service if it will result in a savings to CenSARA.

Hotel Reservations for All Travelers

All hotel reservations must be approved by CenSARA before the authorized traveler reserves lodging. Authorized travelers can request that lodging arrangements be made on the traveler's behalf by CenSARA or the traveler may make their own lodging arrangements through other means, such as online event portals, travel websites, etc. For meetings requiring hotel reservations by a certain deadline, any authorized traveler failing to make reservations, either on their own or through CenSARA by the scheduled deadline will be responsible for making and paying for his/her own lodging at the prevailing hotel rate. CenSARA will reimburse the traveler up to the government per diem rate or the room block rate (whichever is less).

Car Rentals for CenSARA Staff

CenSARA staff are authorized to use intermediate class vehicles, i.e. less than or equal to standard size. When CenSARA staff anticipates transportation needs for three or more travelers, rental of a full-size sedan or a mini-van is authorized. Weekly car rental rates will be allowed if the cost is less than the total cost of renting at the daily rate.

When renting a vehicle for business purposes with the CenSARA Business credit card, staff should waive the collision damage coverage, supplemental liability insurance and personal accident insurance, as the CenSARA Business credit card already includes these insurance coverage if the rental is paid with the card. CenSARA will pay for the actual cost of the rental vehicle and Personal Effect Coverage, which will protect the employee's personal belongings that are in the rental vehicle (e.g. laptop, phone, and luggage). CenSARA will also reimburse the traveler for fuel or toll charges. Receipts for the rental vehicle, fuel, and other expenses must be obtained and submitted with the Travel Reimbursement Form via the Travel and Credit Card Program Database.

CenSARA prefers that all car rentals be purchased using the CenSARA Business credit card, as it includes rental vehicle/travel insurances that protect the traveler and CenSARA against accident related liabilities. However, if a staff member chooses to use a personal credit card in lieu of the CenSARA credit card, CenSARA will only reimburse the employee for the actual cost of the rental vehicle, fuel and toll charges. Individuals should ensure they have adequate and up-to-date coverage with their personal auto insurer that covers rental vehicles. Liability to others, including passengers in the rental vehicle, must be covered by the vehicle renter's private auto policy. If you have questions, refer to your policy or contact your agent for coverage specifics relating to use of a rental vehicle.

When renting a car for travel in a foreign country, the full package of insurance offered by the rental agency should be obtained and will be reimbursed by CenSARA.

If the traveler uses a rental car for personal use and, as a consequence, CenSARA incurs additional costs, e.g. a mileage charge (this could occur when a traveler uses an authorized rental car for sight-seeing purposes during a weekend), then the traveler will be responsible for reimbursing CenSARA for those costs and any related expenses incurred during non-business use of the vehicle.

Car Rentals for Contractors, CenSARA Membership, and Others

Travelers who are in need of a rental car are authorized to use intermediate class vehicles, i.e. less than or equal to standard size. When the authorized traveler anticipates transportation needs for three or more travelers, rental of a full-size sedan or a mini-van is authorized. Weekly car rental rates will be allowed if the cost is less than the total cost of renting at the daily rate.

When a traveler is renting a vehicle for CenSARA business purposes, CenSARA will pay for all additional insurance coverage available to the rental car, such as collision damage coverage, supplemental liability insurance, personal accident insurance and personal effect coverage. CenSARA will also reimburse the traveler for fuel or toll charges incurred during official business. A receipt for the rental vehicle and any additional expenses must be obtained and submitted with the contractor's itemized invoice and request for reimbursement.

When renting a car for travel in a foreign country, the full package of insurance offered by the rental agency should be obtained and will be reimbursed by CenSARA.

If the traveler uses a rental car for personal use and, as a consequence, CenSARA incurs additional costs, e.g. a mileage charge (this could occur when a traveler uses an authorized rental car for sight-seeing purposes during a weekend), then the traveler will be responsible for reimbursing CenSARA for those costs and any related expenses incurred during non-business use of the vehicle.

Per Diem for CenSARA Staff, Contractors, and Others

It is CenSARA's policy that a daily per diem rate will be paid to authorized travelers to cover the cost of meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) in accordance with the applicable Federal Per Diem* rate for the location in question. In instances where employees incur breakfast or evening meal expenses when leaving and returning to their official location, they should indicate on their Travel Reimbursement Form the reason for the early departure or late arrival. No receipts are required to be reimbursed for per diem expenses, but CenSARA staff must record the amounts in the Travel Request Form via the Travel and Credit Card Program Database and Contractors and Others must record on the Travel Reimbursement forms.

When meals are included with meeting registration fees or otherwise provided to the traveler, the daily M&IE will be adjusted downward as follows:

Meal furnished:	
Breakfast	20%
Lunch	30%
Dinner	50%

*Training contractors will be paid a full day's Federal Per Diem rate for each day of business-related travel or course instruction.

Miscellaneous Expenses for CenSARA Staff, Contractors, and Others

CenSARA will reimburse staff, contractors, and approved others for all reasonable and necessary expenses incurred as part of official business. Examples of allowable expenses include: taxi fares from residence to/from airport or hotel to/from office, baggage transfer expenses, official CenSARA excess luggage, business-related photocopying, airport departure fees or taxes, and pre-approved expenses associated with travel outside the United States. Examples of expenses that CenSARA will not reimburse are: newspapers, magazines, alcoholic beverages, parking fines or tickets, personal travel expenses, personal excess luggage, or personal medication. Telephone, internet connection and/or facsimile expenses shall be allowed only when necessary for the transaction of official business. Incidental expenses not directly connected with the travel purpose (such as postage, small emergency personal supplies, etc.) may be allowed when necessary to the performance of official business. All expenses the traveler is seeking reimbursement for must be listed on the Travel Reimbursement Form (or database for CenSARA staff). Receipts are required for any single expense over \$25.

Cancellations of Travel for CenSARA Staff, Contractors, and Others

CenSARA staff and contractors are responsible for managing their own travel arrangements and cancellations. If there is a business related conflict that results in the need to cancel travel arrangements, CenSARA will be responsible for all travel charges that are non-transferable and non-refundable. If there is a personal conflict that results in the cancellation of travel arrangements, the staff member or contracted staff member will be responsible for all travel charges that are non-transferable and non-refundable.

Cancellations of Travel for CenSARA Membership

Airline tickets purchased on the traveler's behalf by CenSARA are non-transferable and non-refundable. If a cancellation occurs, the traveler's organization may be billed by CenSARA for the cost of the unused ticket. If hotel arrangements are made on the traveler's behalf by CenSARA and the traveler must cancel, they should contact CenSARA directly - they should not contact the hotel. The traveler must notify CenSARA at least 72 hours prior to the traveler's scheduled arrival date; otherwise, the traveler's organization may be billed for any lodging costs incurred. Excessive cancellations (two or more) or any outstanding payment due to a previous bill sent to an organization will jeopardize eligibility for future travel assistance. Cancellations resulting in financial damages to CenSARA due to hardships will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Management of travel arrangements made by the traveler on their own behalf will be the responsibility of the traveler, should there be a need to cancel.

Daily Trips for CenSARA Staff

No per diem is authorized for a day trip, i.e. a trip that starts/ends at the traveler's normal place of employment and occurs during their regularly scheduled working hours. For any day trip that starts earlier or ends later, the traveler will receive one-quarter of the authorized daily per diem rate. An employee must be greater than fifty miles from their domicile to incur a lodging expense.

Travel Advance for CenSARA Staff

CenSARA does not expect its employees to self-finance a business trip taken in behalf of CenSARA. Thus, employees may be provided a travel advance of 100 percent of their expected lodging, per diem, and miscellaneous expenses. The amount of the advance will be detailed on the Travel Request Form and submitted to the Executive Director for approval before submitting to the Office/Grant Manager. The travel advance should be requested at least five days prior to the departure date.

If a traveler receives an advance of funds and the trip is cancelled, the full amount of advance will be submitted to the Office/Grant Manager within two working days. If a traveler receives an advance in excess of actual expenditures, the traveler will submit a payment in the amount of overage with the Travel Reimbursement Form. If the traveler does not settle an outstanding travel advance within 15 days after the trip, CenSARA has the right to deduct the amount due directly from the employee's salary. Also, if an employee regularly abuses the advance policy, e.g., does not liquidate a previous

outstanding advance, CenSARA reserves the right to provide the traveler with a reduced advance amount or no advance whatsoever. The Executive Director will be the final authority on this policy.

Third Party Reimbursement of Travel Expenses for CenSARA Staff

CenSARA recognizes that its employees may be invited to participate in meetings, seminars, lectures, committees, etc. as part of their official capacity. Frequently, such requests include offers to pay honorarium, travel costs or parts thereof, and/or registration fees. Offers to reimburse CenSARA for employee expenses may be accepted by CenSARA.

Whenever it is deemed appropriate for CenSARA employees to participate in an outside event in the conduct of an employee's official duties, CenSARA will reimburse the employee in accordance with this Policy. For offers of reimbursement of travel expenses not customarily allowed by CenSARA, CenSARA's travel policies will prevail. CenSARA's employees shall not accept special benefits such as: first-class travel, luxury hotel accommodations, and/or travel expenses for a travel companion.

If an employee is reimbursed or paid directly by an organization, the employee will submit a CenSARA Travel Reimbursement Form with details of the expenses reimbursed by the third party.

Trip Reporting Requirements for CenSARA Membership

CenSARA meetings (ex: business meetings) do not require the travelers to submit trip reports. In all other situations when CenSARA is paying for travel, the authorized traveler must submit a trip report following the general outline provided in Appendix C. The trip report is due in the CenSARA office no later than one month after the travel was completed.

Misc.

Any questions related to this policy should be referred to CenSARA's Executive Director.

APPENDIX A

Travel Request Form

I. Prepared by Traveler:

Traveler: _____ Date: _____
Departure Date _____ Return Date: _____
Purpose of Trip _____
Destination _____
Address _____
Lodging _____
Method of Travel _____
Comments: _____

Calculation of Estimated Costs

Mileage Amount
No of Days: Total Per Diem

Total Travel Request:

II. Prepared by Supervisor:

Supervisor Name: Theresa Pella Supervisor's Approval _____
Date: _____
Supervisor's Comments: _____

III. Prepared by Controller:

Controller: _____ Date: _____
Funds Available: _____
Accounting Data: _____
Authorized Per Diem for Location: _____
Lodging: _____
Meals/Incidentals(MIE):\$ _____
Other:\$ _____

<u>For office use only:</u>
Project: _____
Project Nr.: _____
Activity Code: _____

APPENDIX B

Travel Reimbursement Form

Voucher Number: _____

Traveler: _____ Date: _____
Departure Date _____ Return Date: _____
Purpose of Trip _____
Destination _____
Address _____
Lodging _____
Method of Travel _____
Comments: _____

Calculation of Travel

Per Diem Days: _____ Total Per Diem Claimed _____
Mileage: _____ @ \$0.51 Total Mileage Claimed _____

Other Expenses

Credit Card Used	Cash Used	Total Travel Expenses	Net to Traveler

Mailing Address: _____

I certify that this voucher is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that payment or credit has not been received by me. When applicable, per diem claimed is based on the average cost of lodging incurred during the period covered by this voucher.

Traveler Signature: _____ Date: _____

Accounting Official Signature: _____ Date: _____

Executive Director Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C

CenSARA TRIP REPORT

Name of Traveler: _____ Travel Dates: _____

I. Purpose.

II. Organization Visited. People Contacted.

III. Observations/Findings.

IV. Proposed Changes and/or Recommendations for future related trips.

V. Other Comments

This form should be submitted with the Travel Reimbursement Form.

HISTORICAL NOTES	
ORIGINATION DATE: 01/09/2014	LAST UPDATED:

This Policy replaces the Policy with an Origination Date of 12/19/2006, last revised on 10/18/11.