

CONFERENCES AND BUSINESS RELATED TRAVEL**I. Intent**

Questar III recognizes that on occasion Questar III board members, officers and employees will incur expenses related to Questar III related travel. Such travel may be for purposes of attending conferences, conventions, workshops, meetings and training events. Such expenses shall be paid in accordance with this policy, except that employee mileage shall be reimbursed in accordance with the Personal Automobile Business Mileage Reimbursement Policy. It is the intent of this policy to guide Questar III in making decisions regarding the approval of travel in order to assure that travel directly benefits the organization.

II. Conferences, Conventions, Workshops and Training Events

Expenses related to attendance at conferences, conventions, workshops, meetings or training events may be paid or reimbursed when approval has been obtained for attendance and upon submission of appropriate documentation as may be required by the Assistant Superintendent for Business and Financial Services. The Board President is authorized to approve board member attendance at conferences, conventions, workshops, meetings or training events. The District Superintendent, or his or her designee, is authorized to establish procedures for approval of employee attendance at conferences, conventions, workshops, meetings or training events.

III. Criteria for Approval

The following criteria shall apply when considering the approval of attendance at conferences, conventions, workshops, meetings or training events:

- A. Benefit to the organization as a whole;
- B. Benefit to a Questar III program;
- C. Professional benefit to the individual, provided such benefit will advance Questar III's mission;
- D. Ability of Questar III to continue to provide coverage of services during period of travel;
- E. Reasonableness of cost of registration fees and other expenses required to attend; and
- F. Availability of other, less-costly options, including but not limited to other conferences or training events, opportunities for Questar III staff to serve as trainers of other staff, or other venues for holding meetings.

- G. An employee may be required to report on such conference, as a condition of approval.

IV. Employee Travel Related Expenses

The following expenses incurred during approved travel status may be paid as follows upon submission of a proper claim by the employee, in accordance with administrative procedures. An employee shall be considered in travel status when required to travel for Questar III business purposes which includes at least one overnight stay.

- A. Breakfast, lunch and dinner allowances may be reimbursed in amounts equal to the federal (GSA) maximum meal and incidental expenses (M&IE) per diem rates in effect for the travel destination location. Per diem rates for first and last days of travel will be paid on a pro-rated basis as provided in the GSA rates.
- B. Actual and necessary lodging expenses will be paid provided, however, that lodging expenses that exceed maximum lodging rates established by the GSA for the applicable destination may be reimbursed when the conference, convention, workshop, meeting or training requires the employee to lodge at a particular location where the lodging costs exceed the applicable rate schedule or when lodging at applicable rates is not reasonably available.
- C. Personal expenses, such as pay television, hotel health club fees, alcoholic beverages, theater or show tickets, and transportation costs unrelated to Questar III business, will not be paid or reimbursed.
- D. Actual and necessary travel expenses (other than mileage), including but not limited to transportation fees, tolls, parking fees and taxis may be reimbursed if itemized original receipts are provided.

- E. Travel shall be by the most economical yet practicable method available, whether by private automobile, school vehicle or common carrier. If travel is by personal automobile, mileage shall be reimbursed in accordance with the Personal Automobile Business Mileage Reimbursement Policy. Gasoline expenses and any other expenses related to use of a personal automobile will not be reimbursed.
- F. Rental vehicle charges may be incurred only when it can be demonstrated as the most practical or economical means of travel. In such instances, rental vehicles should be obtained through purchase order or Questar III credit card, utilizing state contract when available. In situations where purchase orders will not be accepted and a Questar III credit card is not used, rental vehicle expenses will be reimbursed only if itemized receipts are provided.
- G. Air travel may be reimbursed only when it can be demonstrated as the most practical or economical means of travel. Every effort shall be made to obtain the most economical fares possible.
- H. Employees who attend conferences which include as part of the working agenda meals which are not included in the conference fees, may be reimbursed for such meal(s) upon prior approval and submission of appropriate documentation.
- I. In instances where it is appropriate, the District Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendents may be reimbursed for actual meal expenses incurred on behalf of Questar III guests at Questar III business related meetings or events.

V. Administrative Procedures

The Assistant Superintendent for Business and Financial Services shall establish such administrative regulations and procedures as necessary or desirable to carry out this policy including but not limited to procedures for obtaining prior approvals when appropriate and establishing expense reimbursement forms and processes.

VI. Reimbursement for Expenses Associated with Performance of Board Duties

Board members shall be reimbursed for attendance at approved conferences and for all other actual and necessary expenses associated with the discharge of duties, within budgetary allotments and subject to General Municipal Law, section 77-b where applicable.