

CITY OF BELTON

TRAVEL POLICY

I. INTRODUCTION

It is a goal of the City of Belton to promote the professional development of City employees and officials. Training and professional development often necessitates that City employees and officials travel beyond the City of Belton. This travel policy shall govern such travel by City employees and officials in the furtherance of the above goal.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to clarify and simplify the procedures that employees and elected or appointed officials will use to receive travel advance or reimbursement for expenses incurred while on official City business. City employees and officials should reflect positively on the image of the City by being responsible for appropriate expenses.

III. POLICY

The City of Belton will pay for reasonable and associated expenses that are incurred in the course of authorized City trips for meetings, training and other official business. Department Heads and Supervisors shall be accountable for the prudent use and allocation of training and travel dollars for use by their employees. Planning for training and travel needs is essential by Department Heads to avoid overruns in the budget.

City employees are allowed to attend in-state conferences as specifically budgeted, or as recommended by the Department Head. Out-of-state conferences will only be attended if approved in advance by the City Manager. City employees are strongly encouraged to participate in state association meetings as budgeted and to obtain training within Texas first.

Advance approval is needed for any training not approved in the budget.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Travel Authorization

All travel and anticipated expenses to attend workshops, conventions, schools or any type of meeting must be approved in advance by the Department Head. Department Heads must sign and submit all *Travel Authorization Forms* to the Finance Department (in writing, by e-mail, or by fax) who will verify that money is available in the listed account number to cover expenses. All travel requests will be sent back to the originating Department Head after Finance approval. The City will not reimburse expenses

incurred without prior authorization. A copy of the entire registration form (indicating registration fees, times, dates, included meals, etc.) should be attached to the travel authorization form.

Travel Authorization Forms are NOT required for the following:

- Travel under \$50.00 which can be reimbursed through petty cash;
- Meals at business meetings held in Belton or vicinity;
- Mileage for conducting regular City business (City of Belton vehicle should be used when available).

B. Travel Advances

Advances for anticipated travel expenses and per diems must be approved by the Finance Department prior to the accounts payable deadline preceding the expected departure date. An employee must submit a *Travel Authorization Form* to their Department Head for approval. The Department Head must then forward the request to the Director of Finance, who will approve the request if budgeted funds are available. If funds are not available, the Department Head must identify available funding for the Director of Finance.

C. Travel Expenses

All City employees who travel are individually accountable for obtaining receipts and validating the expenditure of public monies. Itemized receipts for all expenses must accompany the *Travel Expense Report*, except for meals for which a per diem system will be utilized. Receipts should be detailed as to the individual charges, not just a total charge (Example – hotel bills will list all charges including phone and parking, etc.)

If an employee loses a receipt or does not obtain a receipt, a request for reasonable reimbursement may be made by submitting a written explanation of the expenditure. Such request must be approved by the Department Head and by Finance.

D. Travel Meals

1. Per Diem for Meals

All City employees will receive a per diem amount for authorized meals while traveling. The City will reimburse employees at the State of Texas published per diem rate for State employees (including taxes and tips) when out-of-town on City business. Partial per diem days will be broken down as follows:

Breakfast (12 a.m. - 7 a.m.) -	25%
Lunch (11:30 am - 1:30 p.m.) -	25%
Dinner (7:00 p.m. - 11:59 p.m.) -	50%

Per diem amounts will not be paid for meals included as part of the registration fee.

Elected and appointed officials will receive per diem amounts at the State of Texas rate for legislative and key employees.

2. Business Meals:

Business meals are not subject to the per diem limits. Business meals are defined as any meal in which the main purpose of the meal is to actively conduct business with a city economic prospect or another non-City of Belton government official. The names of guests' present, name of organization represented, and business justification must be provided for the expense to be reimbursable. Actual expenses will be reimbursed with properly submitted itemized receipts.

Examples of qualified business meals are business meetings conducted at lunch or out-of-town meals in which non-City of Belton business guests are present. Another more specific example would be if a City Council Member was in Austin for a conference and met a State or Federal Legislator for dinner to discuss governmental issues. This would be considered a business meal. Business meals are not meals on out-of-town trips in which two or more City employees or officials meet to eat and discuss City business. This type of meal is considered a travel meal subject to per diem limits.

E. Hotel / Motel

One day or partial day seminars or meetings held 50 miles or less from Belton will not be reimbursed for hotel/motel costs, unless there is additional justification (such as an extremely early starting time, evening awards ceremonies, etc.) and only if approved in advance by the City Manager. Hotel reservations will be made by the traveling individual or their department. Advance payment to the hotel/motel may be made if time allows; otherwise, the employee will request an advance or reimbursement for hotel/motel costs. Receipts must be submitted to Finance for these expenditures.

F. Registration

The City will pay actual registration fees for conventions, conferences, schools and workshops. When possible, all registration fees will be paid in advance. If the employee pays the registration fee on site, he must receive advance approval for such training and he must attach a registration receipt to the *Travel Expense Report Form*.

G. Mileage

With the approval of their Department Head, an employee may use a personal vehicle for out-of-town travel. It is preferred that a City vehicle be used if available. The City will pay mileage for personal vehicles based on the per mileage rate and mileage designated by the State of Texas for State employees.

Employees who receive a car allowance and travel out of Bell County on approved business, will be reimbursed for their total mileage, less 140 miles, at the per mileage rate designated by the State of Texas.

State mileage rates are available on-line at the State Comptroller's website or from the Finance Department. Mileage may be calculated by using a reputable online mapping system, such as mapquest.com or maps.yahoo.com.

H. Air Fare and Car Rental

An employee will only be reimbursed for the cost of economy airfare, if and only if, airfare is the more economical in terms of both cost and time.

If a car is rented while an employee is traveling, it must be the most cost-effective means of transportation available.

Receipts must be submitted to Finance for these expenditures.

I. Phone

The City will pay for one personal telephone call home per day while out-of-town on City business. The cost for phone calls home shall not exceed \$5.00 per day.

J. Miscellaneous

Reasonable parking fees, cab fare, toll fees, etc. may be reimbursed. Receipts must be submitted to Finance for these expenditures.

No fines or fees for tickets or violations of traffic/parking laws will be reimbursed.

Reasonable tips for bellhops will be reimbursed.

K. Ineligible Expenses

1. Spouses

The City cannot pay for travel-related expenses for spouses or other family members of City employees or City officials per Attorney General Letter of Opinion No. 90-031. The employee/official must reimburse the City for any such expenses within ten (10) working days of Finance Department review, upon return of the travel expense report.

2. Recreation / Entertainment

The City will not pay for recreation expenses including, but not limited to, alcoholic beverages, golf, exercise room charges, movies, or any general forms of entertainment. The City may pay for work-related tours, special site visitations and approved special events associated with professional development.

L. Travel Expense Forms

Within ten (10) working days of returning from an authorized City trip, employees/officials must submit a Travel Expense Report detailing the actual charges incurred. Failure to report within ten (10) days may result in cancellation of travel privileges. Itemized receipts for hotel/motel room, airline tickets, car rental, or any other appropriate items must be attached to the report.

Travel Expense Reports are NOT required for the following:

- Mileage reimbursement for City business errands; or
- Seminars or luncheon meetings in Belton, or out-of-town meetings where travel will not be reimbursed.

M. Travel Reimbursement

1. City Reimbursement

If any employee/official needs to reimburse the City, payment shall be made after the Department Head and Finance have approved the *Travel Expense Report*. After Finance approval, payment should be remitted to the City cashier and a copy of the receipt shall be attached to the final *Travel Expense Report* for filing.

2. Employee, Board Member, Elected Official Reimbursement

If any employee or official needs to be reimbursed, payment shall be made after the Department Head and Finance have approved the *Travel Expense Report*. After Finance approval, the employee will be reimbursed via an accounts payable check on the normal accounts payable payment date or by petty cash if the reimbursement is under \$50.

N. Department Head and Employee Responsibility

A Department Head who countersigns an employee's *Travel Expense Report* must make sure that the form is properly filled out and has the necessary receipts attached. Preparation of the *Travel Expense Report* is the responsibility of the employee claiming reimbursement and is accountable for by the Department Head.

O. Effective Date

This policy originally became effective March 1, 2004.
Amended effective October 1, 2011.

City Council

Account Number	Description	Amount
01-4-010-201	Office Supplies	
	- Business cards for Council & stationery	\$ 100
	- Color copier cartridges	\$ 170
	- Department share of copy paper	\$ 350
	- Other miscellaneous supplies	\$ 180
		\$ 800
229	Tools & Other Supplies	
	- Meeting supplies	\$ 80
	- Minutes book	\$ 225
	- Nameplates and proclamation materials	\$ 150
		\$ 455
501	Advertising & Public Notices	
	- Fort Hood Newcomers' Guide	\$ 600
	- Chamber of Commerce magazine advertisement	\$ 500
	- Legal advertisements and official recordings	\$ 3,500
		\$ 4,600
510	Dues & Publications	
	- OrdLink Service	\$ 150
	- Association of the United States Army	\$ 75
	- Belton Chamber of Commerce	\$ 500
	- Oncor Cities Steering Committee	\$ 1,859
	- Web hosting of Code of Ordinances	\$ 550
	- ERCOT	\$ 100
- Texas Municipal League	\$ 2,712	
		\$ 5,946
513	Travel & Training	
	- Council members - 6	\$ 4,500
	- Mayor	\$ 2,000
	- AUSA membership meetings - 2	\$ 192
	- AUSA conference - 3	\$ 2,300
	- AUSA soldier dinner sponsorship	\$ 3,000
	- AUSA Board of Governors	\$ 400
	- Mayor/Mayor Pro Tem meetings	\$ 300
	- Council workshops	\$ 150
		\$ 12,842
570	Special Services	
	- 4th of July reception	\$ 350
	- Volunteer Firefighter banquet	\$ 500
	- Boards & commissions appreciation banquet	\$ 1,700
	- Soldier Support	\$ 800
		\$ 3,350
571	Election Expenses	
	- Election judges and clerks	\$ 1,772
	- Election ballots	\$ 498
	- Election forms and supplies	\$ 150
	- Election voting equipment	\$ 1,360
	- Election publications and updates	\$ 30
	- Lunch for election workers	\$ 60
- Publication of ordinances	\$ 240	
		\$ 4,110
572	Employee Relations	
	- Employee benevolence fund	\$ 250
	- Employee Christmas party and gift	\$ 12,700
	- Employee appreciation barbecues	\$ 1,500
	- Awards and plaques	\$ 1,000
		\$ 15,450
950	Transfer to Youth Advisory Commission Fund	
	- Transfer to YAC fund	\$ 1,000

ORDINANCE NO. 2011-15

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING RATES AND FEES FOR CERTAIN ITEMS, SERVICES AND PERMITS PROVIDED FOR IN THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BELTON, TEXAS.

Miscellaneous

Administer the Oath of Office to Youth Advisory Commission members.

The City Attorney administered the Oath of Office to the following YAC members:

Kendra Emerson	Grace Hutchinson	Emily Street
Lauren Hutchens	Bharath Lavendra	Samantha Waggoner
Roxanne Reichl	Hadley Young	

(Bethany House was not able to attend the meeting and will be sworn in at another time.)

Consider an ordinance adopting the City of Belton Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2011, and ending September 30, 2012.

The City Manager recommended adoption of the FY 2012 budget built on a \$0.6540 tax rate. Upon motion by Councilmember Carpenter, seconded by Councilmember Peters, the following captioned ordinance was unanimously approved:

ORDINANCE NO. 2011-16

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE CITY OF BELTON FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2011, AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2012.

Consider an ordinance adopting the 2011 ad valorem tax rate (Fiscal Year 2012).

The City Manager recommended approval of the ordinance adopting the 2011 ad valorem tax rate (FY 2012) of \$0.6540, a decrease from the current rate of \$0.6550. A motion to approve the ordinance was made by Councilmember Pearson and seconded by Councilmember Peters. The following captioned ordinance was unanimously approved:

ORDINANCE NO. 2011-17

AN ORDINANCE LEVYING AD VALOREM TAX FOR PAYMENT OF OUTSTANDING DEBTS OF THE CITY OF BELTON FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2012 (TAX YEAR 2011), TOGETHER WITH INTEREST THEREON, LEVYING TAXES FOR GENERAL FUND PURPOSES, AS PROVIDED BY THE STATUTES OF TEXAS; PROVIDING WHEN TAXES SHALL BECOME DUE AND WHEN SAME SHALL BECOME DELINQUENT IF NOT PAID; PROVIDING FOR EARLY PAYMENT DISCOUNTS; PROVIDING FOR A PENALTY AND INTEREST ON ALL DELINQUENT AD VALOREM TAXES; AND PROVIDING THAT IF ANY PART OF THIS ORDINANCE BE HELD INVALID BY COURT, SUCH FINDING SHALL NOT AFFECT ANY OTHER PART OF THIS ORDINANCE.

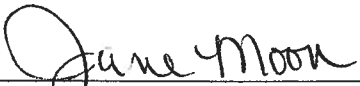
Publisher's Affidavit

State of Texas
County of Bell

Before Me, The Undersigned Authority, this day personally appeared Jane Moon after being by me duly sworn, says that she is the Classified Inside Sales Manager of the Temple Daily Telegram, a newspaper published in Bell County, Texas and that the stated advertisement was published in said newspaper on the following date(s):

August 28, 2011

For: City of Belton
Ad # 16465749
Cost: \$34.74
Times Published: 1



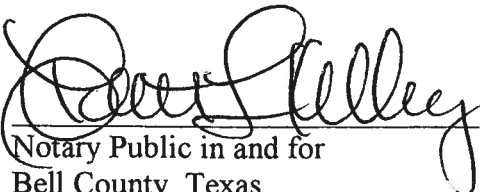
Jane Moon
Classified Inside Sales Manager

**NOTICE OF
PUBLIC HEARING**

The Belton City Council will conduct a Public Hearing at 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, September 6, 2011, in the Wright Room of the Harris Community Center, 401 N. Alexander, Belton, Texas, to receive public input regarding the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2012. The proposed budget may be examined on weekdays at Belton City Hall, 333 Water Street, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Connie Torres
City Clerk
City of Belton

Subscribed and sworn to before me,
this day: Sept. 22, 2011.



Notary Public in and for
Bell County, Texas

