

VA Financial Policies and Procedures
Local Travel

CHAPTER 7

0701 OVERVIEW	2
0701 OVERVIEW	2
0702 POLICIES	2
0703 AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES	4
0704 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	5
0705 PROCEDURES	5
0706 DEFINITIONS.....	11
0707 RESCISSIONS.....	13
0708 QUESTIONS	13
0709 REVISIONS.....	13
APPENDIX A: LOCAL TRAVEL EXAMPLES.....	15
APPENDIX B: VA FORM 3079.....	19
APPENDIX C: VA FORM 4530.....	20
APPENDIX D: PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING APPROVAL FOR PER DIEM IN THE LOCAL AREA.....	21
APPENDIX E: SF FORM 1164	25

0701 OVERVIEW

This chapter establishes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) financial policies and procedures regarding local travel. Local travel at the official station includes official travel within the vicinity of the official duty station; specifically within 50 miles of an employee's residence (known as the 50-Mile Rule) or the geographic boundaries as defined by the station. Local travel will generally not include lodging, M&IE (meals and incidental expenses) or expenses incurred for rental of a vehicle to conduct authorized official business, unless authorized as outlined in this chapter.

The Federal Travel Regulation (FTR), as prescribed under 41 C.F.R. Chapters 300-304, delegates authority to agencies to define a local radius for official business travel either at or in the vicinity of the official duty station within which per diem will not be allowed. Established mileage radii must be uniform for overtime in accordance with 29 U.S.C. 201, *Fair Labor Standards Act*, and travel allowance purposes in accordance with 5 C.F.R. 550.112, *Computation of Overtime Work*. More information regarding overtime compensation can be found in Volume XV, *Payroll*.

Union master agreements may alter the application of certain agency travel policy provisions. However, Union master agreements cannot conflict with the FTR. The FTR is the final governing regulation for all Federal employees.

0702 POLICIES

070201 AUTHORITY FOR LOCAL TRAVEL.

A. VA employees are required to commute to and from their official station at their own expense. When an employee performs official duty at an alternate duty site within the geographic boundaries as defined by the station or within 50 miles of their residence, reimbursement for transportation expenses will be limited to those expenses in excess of the normal daily commute.

Local travel is defined as travel within the local radius of the official station **AND** travel within the 50-mile radius of the employee's residence. For example, a VACO employee has training in Baltimore. Baltimore is outside the local radius for VACO employees; however, the employee lives 25 miles from Baltimore. Travel to Baltimore for this employee would be considered local travel, and the employee would not be entitled to per diem expenses.

Where an employee's regularly scheduled duties involve assignments to which he or she commutes daily from his/her official station or residence, the travel is no different than travel required of an employee in reporting to his/her permanent duty station (52 Comp. Gen. 446). For example, if an employee is regularly scheduled to perform work at their permanent duty station at a VA medical center on Monday and Tuesday, and is scheduled to perform work at the consolidated mail-order pharmacy Wednesday

through Friday, travel to both locations is considered a normal transportation expense and is not in excess of their daily commute.

B. Field Facility Directors and the Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Financial Business Operations in VA's Central Office (VACO) will determine the area to be covered by local travel by using the 50-Mile Rule or geographic boundaries as defined by their respective stations. The local radius cannot exceed 50 miles. For example, VACO has defined its local travel area as the District of Columbia; Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland; Arlington, Fairfax and Falls Church Counties and the City of Alexandria in Virginia; and all cities now or hereafter existing in Maryland or Virginia within the combined geographic area of said counties.

C. VA will provide mass transportation tokens and/or tickets for local travel when practicable and will also reimburse local travel expenses for privately-owned vehicles, taxis and other expenses as discussed in 070502B. VA employees may also be reimbursed for excess local travel expenses under 41 C.F.R. Chapters 300-304.

070202 ACTIONS FOR LOCAL TRAVEL.

A. Approval. VA supervisors or delegated authorities must approve local travel expenses with a written or electronic authorization (i.e., memorandum or email) prior to incurring local expenses. A Travel Authorization in VA's travel system will not be issued for strictly local travel expenses, but may be required in certain situations (e.g., approved rental vehicle). VA may approve a specific authorization for reimbursement of travel expenses after the travel has been completed, with proper justification.

B. Local Travel Expenses.

1. VA will approve local public transportation when practicable. Tokens, transit cards and/or tickets may be issued to employees for local travel. When tokens and/or tickets are not furnished, employees will be reimbursed for expenses that exceed their normal commuting cost. For more information regarding the financial policies and procedures of the VA transit benefit program, refer to Volume III, Chapter 1, *Transit Benefit and Bicycle Benefit Program*.

2. VA will first use Government-owned vehicles (GOV) for local travel whenever an automobile is required, authorized and available.

3. VA will reimburse employees for privately-owned vehicle (POV) travel to the extent that allowable costs exceed the employee's normal commuting expenses between his or her residence and the official duty station.

4. VA will allow the use of taxis if the employee does not have a Government vehicle available and/or a Government-provided shuttle, or mass transportation cannot be used for local travel.

5. VA Approving Officials may approve the use of a rental vehicle for local travel. A Travel Authorization in the travel system must be issued for all rental vehicle expenses. All receipts associated with rental vehicles must be faxed into the travel system.

6. Under 5 U.S.C. 41, *Government Employees Training Act*, VA may approve a per diem allowance for travel in the local area of the official duty station. Only the Secretary of VA can approve the exception for per diem expenses in the local area. This approval has not been delegated. VA employees will prepare a temporary duty Travel Authorization for any approved local per diem expenses.

C. Processing Local Travel Expenses.

1. VA will use the travel system to process all local travel expense vouchers. When a reimbursable amount is less than \$25, the employee may file a manual voucher for reimbursement.

2. VA will require receipts for all other single expenses when the expense is greater than \$75. An employee may aggregate all other local expenses when each individual expense is under \$75.

3. VA Approving Officials will review local travel expense vouchers for proper reimbursement to employees.

4. VA will pay reimbursable amounts by direct deposit to the employee's financial institution.

5. Employees may use the Individually-Billed Account travel card to pay for approved transportation expenses within the local commuting area whenever possible. The employee is responsible for paying the servicing bank directly for any charges made to the VA Travel Card. Local expense vouchers in the travel system do not have the split disbursement feature. Reimbursement for all approved expenses will be made directly to the employee by EFT.

0703 AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES

[070301 Executive Order 13150, Federal Workforce Transportation](#)

[070302 29 U.S.C. Chapter 8, Fair Labor Standards](#)

[070303 5 U.S.C. Chapter 41, Government Employees Training Act \(GETA\)](#)

[070304 41 C.F.R. Chapters 300-304, Federal Travel Regulation \(FTR\)](#)

[070305 5 C.F.R 550.112, Computation of overtime work](#)

070306 General Services Administration (GSA) Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Mileage Reimbursement Rates (www.gsa.gov/mileage)

070307 52 Comptroller General Decision 446 (B-181347), Overtime Compensation for Travel

070308 VA Handbook 5011, Hours of Duty and Leave

070309 Civilian Board of Contract Appeals, 15655-TRAV, Anthony Milano, November 2001

070310 Civilian Board of Contract Appeals, 16069-TRAV, Robert M. Malone Jr., August 2003

0704 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

070401 The Assistant Secretary for Management/Chief Financial Officer (CFO) oversees all financial management activities relating to the Department's programs and operations, as required by the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990 and 38 U.S.C. 309. Specific responsibilities include the direction, management and provision of policy guidance and oversight of VA's financial management personnel, activities and operations. The CFO establishes financial policy, systems and operating procedures for all VA financial entities and provides guidance on all aspects of financial management.

070402 Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Chief Financial Officers, Fiscal Officers, Chief Accountants, Chiefs of Finance Activities and other key officials are responsible for ensuring compliance with the policies and procedures set forth in this chapter.

070403 The Office of Finance, Office of Financial Policy (OFP) is responsible for developing, coordinating, reviewing, evaluating, and issuing VA financial policies, including those that impact financial systems and procedures for compliance with all financial laws and regulations. OFP is also responsible for working with the Office of Inspector General's independent contract auditors on VA's annual Consolidated Financial Statements audit and preparing and reviewing Consolidated Financial Statements, Notes and Required Supplementary Information.

0705 PROCEDURES

070501 APPROVAL FOR LOCAL TRAVEL

A. VA employees will pay for their own commuting expenses, including those occasions when they work overtime or are called back to work to perform involuntary, unscheduled overtime duty, except when a VA official approves the reimbursement of excess commuting expenses. If it is not practicable or possible to obtain such

authorization prior to travel, the employee's supervisor may approve a specific authorization for reimbursement of travel expenses after travel has been completed.

B. Field Facility Directors and the Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Financial Business Operations in VACO will determine the area to be covered by local travel, as prescribed by the Federal Travel Regulation under 41 C.F.R. Chapters 300-304. VA will determine the local travel area in consideration of the normal commuting area of the facility and the corporate limits of the city or town in which the facility is located or a mileage radius measured from the official duty site normally not to exceed a 50-mile radius. VA will use the defined official duty station as the guiding principle to determine when travel is either a normal commuting expense or a travel expense.

C. VA will provide mass transportation tokens and/or tickets to employees for local travel when it is practicable and permits accomplishment of official business. VA will also reimburse local travel expenses related to the use of privately-owned vehicles, Government-owned vehicles, and taxis as well as other expenses in excess of an employee's normal commuting expenses as discussed in 070502B.

070502 ACTIONS FOR LOCAL TRAVEL.

A. Approval.

1. VA employees will obtain written or electronic authorization (i.e., memorandum or email) from the supervisor or delegated approving official prior to incurring local travel expenses. If it is not practicable or possible to obtain such authorization prior to travel, the employee's agency may approve a specific authorization for reimbursement of travel expenses after travel has been completed. A Travel Authorization must be issued in the travel system for local official rental vehicle expenses.

2. VA Approving Officials will approve reimbursement for travel expenses in excess of normal commuting costs in the official duty station area for any official travel between:

- a. Office/point of duty and other place of business;
- b. One place of business and another place of business; or
- c. Residence and place of business other than the office or point of duty.

3. If approved, VA will authorize and reimburse expenses associated with an official rental car for local travel through a Travel Authorization in the travel system prior to incurring such expenses.

4. VA employees are responsible for commuting to and from their official station. This responsibility applies to regular work days as well as non-work days (i.e., weekends or holidays). For example, an employee is not reimbursed mileage when called into work on a holiday or Saturday (non-work day) (reference Civilian Board of Contract Appeals

Decisions 15655-TRAV and 16069-TRAV). The approving official who has the authority to direct the employee to perform the overtime work will approve any reimbursement in excess of their normal commuting expenses when the employee is:

- a. Officially approved to work outside of his or her regular working hours (e.g., weekend) (see Appendix A, Example 6a);
- b. Dependent on public transportation for travel and traveling during hours of infrequently scheduled public transportation (see Appendix A, Example 6b).

For more information regarding overtime compensation see Volume XV, *Payroll*.

B. Local Travel Expenses.

1. Transit Tokens/Tickets/Cards. VA travelers will use mass transportation when it is practicable and permits accomplishment of official business. VA will furnish tokens, cards and/or tickets for local travel whenever possible. When tokens and/or tickets are not furnished, employees will be reimbursed for expenses that exceed their normal commuting cost.

a. VA-designated personnel will procure and maintain mass transportation tokens, cards and/or tickets for use of authorized local travel by employees. Requests for quantities of tokens and/or tickets for transportation will be made on VA Form 3079 (see Appendix B), *Request for Tokens or Tickets*, to the official authorized to issue tokens and/or tickets.

(2) VA Form 4530 (see Appendix C), *Accountability Record for Tokens or Tickets*, will be used to maintain records of receipt and issuance of tokens and/or tickets. Tokens, cards and tickets will be kept in a locked receptacle.

(3) VA issuing officials will contact carriers to determine automatic expiration dates and will periodically check tokens and tickets to ensure they are used before the expiration date or turned in for redemption.

(4) VA-designated officials in the issuing office will audit tokens, cards and tickets on a monthly basis

b. VA will provide a "transit pass" transportation fringe benefit program for its qualified Federal employees' regular commuting costs. For more information on this program, refer to Volume III, Chapter 1, *Transit Benefit and Bicycle Benefit Program*. If the employee normally uses a mass transportation system for his or her daily commute, only the excess cost above and beyond daily commuting cost will be claimed as a local travel expense.

2. Government-Owned Vehicle (GOV). VA will use Government-owned vehicles as the first resource for official travel performed locally or within commuting distance when an

automobile is required in order to fully utilize the Government fleet and lower costs. VA employees must hold a valid state, District of Columbia or territorial motor vehicle operator's license to operate a GOV. If a GOV is unavailable, a rental car or POV may be used. Volume XIV, Chapter 3, *Transportation Expenses*, discusses detailed policies and procedures relating to GOV.

3. Privately-Owned Vehicle (POV). VA will reimburse employees for privately-owned vehicle travel when allowable costs exceed the employee's normal commuting expenses between his or her residence and the official duty station to include:

- a. Privately-owned vehicle (POV) mileage reimbursement rates as established by the General Services Administration (i.e., POV as advantageous or when a Government-owned vehicle is not available, or POV in lieu of Government-owned vehicle);
- b. Parking;
- c. Bridge and road tolls; and
- d. Other local transportation expenses.

Mileage payments and expense reimbursement will only be paid to the employee who owns and incurs the POV operating expenses, regardless of the number of passengers who accompany the employee or whether passengers contribute funds to defray POV operating expenses.

4. Taxis. VA will allow the use of taxis if the employee does not have a GOV available and/or a Government-provided shuttle, or mass transportation cannot be used for local travel.

5. Rental Vehicles. VA Approving Officials may approve the use of a rental vehicle for local travel. In this case, a Travel Authorization (TA) must be prepared for local travel.

6. Non-Motorized Bicycles. VA employees must complete a bicycle safety training course in the state or district from which he/she commutes. Both the rider and bicycle shall be subject to the laws and regulations applicable to their commuting area. Each bicycle and rider shall be equipped with safety equipment as required. VA will not reimburse bicycle commuters for violations incurred.

Reimbursement for bicycle use will be at the prorated daily rate based on established amounts in VA Handbook 0634, *Transit Benefit Bicycle Program*. An employee cannot claim bicycle reimbursement for the same days under both the Transit Benefit Bicycle Program and under a local expense voucher.

7. Approved Exception to Local Travel Per Diem.

a. Only the Secretary of VA can approve the exception for per diem expenses in the local area. The Secretary may approve a per diem allowance for travel in the local area if an employee is authorized to travel under the Government Employees Training Act (5 U.S.C. 41). This approval has not been delegated. For more detailed policies relating to per diem, see Volume XIV, Chapter 2, *Per Diem*. Procedures for requesting this exception are provided in Appendix D.

The following conditions must be met for an employee to receive a per diem allowance in the local area:

- (1) The event must be classified as a bona-fide training event, which is concurred on by VA Central Office, Office of Human Resources;
- (2) The Office of General Counsel provides a legal review to ensure appropriated funds are used for the “necessary expenses” of training (5 U.S.C. §4109);
- (3) A determination must be made that partaking of meals is necessary to achieve the objectives of the training; and
- (4) All participants are required by VA to stay in the same local hotel in order to foster the participation in daytime and evening activities.

Note: Approval of the lodging portion of the per diem allowance does not automatically provide approval for the meal portion. Justification must be provided for each portion separately.

b. If per diem is approved by the Secretary of VA, employees will prepare a temporary duty Travel Authorization in the travel system for the specific per diem entitlements. A copy of the approval will be attached to the Travel Authorization for audit purposes.

C. Processing Local Travel Expenses.

1. Expense Vouchers. VA will use the travel system to process local travel expense vouchers. Employees will submit local travel expense vouchers in the travel system at least every 30 days and in the fiscal year in which an expense incurred when the total reimbursable expenses incurred are at least \$25. When reimbursable expenses are under \$25, employees may submit a manual local expense voucher form (Standard Form 1164, *Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business*) for reimbursement outside of the travel system (see Appendix E).

Approved local travel expenses charged to the employee’s IBA travel card must be paid by the employee directly to the contractor bank. There is no split disbursement feature for a local expense voucher. Payment must be made by the bank statement due date regardless of whether the local expense voucher has been submitted and approved.

2. Receipts.

- a. VA will require receipts for all other single expenses when the expense is greater than \$75. VA will require that additional individual expenses greater than \$75 be accompanied by a receipt and listed separately.
 - b. Approving officials may require a receipt and justification for any expense, including those below the threshold, based on official local written organizational policy.
 - c. VA employees will attach (fax or scan) all required receipts in VA's travel system before submitting the voucher to their approving official.
 - d. If a receipt cannot be produced, VA employees will provide a written statement in lieu of a valid receipt. This statement will describe the circumstances, explaining why a receipt cannot be provided, and contain all of the information that would be included in a valid receipt, such as the service provider's name and address, date(s) of service, itemized expenses and total amount paid.
 - e. Acceptable evidence for POV ground mileage will include odometer readings of actual and necessary distance traveled for conducting official business. A comparison of actual mileage will be made against the number of miles calculated using Mapquest® as the principal standard for determining approved reimbursement. Other standards (e.g., Rand McNally, Yahoo) may be used if data is not available in Mapquest.com®. When the deviation exceeds 5 percent between the actual and standard (rounded up to the nearest mile), justification must be provided to the authorizing official.
3. Review. VA Approving Officials will review local travel expense vouchers submitted by employees for reimbursement. VA Approving Officials will return the voucher to the traveler for clarification or justification within three (3) business days. VA Approving Officials will forward approved expense vouchers to the VA travel technician or VA's travel system to ensure payment within 30 calendar days. VA employees will include the written or electronic authorization received with the travel expense voucher.
 4. Payment. VA will pay reimbursable amounts by direct deposit to the employee's financial institution. Under normal conditions, properly prepared local travel expense vouchers will be paid within 30 days of receipt. For more detailed policies relating to direct deposit and electronic funds transfer (EFT), see Volume VIII, Chapter 2, *Electronic Funds Transfer Requirement*, and for payroll payments to employees, see Volume XV, Chapter 6, *Payments*.
 5. VA Individually-billed account (IBA) travel card. VA employees will use the IBA travel card to pay for approved transportation expenses within the traveler's local commuting area when the employee has been given written or electronic authorization (i.e., memorandum or email).

- a. Approved use of an IBA Travel Card for local travel includes taxis, tolls, local transit, parking, rental vehicle, and gas purchases for rental vehicles.
- b. Unauthorized use of an IBA Travel Card for local travel includes ATM cash withdrawals, gas purchases for POV, and lodging and meals (unless approved per paragraph 070502B6a) in addition to the unauthorized uses cited in Volume XVI, Chapter 2, *Travel Charge Card*.
- c. If a Travel Authorization for local per diem expenses is approved, the IBA Travel Card may be used for the approved per diem entitlement (i.e., lodging and meals) in addition to the approved local transportation expenses. See 070502B6a for information on GETA and per diem exceptions in the local travel area.

Refer to Volume XVI, Chapter 2, *Travel Charge Card*, for detailed procedures relating to use of the IBA Travel Card.

0706 DEFINITIONS

070601 Approving Official (AO). An employee with authority to approve or direct travel for official Government business by the agency head.

070602 Authorization (see “Travel Authorization”).

070603 Expense Voucher. Written request, supported by documentation and receipts, where applicable, for reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of official travel.

070604 Geographic Boundaries. The specific area defined by a field facility, when the 50-Mile Rule is not applicable, to set parameters for local travel purposes.

070605 Government-owned Automobile (GOV). An automobile owned by VA, assigned or dispatched to VA on a rental basis from a GSA Interagency Fleet Management Center, or leased by VA for a period of 30 days or longer from a commercial firm.

070606 Local Travel. Travel performed within an established local radius of the official duty station. The standard local radius will be 50 miles from the official station. A VA station may establish a local radius different from the standard radius based on counties, geographical boundaries or nearby cities. This local radius cannot exceed 50 miles, must be established in writing and approved by the Facility Director. For virtual employees, the local radius will be 50 miles from the virtual/mobile office.

070607 Mass Transportation. Any form of public transportation operated for use by the general public (i.e., buses, subways, ferries, commuter buses, trains and qualified van pools).

070608 Non-Motorized Bicycle. A bicycle that is human-powered and designed to transport by the act of pedaling.

070609 Official Duty Station. The corporate limits of the city or town and any other established areas in which the employee's permanent work assignment is situated.

070610 Official Travel. Travel under an official Travel Authorization from an employee's official station or other authorized point of departure to a temporary duty location and return from a temporary duty location, between two temporary duty locations, or relocation at the direction of a Federal agency.

070611 Per Diem Allowance. A daily payment (also referred to as a subsistence allowance) instead of reimbursement for actual expenses for lodging, meals and related incidental expenses. The per diem allowance is separate from transportation expenses and other miscellaneous expenses.

070612 Privately-Owned Vehicle (POV). Any vehicle such as an automobile, motorcycle, aircraft or boat, operated by an individual, that is not owned or leased by a Government agency and is not commercially leased or rented by an employee under a Government rental agreement for use in connection with official Government business.

070613 Rental Automobile (Government-Contract). An automobile obtained for short-term use from a commercial firm, as specified in the Federal Travel Directory, under the provisions of an appropriate General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Supply Schedule contract.

070614 Telework Employee. A telework employee is one who performs work through the use of portable information technology and communications packages on a part-time basis. A teleworker is required to report to the official duty station based on the written agreement (VA Handbook 5011/5, Hours of Duty and Leave).

070615 Telework Office. A temporary location or environment, which may include customer sites, hotels, cars or at home, where a telework employee performs work through the use of portable information technology and communications packages (VA Handbook 5011, Part II, Chapter 4).

070616 Training. The process of providing for or making available to an employee and placing or enrolling the employee in a planned, prepared and coordinated program, course, or curriculum designed to improve individual and organizational performance and assist in achieving the agency's mission and performance goals.

070617 Temporary Duty (TDY) Location. A place away from an employee's official station where the employee is authorized to travel.

070618 Travel Authorization (TA). Written or electronic permission to travel on official business and may be Unlimited blanket, Limited blanket or Trip-by-trip.

070619 Travel System. The Government-contracted, end-to-end travel management service that automates and consolidates the Federal travel process in a self-service Web-centric environment, covering all aspects of official travel, including travel planning, authorization, reservations, ticketing, expense reimbursement and travel management reporting.

070620 Virtual Employee. An employee who performs work through the use of portable information technology and communications packages on a full-time basis. A virtual employee who works from the virtual/mobile office 5 days a week is not a teleworker as they perform permanent duties at a site other than the virtual/mobile office (VA Handbook 5011/5, Hours of Duty and Leave).

070621 Virtual/Mobile Office. A permanent worksite location or environment, which may include customer sites, another VA facility, or residence, where a virtual employee performs work through the use of portable information technology and communications packages (VA Handbook 5011, Part II, Chapter 4).

0707 RESCISSIONS

070701 VA Financial Policy, Volume XIV, Travel, Chapter 7, Local Travel, December 2010.

0708 QUESTIONS

Questions concerning these financial policies and procedures should be directed to:

VHA	VHA CFO Accounting Policy (10A3A) (Outlook)
VBA	VAVBAWAS/CO/FINREP (Outlook)
All Others	OFP Accounting Policy (Outlook)

0709 REVISIONS

Section	Revision	Office	Effective Date
0701 Overview	Added paragraph relating to Union master agreements	APPS (047GA)	January 2013
070201 Authority for Local Travel	Clarified local travel to apply to both official station local radius and employee's residence local radius.	APPS (047GA)	January 2013
070202 Actions for Local Travel	Updated Vol III, Ch 1, Transit Benefit and Bicycle Benefit Program title. Added employee responsibility for paying approved charges on IBA travel card.	APPS (047GA)	January 2013

Section	Revision	Office	Effective Date
0704 Roles and Responsibilities	Removed Office of Financial Business Operations; replaced with Office of Financial Policy due to transition of Travel Policy Services	APPS (047GA)	January 2013
070501 Approval for Local Travel	Included provision for post-travel approval.	APPS (047GA)	January 2013
070502 Actions for Local Travel	Added information on 6. Bicycles. Clarified 7. Approved Exceptions to Local Travel Per Diem. Removed parking receipt requirement of \$25 to fall under \$75 threshold. Updated approving officials review to 3 days to remain consistent for all expense vouchers.	APPS (047GA)	January 2013
0706 Definitions	Added Approving Official, Authorization, Bicycle, GOV. Separated Telework and Virtual to provide clarity.	APPS (047GA)	January 2013
Appendix D	Added Procedures for Requesting Per Diem Approval in the Local Area	APPS (047GA)	January 2013
Appendix E	Added copy of SF1164, Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business	APPS (047GA)	January 2013

APPENDIX A: LOCAL TRAVEL EXAMPLES

A. Example 1.

Situation: Lisa is stationed at the VA office in Cleveland. Her daily commute by POV is 30 miles round trip. Her boss wants her to go a conference at a hotel in the local commuting area. The distance from Lisa's home to the hotel is 50 miles round trip.

VA Reimbursement: Lisa would be reimbursed 20 miles net mileage over her normal daily commute.

Round trip from home to conference:	50 miles
Less round trip from home to work:	<u>- 30 miles</u>
Net mileage reimbursement:	20 miles x mileage rate

B. Example 2.

Situation: Jill is stationed at the VA Medical Center in Kansas City. Her home is 20 miles from work. Jill's boss wants her to attend a meeting at another agency in the afternoon (7 miles from work). Jill returns home from the meeting location (10 miles to home).

VA Reimbursement: Jill **is not** authorized for local mileage reimbursement, since the distance traveled is less than the ordinary round trip commuting distance to work.

Home to work:	20 miles
Work to meeting:	7 miles
Meeting to home:	<u>10 miles</u>
Total mileage for day:	37 miles

Round trip from home to work: 40 miles

C. Example 3.

Situation: Gary is stationed at VA Central Office in Washington, D.C. He pays \$10 a day out of pocket for Metro services. Gary's boss wants him to attend a conference in Crystal City (30 miles from Gary's home). Gary drives his car.

VA Reimbursement: Gary would be reimbursed 60 miles round trip reimbursement minus \$10 a day Metro costs.

Home to conference:	30 miles
Conference to home:	<u>30 miles</u>
Total mileage for day:	60 miles x mileage rate - \$10 Metro costs benefits

D. Example 4a (Teleworker).

Situation: Sarah is a teleworker. She works from her virtual office (home) on Monday and Friday and reports to her official duty station on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Her home is 30 miles from the official duty station. Her boss wants Sarah to attend training on Monday and Tuesday. The training site is 20 miles from Sarah's home.

VA Reimbursement: The reimbursement would not be calculated separately for Monday and Friday. The regular commute to the official station is always deducted.

Round trip home to training:	40 miles
Less round trip home to work:	- <u>60 miles</u>
Total mileage for the day:	- 20 miles (there is no reimbursement)

E. Example 4b (Teleworker).

Situation: John is a teleworker. He works from his virtual office (other than home) on Thursday and Friday and reports to his official duty station on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. His home is 10 miles from his virtual office and 43 miles from the official duty station. His boss wants John to attend a conference on Wednesday and Thursday. The conference is 25 miles from John's home.

VA Reimbursement: The reimbursement would not be calculated separately for Wednesday and Thursday. The regular commute to the official station is always deducted.

Wednesday:

Round trip home to conference:	50 miles
Less round trip home to work:	- <u>86 miles</u>
Total mileage for the day:	- 36 miles (there is no reimbursement)

Thursday:

Round trip home to conference:	50 miles
Less round trip home to work:	- <u>86 miles</u>
Total mileage for the day:	- 36 miles (there is no reimbursement)

F. Example 5a (Virtual Employee).

Situation: Charles is a virtual employee. He works from his virtual office (home) on a full time basis in Montgomery, Alabama. He is assigned to VA Central Office in Washington, D.C. His boss wants John to attend training on Monday. The training site is 20 miles from John's home.

VA Reimbursement:

Home to training:	20 miles
Training to home:	<u>20 miles</u>
Total mileage for the day:	40 miles x mileage reimbursement (There is no deduction for a daily commute as virtual office is home.)

G. Example 5b (Virtual Employee).

Situation: Pete is a virtual employee. He works from his virtual office (Memphis VA Medical Center) on a full time basis. He is assigned to VA Central Office in Washington, D.C. His home is 15 miles from his virtual office. His boss wants Pete to attend a conference on Wednesday. The conference is 25 miles from Pete's home.

VA Reimbursement:

Round trip home to conference:	50 miles
Less round trip home to virtual office:	- <u>30 miles</u>
Total mileage for the day:	20 miles x mileage reimbursement

H. Example 6a (Weekend/Non-Work Day Employee).

Situation: John is called into the office on Saturday (non-work day) by his supervisor. The office parking lot cost is \$12 per day and John needs to park in the public parking lot incurring a cost of \$20.

VA Reimbursement:

Round trip home to office:	30 miles
Less daily commute	- <u>30 miles</u>
Total mileage for the day	0 miles (no reimbursement for commute)

Parking \$20 - \$12 = \$8; reimbursed as cost in excess of daily commute.

I. Example 6b (Weekend/Non-Work Day Employee).


Situation: Susan is called into the office on Sunday (non-work day) by her supervisor. Susan's only means of transportation into work is the public bus; she does not own a

car. The bus that services her home does not run on Sundays. Susan took a taxi into the office on Sunday.

VA Reimbursement:


Daily cost of bus:	\$ 6.00 (round trip)
Cost of Taxi on Sunday:	<u>\$ 18.00 (round trip)</u>
Reimbursement:	\$ 12.00

APPENDIX B: VA FORM 3079

 Department of Veterans Affairs		
REQUEST FOR TOKENS OR TICKETS	DATE OF REQUEST	
	KIND	NUMBER
TO <i>(Official authorized to issue tokens or tickets)</i>	TOKENS	
	TICKETS	
	OTHER	
FROM		
<i>CERTIFICATION: I certify that the tokens or tickets requested will be used for official business only.</i>		
SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZING OFFICIAL		
SIGNATURE OF PERSON RECEIVING TOKENS OR TICKETS	DATE RECEIVED	

VA FORM
NOV 1993 (R) **3079**

APPENDIX C: VA FORM 4530

 Department of Veterans Affairs		ACCOUNTABILITY RECORD FOR TOKENS OR TICKETS			
RECEIVED	ISSUED	BALANCE	DATE	ISSUED TO	SIGNATURE OF RECIPIENT <i>(For beneficiaries enter Authorization No. and date)</i>

APPENDIX D: PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING APPROVAL FOR PER DIEM IN THE LOCAL AREA

Following are instructions for obtaining the Secretary of VA approval for a per diem allowance for local area employees participating in a training event.

Only the Secretary of VA can approve the exception for per diem expenses in the local area. This approval has not been delegated.

A. Requirements. The following requirements must be met for an employee to receive a per diem allowance in the local area.

1. **Concurrence from Human Resources.** The event must be classified as a bona-fide training event under the Government Employees Training Act (5 U.S.C. 41), which is concurred on by VA Central Office, Office of Human Resources and Administration.

2. **Concurrence from General Counsel.** The Office of General Counsel provides a legal review to ensure appropriated funds are used for the “necessary expenses” of training (5 U.S.C. 4109).

3. **Concurrence from Office of Management (OM).** The Office of Finance (047), Office of Financial Policy (047G) within OM reviews these requests to ensure compliance with policy, and recommends concurrence to the Assistant Secretary for Management.

4. **Approval for Meals.** For meals to be approved, the supervisor who authorizes the official travel must determine that partaking of meals is necessary to achieve the objectives of the training, such as a guest speaker during lunch.

5. **Approval for Lodging.** For lodging to be approved, the training event must require all participants to stay in the same local hotel in order to foster the participation in daytime and evening activities.

Note: Approval for lodging does not automatically grant approval for meals. A separate determination must be made for each per diem entitlement.

Unusual work days (i.e., extended hours) alone are not sufficient for approval for per diem entitlements. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) long recognized that employees are not entitled to reimbursement of subsistence costs at the official station because of unusual working conditions. Civilian Board of Contract Appeals’ decisions are consistent with GAO rulings (reference GSBCA 15548-TRAV et. al).

B. Request for Approval. The requesting office must prepare a memorandum that includes the following information:

1. Training Information. The memo must include the name of the training event, a brief description of the event, the dates of the event, and the agenda information requiring participation specific to the per diem entitlement (e.g., luncheon speaker, evening training).

2. Number of Local Participants. Indicate the number of participants from your office attending from the local area. Include the local radius of the participant(s) official station and the location of the training as being within the local radius.

3. Associated Costs. Indicate the costs associated for lodging and meals separately as well as the overall total cost.

4. Local Travel Policy Reference. Include the exception for per diem entitlements in the local area from this chapter.

Once concurrence is obtained from HR, GC and OM, the requesting office will forward the request for approval to the Secretary of VA (00).

If approval is obtained, the employee will be issued a temporary duty Travel Authorization for the approved per diem entitlement to attend the training and receive reimbursement for associated expenses.

**** SAMPLE ****

**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

Memorandum

Date:

From: (Assistant Secretary or Under Secretary)

Subj: Per Diem for Locally Based Employees

To: Secretary (00)

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to request your approval for lodging and meal (*specify which per diem expense*) expenses for three VA employees at an upcoming training event on (*name of training*). The dates requested for lodging are (*include dates*). (*Provide brief description of the training*)
2. The employees will participate in a session(s) on (indicate the part of the agenda which would require attendance and necessitate the per diem entitlement, such as luncheon speaker/session or evening session).
3. The local travel radius for the official station is (indicate local radius). The location of the training is (indicate location) which falls within the local radius.
4. Employees are not entitled to per diem while in a local travel status. Per VA Financial Policy, Volume XIV, Travel, Chapter 7, Local Travel, as an exception, VA may authorize a per diem allowance for travel in the local area if an employee is authorized to travel under the Government Employees Training Act (GETA) (5 U.S.C. 41). The Office of Human Resources must determine whether the event qualifies as a training event under GETA guidelines in order to authorize per diem entitlements.
5. The following requirements have been met for the employee to receive a per diem allowance in the local area:
 - (a) The event has been classified as a bona-fide training event and concurred on by VA Central Office, Office of Human Resources.
 - (b) The Office of General Counsel has provided a legal review to ensure appropriated funds are used for the “necessary expenses” of training (5 U.S.C. §4109).

(c) I have made the determination that partaking of meals is necessary to achieve the objectives of the training;

(d) All participants are required to stay in the same local hotel in order to foster the participation in daytime and evening activities; and

(e) The employee will be issued a temporary duty Travel Authorization to attend the training.

APPENDIX E: SF FORM 1164

CLAIM FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENDITURES ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS		1. DEPARTMENT OR ESTABLISHMENT, BUREAU, DIVISION OR OFFICE		2. VOUCHER NUMBER				
				3. SCHEDULE NUMBER				
<i>Read the Privacy Act Statement on the back of this form.</i>								
4. CLAIMANT	a. NAME (Last, first, middle initial)		b. SOCIAL SECURITY NO.		5. PAID BY			
	c. MAILING ADDRESS (Include ZIP Code)		d. OFFICE TELEPHONE NUMBER					
6. EXPENDITURES (If fare claimed in col. (g) exceeds charge for one person, show in col. (h) the number of additional persons which accompanied the claimant.)								
DATE	C O D E	Show appropriate code in col. (b): A - Local travel B - Telephone or telegraph, or C - Other expenses (itemized)		MILEAGE RATE	AMOUNT CLAIMED			
		D - Funeral Honors Detail E - Specialty Care			NO. OF MILES (e)	MILEAGE (f)	FARE OR TOLL (g)	ADD PER- SONS (h)
20	<i>(Explain expenditures in specific detail.)</i>							
(a)	(b)	(c) FROM	(d) TO	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)
If additional space is required continue on the back.			SUBTOTALS CARRIED FORWARD FROM THE BACK					
7. AMOUNT CLAIMED (Total of cols. (f), (g) and (i).) ▶ \$					TOTALS			
8. This claim is approved. Long distance telephone calls, if shown, are certified as necessary in the interest of the Government. (Note: If long distance calls are included, the approving official must have been authorized in writing, by the head of the department or agency to so certify (31 U.S.C. 680a).)					10. I certify that this claim is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and that payment or credit has not been received by me. <i>Sign Original Only</i>			
<i>Sign Original Only</i>					CLAIMANT SIGN HERE ▶	DATE		
APPROVING OFFICIAL SIGN HERE ▶					11. CASH PAYMENT RECEIPT			
9. This claim is certified correct and proper for payment. <i>Sign Original Only</i>					a. PAYEE (Signature)		b. DATE RECEIVED	
APPROVING OFFICIAL SIGN HERE ▶					12. PAYMENT MADE BY CHECK NO.		c. AMOUNT \$	
ACCOUNTING CLASSIFICATION								

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