

Operations Manual

OpMan 23 – Travel and Expense Reimbursement

Effective: July 23, 2014
Effective: September 27, 2016
Effective: March 11, 2021

1. **RESPONSIBLE PARTY:** ~~The Executive Committee shall be~~ responsible for authorizing, overseeing, and ensuring compliance with this policy. ~~The AOC Executive Director is responsible for day-to-day oversight and implementation.~~
2. **PURPOSE:** ~~The purpose of this policy statement~~ operations manual is to establish policy and procedures for travel and reimbursement of authorized expenses by AOC employees, Board of Directors, and Board of Governors. Except for provisions related to approval of expenses, “traveler” also refers to anyone who incurs expenses in conjunction with authorized AOC activities and who request reimbursement.
3. **AUTHORITY:** ~~The Association~~ AOC is directed to maintain fiscal responsibility in accordance with OPMAN-21 and the policies outlined in the AOC Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest.
4. **OPERATIONS:** ~~Unless otherwise provided for,~~ The following policies and procedure will apply to the scheduling and conduct of travel and the reimbursement of authorized expenses.
5. ~~**GENERAL GUIDELINES:** Volunteers are encouraged to keep expenses to a minimum by combining AOC trips with business trips that can be either fully or partially supported by their business activity. Volunteers will be reimbursed for expenses only if such reimbursement is not available from other sources.~~
5. **AUTHORIZATION OF TRAVEL, TRAVEL EXPENSES, AND REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES.** Travel and associated expenses must be approved in advance by the . The reimbursement of authorized business travel expenses will be approved by the Executive Director. The Treasurer or President will approve the Executive Director’s reimbursement of authorized travel expenses. All approvals must be in writing (letter or email is acceptable). Approval by phone text or any other means will be by exception only and must be followed up with a letter or email for recordkeeping purposes.
6. ~~**AUTHORIZATION OF TRAVEL EXPENSES:** Travel and associated expenses must be approved in advance according to the following guidelines:~~
 - A. ~~The Executive Director will approve all travel expenses except their own.~~
 - B. ~~The Treasurer or President will approve the Executive Director’s travel expenses.~~

~~Approval must be in writing. Email is acceptable.~~
6. **AUTHORIZATION OF OTHER EXPENSES:** ~~Other business travel, travel expenses, and reimbursements~~ not specifically addressed in this OPMAN must be approved in advance by the Executive Director. ~~Approval must be in writing and email is acceptable. No one is authorized to approve their own expenses.~~
7. **AUTHORIZATION OF TRAVEL, TRAVEL EXPENSES, AND REIMBURSEMENTS FOR CONTRACTORS.** Contractor (includes “1099” personnel, consultants, instructors, vendors) authorizations will be in accordance with their approved and signed contract/agreement. Deviations/variations from the contract/agreement will be reviewed and approved only by the Executive Director.

Commented [AR1]: Recommend indicating the committee responsible for this OPMAN; further recommend listing the responsible committee in all OPMANs.

Commented [AR2]: Delete. Not all OPMANs have this paragraph. “Purpose” paragraph should be sufficient.

Commented [AR3]: Who approves the actual travel (i.e., travel schedule) and the budget or estimated expenses assigned to it?

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8. TRAVEL DEFINITIONS:

Acronym or Term	Definition
Business meeting meal	A hosted event where business matters are discussed conducted, and food or beverages are provided.
Business class airfare	A class of accommodation offered by airlines that is higher than coach and lower than first class, in both cost and amenities.
Business travel	A business trip within the U.S. or abroad lasting for a period of not more than 60 days. Business travel also covers the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel of spouses, family members, or significant others, when authorized, to of Association AOC employees/oOfficers/dDirectors for business reasons. Travel of award recipients/honorees when authorized.
Circuitous Routing	Flights which require connections or direct flights with intermediate stops when a nonstop is available.
Coach class airfare	The basic class of accommodation by airlines regardless of airline terminology used.
CONUS	Continental United States, including the contiguous 48 states and the District of Columbia.
First class airfare	The highest class of accommodation offered by airlines in terms of cost and amenities.
Foreign	For purposes of this OpMan, per diem lodging and meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) rate locations that are defined by the U.S. Department of State. -Foreign locations include any location other than those defined as CONUS or OCONUS.
Increased cost offsetting savings	Increased cost of using an alternate air travel itinerary that includes additional subsistence costs, overtime, or lost productive time.
Market	The originating point of departure and the point of destination.
Maximum lodging per diem	The daily lodging allowance for the locality published by the government.- See per diem rates for the list of tables.
M&IE	Meals and Incidental Expenses
Non reimbursed cost	Cost willingly incurred by an employee that is not reimbursed by The Association AOC.
Not reasonably available to meet mission requirements.	A requirement that travelers declare desired departure and arrival times that meet mission requirements. Other circumstances may arise that require justification and documentation of as to why the lowest available fare does not meet mission requirements.
OCONUS	Outside the Continental United States, including destinations within the CONUS, but not foreign countries. Specifically, OCONUS includes Alaska, Hawaii, the Commonwealths of Puerto Rico and the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the territories and possessions of the U.S.
Per diem rates	Also referred to as subsistence allowance. U.S. government-established daily rates for lodging, meals, and related incidental expenses for various localities. Per diem allowance is separate from transportation expenses and other reimbursable expense and covers all charges, including tax, except lodging tax in 50 states, District of Columbia, and non-foreign OCONUS locations.
Proof of payment	A detailed receipt. -Exceptions must have a justification and management approval.
Reimbursable	A charge that the Association AOC reimburses an employee for costs incurred.
Trapped weekend	Business travel requiring business to be conducted on Friday and the following Monday, spanning a weekend.
Travel during unreasonable hours	For CONUS flights, scheduled departures before 7 a.m. or scheduled arrivals after 9 p.m.

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Acronym or Term	Definition
	For flights where the origin and/or destination is foreign or non-foreign OCONUS, scheduled departures after 9 p.m. or before 7 a.m.

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9. **TRAVEL POLICIES:** It is the practice of AOC to provide travel allowances for individuals traveling on ~~a~~ Association business that are equitable and consistent with current industry practices and cover the actual and reasonable costs of transportation, lodging, meals, and other incidental expenses associated with travel. Travelers must obtain approval prior to a trip and ~~to comply~~ comply with applicable ~~Association~~ AOC security policies and OpMans. Travelers ~~should nominally~~ must complete a travel expense report with all prescribed documentation within 30 days of the completion of the travel. See the ~~Expenses and Reimbursement section~~ of this OpMan for more information. ~~The Association~~ AOC assumes no obligation to reimburse travelers for expenses that are not in compliance with this OpMan.

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10. **DEVIATIONS:** Deviations for individual travelers from the provisions set forth in this OpMan are authorized only with prior written approval ~~by the Executive Director~~. Written approval must be attached to the expense report.

11. **PERSONAL TRAVEL:** ~~Employees~~ Travelers may combine personal travel with business travel under the following guidelines:

- Travel must be approved by management in accordance with paragraph 6.
- ~~The Association~~ AOC does not incur any additional cost, and all savings are passed onto the ~~Association~~ AOC.
- Any additional costs are the sole responsibility of the ~~employee~~ traveler.

12. **AIR TRAVEL:** Travelers are required to utilize the lowest available airfare for ~~Association~~ AOC business travel. The lowest available airfare is determined by comparison with alternate fares using the following guidelines:

- Like service to like service, i.e., non-stop to non-stop; direct to direct; connection to connection.
- No comparison of the costs of travel to alternate airports is required.
- No comparison is required against fares more than one hour prior to or after the desired departure time or desired arrival time.

Any fares booked which are higher than the lowest available airfare offered must be documented, justified, and approved by ~~the appropriate travel approval authority~~ your supervisor or the Executive Director. Additional discounts may be achieved but are not required by booking direct flights, i.e., one stop, no change of plane, connecting flights, or use of alternate airports. In any of these instances, the alternative selected must be compared with the other available fares with like service, or to an alternate airport.

When booking airline reservations, the AOC will not reimburse travelers for airline travel insurance unless approved by the Executive Director in writing prior to travel reservations. In general, the AOC will not reimburse travel insurance except for extenuating circumstances such as a world-wide crisis.

The table below sets forth acceptable reasons for booking an airfare above the lowest available airfare

No.	Reason	Description
1	Circuitous routing	Domestic flights that require connections or direct flights with intervening stops.
2	Travel during unreasonable hours	See the definitions section of this OpMan for times.

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3	Excessively prolonged travel	Excessive connection times, use of propeller planes.
4	Increased cost offsetting savings	The value of employee's time is taken into consideration.
5	Medical exception	Must have a medical exception as specified in this OpMan.

All Association travelers must use commercial air coach accommodations for travel except for the following: Less than business class accommodations are not reasonably adequate for the physical or medical needs of the employee. When properly documented on the expense report, the premium portion for such tickets is to be considered allowed costs.

13. MEDICAL EXCEPTIONS: All medical exceptions for air travel must be renewed annually and approved by the Executive Director, President or Treasurer and a licensed medical professional. Medical exceptions must note condition and duration of expected medical exception. These exception letters must be filed with the Association Executive Director. Travelers with properly approved medical conditions or physical disabilities may fly business class for both domestic and international travel. If business class is not available, first class is approved.

14. TRAVEL TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES: Travelers should consider not traveling to countries for which a travel advisory has been issued by the US Department of State.

15. SPOUSE TRAVEL: The AOC will not reimburse expenses of spouses or significant others accompanying employees on business trips.

16. LODGING: Lodging expenses are reimbursed at actual costs up to limitations prescribed by the U. S. Joint Travel Regulations at <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/> or for foreign locations US Department of State at https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp. Exceptions to stay at an over per diem hotel must be pre-approved by the appropriate travel approval authority. Exceptions may be made in circumstances such as stays at hotels hosting AOC events where the AOC negotiated rate exceeds the JTR rate. (e.g., Conferences, Conventions, and Courses). Travelers are responsible for any no-show billings and any penalty charges assessed when an unused reservation is not cancelled. Any exceptions to these cancellation requirements must be approved by the appropriate travel approval authority.

The travelers lodging in a non-commercial establishment or staying with a friend or relative are not reimbursed for lodging or un-receipted lodging expenses.

17. RENTAL CARS: When the use of a rental car is determined to be in the best interest of the Association, reimbursement is limited to the cost of:

- A. The class of rental car required to conduct business.
- B. Refueling the rental car as required to conduct business.
- C. Any toll roads.

The Association standard is a full-size car, accommodating up to three travelers. For four or more travelers sharing one vehicle, premium cars or minivans may be booked and require no separate authorization. Upgrades to luxury or sport utility vehicles require authorization from the appropriate travel approval authority.

- A. The Credit Card provided to employees provides necessary insurance coverage. Personal Effects Insurance is not covered and is not a reimbursable expense. Any additional insurance coverage beyond liability and collision, such as Personal Effects Insurance, is at the traveler's discretion and is not reimbursable by the Association.
- B. All fines for traffic or parking violations are the sole responsibility of the traveler and are not reimbursed by the Association.

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- C. The expense associated with GPS devices are the sole responsibility of the traveler and are not reimbursed by the Association.
- D. Safe driving practices must be observed at all times. All incidents of the traveler being cited for driving under the influence of alcohol and/or a controlled substance while operating a rental car on Association business are the sole responsibility of the driver. Employees cited for these offenses are subject to discipline in accordance with the provisions in the Employee Handbook.
- E. All costs and any associated fees assessed for smoking in the rental car are the sole responsibility of the traveler.
- F. Travelers are encouraged to refill the rental car gas tanks prior to returning the car to ensure additional fees are not charged by the rental company. Remember to keep your receipt.

18. BUSINESS MEALS: A business meal (by this definition) is a meal expense incurred at an event other than "Travel Associated Meals" normally occurring at an official Board meeting (Paragraph 20 below). For meal costs associated with association meetings to be reimbursable, the business meal must be approved in advance by the appropriate approval authority. Costs must be reasonable and should be guided by prevailing M&IE per diem rates as stipulated by the U. S. Joint Travel Regulations at <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/> or for foreign locations US Department of State at https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp. To be eligible for reimbursement of these costs, the following must be included:

- A. Clear and concise purpose for the meeting.
- B. Location and date of the meeting.
- C. Full names, association, and relationship of all attendees.
 - 1. Meals for Association employees cannot be expensed as a business meeting meal when a third party is not present.
- D. Itemized Receipt. All alcohol costs including associated tax and tip must be segregated.
 - 1. The charge card receipt with only the total is not adequate supporting documentation.
 - 2. Each traveler is responsible for paying and expensing their own meals to ensure proper calculation of expenses.

19. STAFF WORKING MEALS: -When it is in the best interest of the Association staff to continue working through a meal time, management may elect to have a meal delivered. The business purpose and itemized receipt must be included as supporting documentation to the reimbursement request.

An all-hands event may be held and meals provided. For meal costs to be reimbursed, the meal must be delivered, and an agenda of the items discussed, and an itemized receipt must be included as supporting documentation to the reimbursement request.

A meal may be provided by management to recognize a major event, accomplishment, or milestone. There must be an agenda or award presented and the meal may be brought on-premises or dined out. For the meal to be reimbursed, the agenda or list of those receiving awards, the names of all attendees and an itemized receipt must be included as supporting documentation.

A supervisor may award an employee with a meal for a job well done with no specific event mentioned. An itemized receipt must be provided as supporting documentation.

In all cases, costs must be reasonable and should be guided by prevailing M&IE per diem rates as stipulated by the U. S. Joint Travel Regulations <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/> or for foreign locations US Department of State at https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp.

20. TRAVEL ASSOCIATED MEALS: -Travel associated meal expenses (by this definition) are normally incurred at an official Board meeting. While on business travel, travelers are reimbursed for meals expenses in accordance with the applicable per diem rate for the travel location. Per Diem rates are

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established by the U.S Joint Travel Regulations at <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/> or for foreign locations US Department of State at https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp.

Travelers are expected to use the partial M&IE rates and deduct the appropriate amount(s) from the overall M&IE rate for any meal(s) provided at no cost to the employee. The General Services Administration (GSA) provides M&IE breakdown of breakfast, lunch and dinner at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101518> and the U.S. Department of State at https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp - See Appendix B “Allocation of M&IE Rates to Be Used in Making Deductions from the M&IE Allowance.”

The traveler may receive reimbursement of actual cost in excess of M&IE per diem rate with prior approval by the Executive Director. Note: The traveler must indicate the reason in the appropriate field of the expense report and attach written approval.

21. LOCAL TRAVEL: Local travel reimbursement is limited to the following:

- A. Mileage
- B. Parking
- C. Tolls
- D. Conference fees
- E. Meals at per diem rates

22. SINGLE DAY BUSINESS TRIP: Single day business trip reimbursement is limited to the following:

- A. Transportation costs
- B. Car rental expenses
- C. Mileage
- D. Tolls
- E. Conference fees
- F. Meals at per diem rates

23. TRAPPED WEEKEND: A trapped weekend is a weekend between two approved destinations. In some cases, utilizing a trapped weekend is more cost effective than returning to their home destination only to travel to the second destination. Any traveler meeting this criteria should submit a cost analysis in advance for approval. Reimbursement for business conducted on a trapped weekend must be justified in writing and submitted with the expense report. Justification must demonstrate that the actual and reasonable costs of the trapped weekend are less than flying the employee home and back again. Costs incurred per day, including Saturday and Sunday, cannot exceed the cost per day for the business portion of the trip. Recreation, entertainment, and other personal expenses are not reimbursable.

24. NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES: Expenses that are not reimbursable include, and are not limited to the following:

- A. Alcoholic beverages, except in accordance with authorized business/conference/entertainment policies.
 - 1. Reimbursement is permissible when associated with approved Business Meals (Paragraph 18 above).
 - 2. Reimbursement is not allowed when associated with “Staff Working Meals” (Paragraph 19 above)
 - 3. Reimbursement is not allowed as a separate line item under “Travel Associated Meals” which provides only per diem.
- B. Airfare cost incurred over lowest available due to traveler preference.
- C. Minibars
- D. In-room movies and other recreational, non-business activities

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- E. Airline club memberships
- F. Airline headsets for movies
- G. Child/animal care
- H. Toiletries and other personal items
- I. Fitness center access fees
- J. GPS units
- K. Other personal expenses

25. LAUNDRY AND DRY CLEANING: Laundry and dry-cleaning costs are reimbursed at actual and reasonable after the fifth day of travel for domestic travel. Exceptions to the fifth-day rule are for a business trip of less than five days that is unexpectedly extended or clothing that is soiled by either on-the-job requirements or an unusual occurrence. Either situation must be explained on the expense report. Laundry and dry-cleaning costs are reimbursed at actual and reasonable after the fifth day of international travel.

Commented [AR6]: We are expanding our footprint outside of CONUS. Suggest including international travel.

26. LUGGAGE FEES: Reasonable baggage fees are allowable and reimbursable.

27. PARKING: Travelers on approved business travel are reimbursed for actual and reasonable expenses for parking. Lower rate parking accommodations located outside the main airport property are encouraged.

28. TELEPHONE AND INTERNET CHARGES: -In general, the AOC will not reimburse phone or internet charges. In some cases, with prior approval, the AOC is willing to reimburse the temporary activation of an international calling plan which lasts the duration of the AOC-sponsored trip. There may be times when the traveler will require internet to conduct AOC business. In this case, with prior approval, the AOC can authorize the reimbursement of the internet charges.

29. PRIVATE VEHICLE: When an employee elects to travel to the business destination by private vehicle or rental car for personal convenience in order to conduct Association business, reimbursement cannot exceed the expenses that would have been incurred had the employee traveled via the lowest price airfare. It is understood the mileage allowance paid by the Association constitutes full compensation for all costs, e.g., gasoline, maintenance, depreciation, insurance, operation, and all other expenses associated with private vehicle use.

30. OTHER MODES OF TRANSPORTATION: When an employee elects to travel to the business destination by train, bus, or other surface transportation, the cost paid for reserve seating may not exceed the cost of the lowest non-refundable coach airfare available at the time of booking.

31. TRAVEL TO & FROM AIRPORTS: Transportation to/from airports should be done in an economical and practical manner. Employees are reimbursed for actual and reasonable expenses. The mileage reimbursement for employees using their own cars is at the prevailing IRS mileage rate. Use of shuttles is encouraged when the cost is less than the cost of airport or terminal parking.

32. EXPENSE REPORTS: Employees should submit expense reports using the form at the end of this OpMan accompanied by necessary original receipts as specified in the Required Documentation table below, and detailed descriptions sufficient to document expenses as business expenses, within 30 days of trip return (scanned expense reports, receipts and electronic submission of vouchers are acceptable). Requests for reimbursement of business expenses shall include supporting documentation adequate to demonstrate that the costs claimed were incurred. Exceptions must have a justification and written management approval attached to the expense report.

The final itinerary is required for all business travel, unless a waiver has been secured.

33. REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION: The table below sets forth required documentation to be submitted for each expense type, regardless of amount and excess airfare above the lowest available airfare. Receipts must be submitted for every expenditure, regardless of amount. Original, photocopied, or electronic receipts are acceptable. Credit card receipts or credit card statements alone are insufficient for reimbursement. In lieu of providing a detailed receipt (in case of a lost receipt), a detailed summary of the expense may be submitted.

Expense Type	Required Documentation
Airfare	Itinerary containing the ticket number and invoice price, excluding disclaimer page.
Amtrak or other rail	Ticket stub with price.
Business meals	Itemized receipt. Alcohol must be identified and is not reimbursed. Name and location of the restaurant, list of attendees who participated in the meal, date, and total cost of the meal.
Car rental	Detailed vendor receipt, including rental agreement number and rate information. This may be an electronic or paper receipt.
Lodging	Detailed lodging receipt must have the following: Name and location of the hotel, date(s) stayed, room rate. Tax broken out separately.
Conferences and training	Proof of payment and invoice or registration.
Entertainment and alcohol	Detailed receipt. Alcohol must be identified. Name and location of the restaurant, list of attendees who participated in the meal, date, and total cost of the meal.
Excess airfare above lowest available fare	Justification shall be submitted with the expense report to document and justify the airfare costs above the lowest available airfare.
Internet access	Detailed receipt.
Non-travel expenses	Detailed receipt.
Trade show-related costs	Detailed receipt.
Travel associated meals – per diem	Indicate on expense form using prevailing daily rate. Also, deduct any meal expense(s) that were provided or paid by others.

AOC Expense Report

Name:			Title:			Date:		
Address:								
Purpose of trip:					Dates of Trip:		to	
Nature of expense if other than travel:								

TRANSPORTATION		DATE	METHOD OF TRAVEL	COST
From:				\$ -
To:				\$ -
To:				\$ -
To:				\$ -
To:				\$ -
Total Cost:				\$ -

Daily Expenses	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
Local Transport	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Lodging	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Parking	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Porters/Tips	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Rental Car	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
POV	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Per Diem	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Telephone	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Daily Totals	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

POV Travel	Reason for Travel:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N		
Total Miles	IRS Rate	Amount Claimed - POV
0	0.555	\$0.00
Total POV Expense:		\$ -
Non-Travel Expense:	Total Non-Travel Expense: \$ -	
Nature of Expense:		
Justification of Expense:		
Date of Expense:	Total Expenses: \$ -	
Accounting Data		Expenses Advanced: \$ -
Line Item	Amount	
	\$ -	Total to be Reimbursed: \$ -
	\$ -	
	\$ -	
	\$ -	
	\$ -	
	\$ -	
Total	\$ -	Signature: _____

Department Head	
Deputy Director	
Executive Director	