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Chapter 11 – Travel Policy

11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and specific procedures with regard to incurring and reporting authorized travel expenses for employees and officials incurred in the conduct of State business.

This policy is an “Accountable Plan” for IRS purposes, and as such, employee reimbursements are not reported as pay. “Accountable Plans” require per diem rates be “similar in form to and not more than the federal rate”. The federal rates are established by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) each year for the period October 1 to September 30. This policy requires Organizations/travelers to use the GSA rates effective during the period of travel.

Each Organization’s management is responsible for control over and approval of travel-related expenditures. Organizations’ internal controls must include policies covering the designation of approving authorities for travel expenditures.

11.1.2 Scope

This policy does not cover every possible situation, but it establishes adequate parameters for employees and officials to make appropriate judgments about the expenditure of State funds. Organizations should always consider alternatives to travel prior to approving travel requests. Other options to travel include, but are not limited to, teleconferencing, video conferencing, and webinars.

This policy applies to all State employees, Organizations, boards, commissions and others, except as excluded below, who are engaged in authorized travel and who expend State funds for travel purposes. Although the following Organizations are excluded, it is highly recommended that this policy be adopted.

Exclusions:

- Legislative Branch
- Judicial Branch
- School Districts (inclusive of charter schools)

This policy includes the terms “must” and “should”. “Must” requires the Organizations to adhere to the specific policy cited. “Should” establishes the recommended policy

Organizations are expected to follow, unless reasonable documentation is provided for following an alternative policy.

11.1.3 Travel Authorization

All out-of-state travel that extends beyond one day must be approved by the designated Organization approval authority. All requests must be made on the Travel Authorization Form ([AP006](#)). A copy of the conference or meeting program should be attached to the form. The authorization form must be submitted to the Organization approval authority prior to the traveling day in compliance with Organization requirements.

International travel must be approved by the designated Organization approval authority through requests on the Travel Authorization Form (AP006). Policies specific to international travel are included for air travel, lodging, meals and incidental expenses, and miscellaneous expenses in the related sections within this policy.

11.1.4 Travel Management Company

The State has contracted with a travel management company for booking transportation, other than rental cars, and lodging services. All Organizations must use this booking system unless one of the following exceptions is met:

1. Travel is completely paid by an agency outside of the State that requires booking of travel reservations through their designated sources.
2. The employee is attending an event or conference that provides ‘no cost’ travel reservation services, and where the sponsoring entity pays all travel expenses; either through direct billing or via post travel reimbursement to the State.
3. The employee is attending a conference that provides lodging rates at or below the cost of the travel management company or the location of the travel management company’s lodging results in additional local transportation costs.
4. The employee is traveling to assist with natural disasters and/or requires an extended stay facility with limited offerings by the travel management company in the location needed.

11.1.5 PCard

1. The method of payment for travel expenses is the PCard. The PCard must not be used for personal or unauthorized purposes; it is to be used for State personnel authorized expenses only. Employees may not use the PCard to charge expenses for others (including family members) not on official State business, even with the intent to reimburse the State. Contractors should follow Statewide and Organization-specific policies when making payment for a reimbursable travel expenditure. The PCard may not be used for cash withdrawal. See **Chapter 12 – PCard**, for additional guidance on the PCard program.

Employees should obtain a receipt for all transactions and are required to obtain an **itemized receipt** for all transactions over \$10.00 unless exempted under the Travel Per Diem exceptions. The receipt must be legible, itemized (reflecting the good or service purchased), and contain the vendor name, date of purchase, and price of each item. A receipt description, which only states “Miscellaneous” or “Merchandise”, or only includes a vendor’s stock or item number, is not acceptable. Receipt documentation may be paper or electronic. The Uniform Electronic Transaction Act (UETA) (**6 Del. C. Chapter 12A**) permits copies of receipts, electronic documentation includes pictures of receipts taken with a smartphone or other electronic device.

Under extenuating circumstances, the employee may be unable to obtain an itemized receipt over \$10.00. In this case, the employee must complete an Affidavit for Missing and Non-Itemized Receipts ([AP005](#)). The employee must provide a detailed explanation as to why an itemized receipt is not available. The affidavit must be approved and signed by the employee’s immediate Supervisor and Division Director if \$40.00 or less and the Cabinet Secretary when over \$40.00 but not exceeding \$100.00. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Division of Accounting (DOA) approval is only required for transactions exceeding \$100.00 (see the Affidavit for Missing and Non-Itemized Receipts Flowchart ([Exhibit A](#))). When required, the affidavit must be submitted to OMB within 30 days of the transaction to be considered for reimbursement. If the Affidavit for Missing and Non-Itemized Receipts is not submitted as required, reimbursement is expected within 45 days from the transaction date.

All travel documentation must be provided to the Organization’s Reconciler **within seven business days** after the completion of travel, including all itemized receipts, the Travel Authorization Form ([AP006](#)), and a reconciliation of the estimated versus actual expenses. This action is required in order to document the expenses of the trip. The Travel Reconciliation Form ([AP009](#)) is provided as a tool for Organizations; however, Organizations may choose to use another form of reconciliation.

NOTE: The PCard must not be used for personal or unauthorized purposes. In the event an unauthorized transaction occurs, the employee must submit reimbursement within 30 days of the transaction. A copy of the check, deposit slip, and supporting detail should be filed with the traveler’s paperwork in case of an audit.

2. There are times when a cardholder is reimbursed for travel from an external/member organization. In these cases, the cardholder is responsible for notifying the coordinator and documenting on the Travel Authorization Form that the reimbursement will be requested. When the reimbursement is received, it should be credited against the expenditures incurred for that specific trip. A copy of the check and deposit slip should be filed with the traveler’s paperwork in case of an audit. For more information on processing refunds/reimbursements to the State, Organizations should refer to **Chapter 9 – Receipt of Funds, Section 9.3.4 Refunds to the State.**

3. In certain situations, a traveler utilizing the State's PCard may rely on an administrative liaison to transact and manage travel arrangements. Typically, such relationships are limited to Organization Heads and other officials who are assigned administrative support. If a traveler needs another individual to make travel arrangements on their behalf utilizing the State's credit card, the delegation of responsibility must be memorialized through the proxy process in the JPMorgan Chase (JPMC) PaymentNet system via DOA. Once assigned the role of proxy, delegates have the ability to perform certain functions on behalf of the traveling cardholder such as activate a card, authorize card transactions, and report a card lost or stolen. All proxies must meet the same policy requirements established for becoming a cardholder and must adhere to the same policies and procedures as a cardholder. See **Chapter 12 – PCard** for more information regarding the PCard program.

Only one proxy may be assigned to a cardholder. To assign a proxy, the PCard Proxy Request Form ([PO004](#)) must be completed and submitted to DOA.

11.1.6 Cancellation

When changes in travel require cancellation or revision of carrier tickets, car rental, or lodging arrangements, the employee must notify the travel coordinator and/or the manager approving travel as soon as possible so the necessary changes can be made. State funds should not be expended to pay for unused reservations unless the State Organization is satisfied that failure to cancel or use the reservation was unavoidable. An explanation for the cancellation should be documented and maintained at the Organization. The travel management company allows the Organization to receive a credit to be used for future travel of any employee.

11.2 Transportation: Common Carrier

11.2.1 General

All trips requiring the use of common carrier must have prior approval by the appropriate authority within the Organization.

The mode of travel must be the method most advantageous to the State. Organizations should consider total cost, the most economical use of time of the personnel involved and the requirements of the trip.

The standard for common carrier travel is coach fare. Common carrier should be booked at the lowest available fare consistent with reasonable business travel planning through the travel management company.

Travelers should make travel reservations as far in advance as possible to attain the lowest fares, including non-refundable tickets. Travelers must not specify particular airlines or other

carriers to accumulate mileage on promotional plans, such as frequent flyer programs for personal gain.

Travelers should purchase tickets in advance of travel to take advantage of special discount rates, or other savings that will accrue to the State.

Note: The travel management company will issue a credit for cancellation of a flight.

Baggage charges assessed by airlines are reimbursable to the traveler if and only if the charges are directly related to the work mission. The employee is limited to one checked bag. The need for additional bags must be preapproved by the manager approving travel.

State funds must not be expended to pay for priority boarding or preferred seating unless it is deemed medically necessary. Preferred seating may be approved if it is the only seating available or the cost of the preferred seating is less than taking a different flight. Documentation must be provided to the travel coordinator and/or the manager approving travel, prior to booking, for approval of preferred seating.

Organizations are encouraged to examine the advantage of fares requiring early trip departure or delayed return. The additional cost of meals and lodging for the required extra day(s) stay must be considered when comparing cost.

11.2.2 Air Travel

1. Accommodations

When commercial airlines are used as a mode of travel, accommodations should be coach/economy class, unless some other class is more economical. Airline travel must be booked through the travel management company unless an exception in Section 11.1.4 is met.

2. Routing of Travel

All travel must be by the most economical and direct routes. If a person travels by an indirect route for personal convenience, the extra expense must be the responsibility of the individual. Reimbursement for expenses must be based only on the cost of the most economical and direct route.

3. International Travel

Accommodations for international airline travel may be other than coach/economy class when: the origin or destination is outside of North America; the scheduled flight time, including non-overnight stopovers and change of planes, is in excess of 14 hours; and the employee is required to report for business duty within 24 hours of arrival at the destination.

11.2.3 Rail Travel

1. Accommodations

When rail travel is the most appropriate mode of transportation, the most economical class accommodations should be used. Rail travel must be booked through the travel management company unless an exception in Section 11.1.4 is met.

2. Routing of Travel

All travel should be by the most economical and direct routes. If a person travels by an indirect route for personal convenience, the extra expense must be the responsibility of the individual. Reimbursement for expenses must be based only on the cost of the most economical and direct route.

11.3 Transportation: Passenger Vehicles

11.3.1 State-Owned Vehicles

State-owned vehicles should be used for out-of-state travel when such use is the most practical and economical mode of transportation, including the cost of tolls, fuel, and parking.

11.3.2 Privately-Owned Vehicles

1. The use of privately-owned vehicles for out-of-state travel should require prior approval of the appropriate Organization authority. Reimbursement of private vehicle expenses is at the rate prescribed by **Delaware Code, Title 29, §7102**, and only for actual and necessary miles traveled.

In considering approval, the approval authority should take into consideration the cost of alternative modes of travel and the cost of meals and lodging for the additional travel/transit days.

2. When two or more employees travel in a privately-owned vehicle, only one mileage reimbursement will be approved.
3. Vehicles from Fleet Services should be used for in-state travel; therefore, reimbursement for use of privately-owned vehicles for in-state travel is discouraged. Organizations may allow exceptions to this policy, but in no case should the total amount reimbursed for in-state mileage to an individual on a single day exceed the Fleet Services daily discounted rental rate for a compact sedan. Board and Commission members are excluded from this provision.

11.3.3 Rental Cars

1. General

The use of a rental car when traveling out-of-state must be justified as an economical need and not as a matter of personal convenience. All rentals should be at the most economical rate per day, including government rates. When traveling in groups, the sharing of vehicles, when practical, should be done to minimize costs.

To ensure the most cost-effective rates are available, all approved rental car arrangements must be made in accordance with the Statewide Contract.

2. Vehicle Size

Whenever possible, compact cars should be rented or reserved. However, if a larger size vehicle is more economical or more than two travelers are traveling together, the larger vehicle may be appropriate.

3. Insurance

The PCard should be used to pay for rental cars. Use of the PCard provides collision and theft coverage from the card provider. To activate the coverage, the rental transaction must be completed with the PCard and any Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) coverage, which is offered by the car rental company, must be declined. Reimbursements for additional or optional insurance coverage will not be approved.

4. Refueling Before Return

To avoid a refueling surcharge, all rental cars must be refueled before returning the vehicle to the rental company. Any surcharges billed to the employee or State must be explained on the reimbursement request.

11.4 Per Diem Expenses

11.4.1 General

1. Expenses should be based on actual expense method.
2. Per Diem Rates
 - a. Organizations will use the rates established by the GSA for locations within the United States and by the U.S. Department of State for foreign areas. The per diem for a location is a combination of a lodging allowance, meals allowance and incidental expense allowance.
 - b. Within the United States, a standard rate is published each year and covers all locations.
 - c. All per diem rates can be found at:

- (1) United States - <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem>
 - Rates are set each Federal Fiscal Year - October 1 to September 30. (See [Exhibit B](#) for an example of GSA website tables and how to calculate the maximum per diem rate and the rate for the first and last day of travel.)
 - The GSA Max lodging by Month rate may fluctuate throughout the year for certain cities/regions. The traveler must use the rate for the month in which travel will occur.
- (2) Foreign Areas -
https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&menu_id=78
Rates are set monthly.

11.4.2 Lodging and Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE)

1. Lodging

- a. Lodging costs are authorized when approved official travel is out-of-state, more than 12 hours, and overnight lodging is required. Lodging must be booked through the travel management company unless an exception in Section 11.1.4 is met.
- b. Lodging accommodations are priced for single occupancy rooms.
- c. Accommodations shared with family members or others not on official State business are reimbursable at the single occupancy rate only.
- d. Accommodations shared with other State travelers should be billed and reimbursed to one traveler. When required, reimbursements to more than one traveler should be based on a pro rata share as reported on each reimbursement request.
- e. Organizations have the authority to approve lodging expenses up to 150 percent of the locality lodging per diem rate. Lodging costs over 150 percent up to 200 percent of the per diem rate requires prior approval from the Cabinet Secretary/Organization Head; lodging costs exceeding 200 percent of the per diem rate requires prior approval from OMB and DOA. ([Exhibit C](#) to this policy provides a template for requests that exceed 150 percent of GSA rate.)
- f. Conference Lodging Arrangements

When hotel rooms are blocked for a conference, seminar, etc., and a special discounted conference hotel rate is provided, the employee should inform the individual making the reservations. The person making the reservations should

then attempt to obtain the conference rate, government rate or lower rate, for the traveler. If a lower rate is not available, the normal reservation procedure should be used.

2. Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE)

- a. The M&IE should be based on the total trip allowance rather than a per day or per meal allowance.
- b. The reimbursement for M&IE is not to exceed the standard locality M&IE rate. To qualify for more than the standard locality rate, it requires prior approval from OMB and DOA.
- c. All expenses, including each individual meal, must be itemized separately. When utilizing the PCard, receipts are not required. All receipts for meals over \$10.00 are required when submitting for personal reimbursement.
- d. M&IE are authorized when approved official travel is out-of-state, more than six hours or overnight lodging is required.
- e. M&IE include:
 - (1) Meals (**food, beverage, tax, and tips**). Tips should be reasonable and customary.
 - (2) Incidental Expenses (**fees and tips given to hotel service staff, baggage carriers, etc.**). **The allowance for incidental expenses cannot be used to purchase personal items.**
 - (3) M&IE are not to exceed the location rate, as shown in the following table:

When travel is:		The allowance is:
More than 6 but less than 24 hours		75 percent of the applicable M&IE rate.
24 hours or more, on	Day of departure	75 percent of the applicable M&IE rate.
	Full days of travel	100 percent of the applicable M&IE rate.
	Last day of travel	75 percent of the applicable M&IE rate.

f. Reduced M&IE

If an Organization knows in advance a meal is to be provided without cost to the employee, e.g., included in a conference fee; then a reduction to the daily per diem will be made for the appropriate meal as shown in the following table:

% Reduction to the location rate rounded to the nearest whole dollar	
Breakfast	20%
Lunch	24%
Dinner	50%

NOTE: The remaining 6% is related to incidental expenses.

11.4.3 Miscellaneous Expenses Authorized to Be Claimed

Authorized expenses include:

- a. Ground transportation, including airport shuttle, taxi (excluding premium car service) or public transit.
- b. Hotel/airport parking and tolls for turnpike, bridges and/or ferries.
- c. Business-related telephone calls.
- d. International cellular phone service – reimbursement for the most cost-effective available plan for the duration of the trip
- e. Business related use of miscellaneous services.

Miscellaneous services include, but are not limited to, the use of hotel computers, printers, or data services. Use of such services must be preapproved by the manager approving travel. Services must be deemed necessary for the employee to perform required job-related functions.

- f. Gasoline, Electric charging and/or Other Supplies
 - (1) When State-owned vehicles are used, the Fleet Services fuel access card is the first method of payment. If the traveler is in a location where the Fleet Services fuel access card is not accepted, the expense is reimbursable, and the PCard may be used. All in-state purchases of gasoline require use of the Fleet Services fuel access card.
 - (2) Emergency repairs incidental to using a State-owned vehicle.
- g. Multiple Employee Meal Expense

When multiple employees are having a meal together and more than one meal is being reimbursed, the names of the additional individuals are to be submitted on a schedule itemizing the cost of each individual's meal. Individuals on per diem should have the meal cost deducted from the individual per diem rate.

- h. For international or extended travel, other incidental expenses including laundry or personal items as determined necessary and essential by the Organization.

Unallowable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- a. Alcoholic beverages.
- b. Entertainment, not included in the cost of the conference.
- c. Other expenses noted in **Chapter 7 – Purchasing and Disbursements, Section 7.2.2.**

11.4.4 In-State Travel

1. Lodging

The policy for in-State assignments requiring overnight lodging is established by the Organization. As a general rule, in-State lodging is not encouraged; however, there may be instances when it is deemed appropriate and cost effective. In such instances, in-State lodging must be preapproved by the Organization Head.

2. Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE)

The meal allowance for in-State assignments requiring overnight lodging is established by the Organization and must be preapproved by the Organization Head. As a general rule, such allowances are not encouraged, but may be approved on a case-by-case basis, as long as the amount does not exceed the GSA rate.

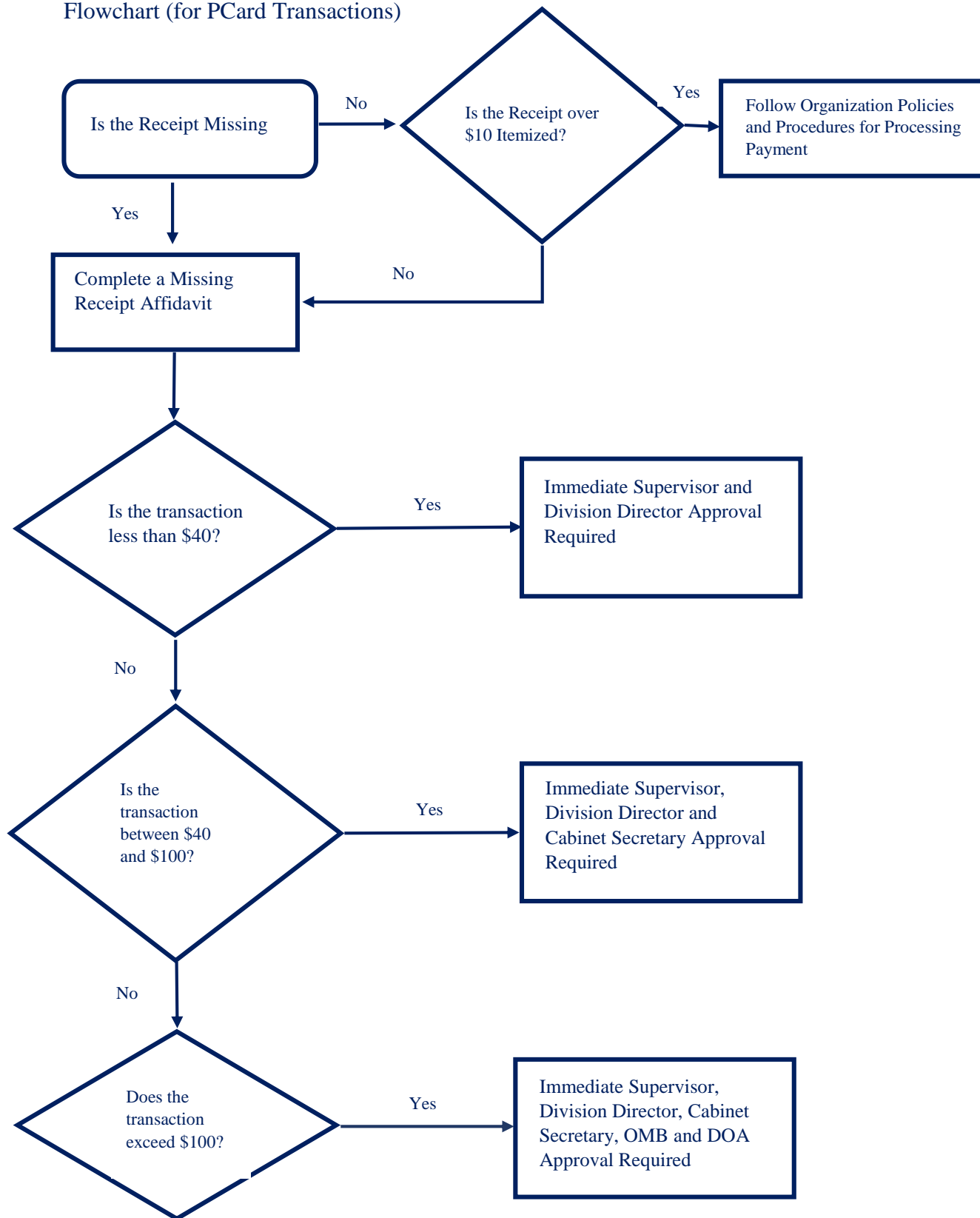
11.5 Travel Expense Reimbursement

Travel advances are prohibited. Payment for all travel-related, approved expenses should be made using the PCard. However, in cases where this option is not possible:

- All requests for travel expense reimbursements should be submitted on the Personal Expense Reimbursement (PE) Form ([AP003](#)). This form and supporting documentation, including required itemized receipts, should be submitted to the appropriate Organization authority **within seven business days** after the completion of travel. An **itemized receipt must be obtained** as proof of purchase for all purchases exceeding \$10.00. The receipt must be legible, itemized (reflecting the good or service purchased), and contain the vendor name, date of purchase, and price of each item. A receipt description, which only states “Miscellaneous” or “Merchandise” or only includes a vendor’s stock or item number, is not acceptable. Receipt documentation may be paper or electronic (including pictures of receipts taken with a smartphone or other electronic device).

- Reimbursements for travel expenses incurred without required receipts, as outlined, is strictly prohibited. A "no receipt - no reimbursement" policy applies. Under extenuating circumstances, the employee may be unable to obtain an itemized receipt. In this case, the employee must complete an Affidavit for Missing and Non-Itemized Receipts ([AP005](#)). See 11.1.4 for signature requirements. If an employee uses this form, it must be attached to the Personal Expense Reimbursement Form ([AP003](#)).
- Receipts may not be customary for certain transactions (e.g., tips given to hotel service staff, baggage carriers, etc.). Organizations must use the Miscellaneous Non-Receipt Transaction Form ([AP007](#)) to support such transactions.
- Organization fiscal personnel assigning or receiving account coding of travel expenses should ensure that Travel account codes are used in preparing the Personal Expense Reimbursement.

**Affidavit for Missing and Non-Itemized Receipts
Flowchart (for PCard Transactions)**



NOTE: All transactions are subject to workflow approvals in the State’s financial management and accounting system. Follow the Organization’s document processing and record retention guidelines for ALL Affidavits for Missing and Non-Itemized Receipts.

EXAMPLE OF GSA PER DIEM RATES

Rates are set each Federal Fiscal Year for the period October 1 to September 30
 (See GSA website for all current rates)

NOTE: If neither the city nor the county is listed on the internet site tables, the Standard Rate is applied.

Below is an **example** of the GSA per diem table. For actual rates, visit <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem>. As shown for City C, the GSA Max lodging by Month rate may fluctuate throughout the year for certain cities/regions. The traveler must be sure to use the rate for the month in which travel will occur.

Primary Destination	County	Max lodging by Month (excluding taxes)												Meals & Inc. Exp.	
		Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep		
Standard Rate	Applies for all locations without specified rates	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	46
City A	County A	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	71
City B	County B	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	61
City C	County C	105	105	105	160	160	160	112	112	98	98	98	98	98	56
City D	County D	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	66

Below is an **example** of how to calculate the maximum per diem rate and the rate for the first and last day of travel. The Max Lodging and M&IE Rates are obtained from the table above, based on travel occurring in April.

Primary Destination (1)	County (2, 3)	Max Lodging (exc. taxes)	+	M&IE Rate	=	Max Per Diem Rate (4)	First & Last Day (75% of M&IE)
Standard Rate (see GSA site for current rates)	Applies for all locations without specified rates	83		46		129	\$34.50
City A	County A	121		71		192	\$53.25
City B	County B	92		61		153	\$45.75
City C	County C	112		56		168	\$42.00
City D	County D	100		66		166	\$49.50

Example of Lodging/Travel Request Exceeding Established Threshold Limit of 150%

- I. Reason to Exceed
 - Brief description of the travel required, why the need to exceed the prescribed threshold is warranted and why travel is essential.
- II. Support or Detail
 - Please Separate details between lodging and meals/incidentals. Do not include taxes in your rate calculation.
 - GSA Rate
 - GSA Rate x 150% (Cabinet Level) GSA Rate x 200% (OMB and DOA approval)
 - GSA Rate x **Actual % rate**
- III. Manager Approval
 - Please have manager approves on request prior to submission for OMB and DOA approval. This approval can be in the form of an e-mail as long as it clearly references the travel request and plainly grants approval.
- IV. Funding
 - GF, ASF, NSF, Federal
- V. Process Request Path
 - Submit requests for lodging exceeding 150% and up to 200% of the per diem rate to the Cabinet Secretary/Organization Head.
 - Submit requests for lodging exceeding 200% of the per diem rate to Cali Engelsiepen, OMB at Cali.Engelsiepen@delaware.gov