

# Travel Policy

Policy #	01
Revision #	01
Approved By	Finance
Effective Date	January 1, 2025

## Purpose

The City of Grand Junction's Travel Policy establishes a comprehensive framework for managing and regulating domestic travel-related expenditures. Its purpose is to promote transparency, ensure compliance with regulatory standards, and provide fair treatment for employees engaging in business travel. This policy applies to all employees and departments within the City of Grand Junction. It outlines guidelines for business-related travel expenditures, reimbursement procedures, and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requirements. This policy supplements the standards established in the Personnel Manual and Procurement Policy.

## Roles & Responsibilities

- I. Finance Department
  - a. Finance is responsible for enforcing the travel policy, processing payments such as Per Diem or Mileage Reimbursements for traveling employees, and ensuring that the reason for employee travel is ordinary, reasonable, and appropriate.
- II. Department Directors, Managers, and Supervisors
  - a. Department Directors, Managers, and Supervisors are responsible for reviewing and approving travel requests, ensuring that they are legitimate and necessary.
  - b. As part of this review, Department Directors are responsible for ensuring the required documentation is complete and reconcile with actual credit card transactions when applicable.
- III. Traveling Employees
  - a. Employees must adhere to the policies outlined in this Travel Policy and the guidelines outlined in the Purchasing Policy, Personnel Manual, and other Finance Policies. Employees are responsible for obtaining proper approval before incurring travel expenditures and for obtaining and submitting all receipts, forms, and other required documentation to their Supervisor, Manager, and Finance Department in a timely manner.

## Policy

- I. Lodging
  - a. Employees must adhere to reasonable lodging rates in alignment with the General Services Administrations (GSA) recommendation. When making lodging arrangements, City employees should request the government rate or the lowest available eligible rate, except when registering with a pre-arranged group rate in conjunction with a conference or meeting.
  - b. Employees are prohibited from charging any personal expenses, including additional amenities, to their room. The use of a City purchasing card for personal expenses is strictly prohibited.

- c. Special lodging arrangements (e.g., RV parks, campgrounds, or vacation rentals like VRBO and Airbnb) require written approval from the Department Director, Manager, or Supervisor and must be submitted to the Finance Department before travel.
- d. If an employee extends their stay beyond the required period for City business, they must use personal funds to cover the cost of additional lodging and associated taxes. The use of a City purchasing card for lodging not directly related to City business is strictly prohibited.
- e. Employees may bring a spouse provided it does not warrant additional charges. In the event additional charges occur, employees are responsible for using personal funds to pay the charges. Adding additional charges for a spouse to a City purchasing card is strictly prohibited.
- f. Employees should attempt to request a tax exemption for lodging tax within the state of Colorado.

## II. Meals

- a. Per Diem is provided before travel and is intended to cover meals not provided during travel. Per Diem is provided at GSA recommended rates.
- b. If meals are provided during a conference or business meeting, employees are not eligible for per diem for those specific meals. The per diem amount will be adjusted accordingly.
- c. Business meals are not permitted on p-cards provided an employee has already received per diem for travel. In situations where per diem is not provided ahead of the travel, employees must use personal funds to purchase meals during travel and then submit a per diem request in line with the GSA predefined rates upon return. Per diem will be issued with the following week's accounts payable check run.
- d. In rare cases where Per Diem is not provided ahead of time and employees cannot pay for meals using personal funds, employees may use a City purchasing card to cover the cost of meals. Itemized receipts will be required to be submitted to Finance within 10 business days of return from travel, and these receipts will be examined for reasonableness and compared to GSA rates. If any expenses are deemed to be unreasonable, the City will bill the unreasonable portion to the employee for reimbursement.

## III. Tipping

- a. Tipping for meals is limited to 20% of the total charge (excluding tax) and requires an itemized receipt.
- b. Tipping for taxi or shuttle service is allowed up to 20% of the fare amount when a receipt is provided.
- c. Courtesy tipping, such as tips paid to parking attendants, bellhops, or housekeeping, will not be reimbursed by the City.

## IV. Employee Travel by City Vehicle

- a. Employees are encouraged to utilize a Motor Pool vehicle to conduct business rather than taking a personal vehicle. All City vehicles are supplied with fuel keys and fuel cards.
- b. If a City Motor Pool vehicle is not available and an employee must use their personal vehicle, they will be reimbursed at the mileage rate permitted by the IRS. Mileage from

an employee's home to the assigned office is defined as commuting and is not reimbursable. Travel during on-duty hours must utilize the most direct route unless an alternate route would be less time-consuming, safer, and/or more effective. Employees must maintain and remit to Finance a record of daily travel documenting the from/to locations and the distance between, for which reimbursement is being sought.

- c. A Mileage Reimbursement Form can be found on “CityWeb – Documents and Forms – Budget and Accounting” and must be approved by the appropriate manager, supervisor, or director.
- d. Rental vehicles may be used when needed for out-of-city travel or when the City does not have the appropriate type of vehicle available for travel. Rental cars and out-of-town fuel purchases for rental cars may be charged to a City purchasing card.
- e. City employees should select the safest, least expensive car that meets their needs and include roadside assistance with the rental.
- f. City employees using a rental vehicle for official City business are covered by the City's insurance; therefore, purchasing additional insurance through the rental agency is unnecessary.
- g. As required by state law, employees must have and provide proof of insurance to receive mileage or fuel reimbursements for personal vehicle usage for city business.

#### V. Airline Travel

- a. The City will pay for the cost of commercial, coach/economy class airfare and/or ground transportation. Employees wishing to upgrade from coach/economy class may use their personal funds to do so. Flight upgrades on a City purchasing card are strictly prohibited.
- b. Standard baggage fees are allowable expenditures and require an itemized receipt. Additional baggage fees must be approved by the Department Director before travel.
- c. If an employee wishes to book a City business flight and include a spouse on the same reservation, payment must be split to ensure City funds are not used for the spouse's airfare. If the payment cannot be split, the employee must use a personal card for the purchase, and the City will reimburse the employee for the business-related portion of the flight. Using a City purchasing card to pay for a spouse's airfare is strictly prohibited.
- d. Airline travel insurance is prohibited and should not be purchased with City funds.

#### VI. Local Ground Transportation

- a. Employees should use economical ground transportation options, such as public transit, UBER, LYFT, or ride-sharing services.
- b. Scooters and bike rentals are not approved modes of transportation while on city business. The only exception is the City bicycle fleet, which is provided by and checked out from the City for local, in-city business only.

#### VII. Other Conditions

- a. Alcohol purchases will not be reimbursed. Purchasing alcohol on City purchasing cards is strictly prohibited.
- b. Expenses and/or fees associated with non-business activities while traveling such as tours, sports activities, golf outings, event tickets (movies, theater, etc.), in-room movies,

and in-flight movies will not be reimbursed and must not be paid for with a City purchasing card.

- c. Employees will not be reimbursed for the cost of parking infractions or other traffic violations/citations. Paying for parking infractions, traffic violations, and citations on a City purchasing card are strictly prohibited.
- d. Any per diem/funds advanced to the employee must be returned to the City within 10 days if a scheduled business trip is canceled.

#### VIII. Substantiation of Business Expenditures

- a. For items being reimbursed by the City, employees must submit itemized receipts detailing the amount, time, place, and items purchased for all business expenditures within 10 days of returning from travel.
- b. Failure to provide sufficient or timely documentation may result in the expense being deemed non-reimbursable under IRS regulations.

# Purchasing Card Policy

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## Purpose

The City of Grand Junction's purchasing card program is designed to improve purchasing efficiency by allowing employees to use purchasing cards (p-cards) to make small-dollar purchases, cover incidental travel expenses, and handle routine transactions, bypassing the normal procurement process. The purpose of this policy is to describe the authorized use and oversight of Purchasing Cards by City of Grand Junction employees. This policy applies to all City employees who issue, use, or monitor the use of purchasing cards. In addition to this policy, all p-card purchases must comply with the City's established Personnel, Procurement, and other Finance policies.

## Roles & Responsibilities

- I. Finance Department
  - a. Maintain a point of contact for department users for all purchasing card inquiries. This contact will have the title of purchasing card administrator. This administrator will oversee the distribution, tracking, enforcement, and correspondence with the financial institution for all purchasing card activity. The finance department will serve as a final review for monthly expense reports and establish and operate a purchasing card audit program to monitor compliance. The finance department will report any non-compliance identified during the audit to the Purchasing Card Administrator, CFO, Cardholder, and Cardholder Supervisor.
- II. Purchasing Card Administrator
  - a. Coordinates the purchasing card program, including the issuance and cancellation of purchasing cards. The administrator will conduct and document, at minimum, an annual inventory of purchasing cards and rate reviews with the banking institution.
- III. Department Directors, Managers, and Supervisors
  - a. Initiate purchasing card requests and set cardholder spending limits within established procurement policy guidelines. Collect, notify the p-card administrator, and dispose of the p-card upon termination of employment of a card user, whether for retirement, voluntary separation, resignation, dismissal, transfer, relocation, end-of-season leave, or approved long-term leave. Proper disposal is providing the collected card to the Purchasing Card Administrator or shredding the card.
- IV. Cardholders
  - a. Safeguarding the physical purchasing card and account details to prevent unauthorized use. Ensuring the availability of funds prior to making a purchase with the card. Obtaining detailed, itemized receipts for all purchases and completing monthly expense reports within the Finance defined due dates. Review all purchasing card activity, initiate billing disputes with the banking institution and immediately report stolen or lost cards.

## Policy

### I. Requestor Cards

- a. All full-time City employees are eligible for a purchasing card with approval from their Department Director.
- b. Purchasing card requests may be submitted using the form available on CityWeb. <https://gjc.city.seamlessdocs.com/f/cardholderrequest>

### II. Authorized Card Use

- a. The Purchasing Card may be used only for the purchase of goods and services for the official business of the City.
- b. The total value of any one charge made with the Purchasing card may not exceed the single transaction limit stipulated on the Cardholder's Enrollment Form.

### III. Limitations on the Use of Purchasing Card

- a. Only the employee whose name is embossed on the card may use the card. No other individual is authorized to use the card.
- b. The cardholder will surrender and cease using the purchasing card upon termination of employment, whether for retirement, voluntary separation, resignation, dismissal, transfer, relocation, end-of-season leave, or approved long-term leave.
- c. The purchasing card is for city-authorized purchases only and must not be used for personal use.

### IV. Dollar Limitations

- a. The Department Director/Division Supervisor approving the assignment of a purchasing card shall set single purchase limits and monthly limits for individual cardholders, according to the following guidelines:

	Minimum (default)	Maximum
<b>Single Purchase Limit</b>	\$2,500	\$30,000
<b>Monthly Credit Limit</b>	\$10,000	\$55,000

- b. Department Directors may request a temporary or permanent change to a cardholder's purchasing limit by submitting their request in writing to the Purchasing Card Administrator.

- i. Under no circumstances shall the new single purchase/monthly limits exceed the maximum allowable limit level available to all cardholders.
- ii. Splitting transactions into multiple purchases to circumvent card dollar limitations is strictly prohibited.

### V. Business Meals

- a. Per Diem is provided before travel and intended to cover meals not provided during travel. Refer to the Finance Travel Policy for exemptions and eligible P-Card usage for business meals when traveling.
- b. Group business meals on City property may be purchased with a p-card with Department Director approval, provided they are substantiated in five respects:
  - Amount of the expense (including tips and delivery fees)
  - Date of the meal
  - Location of the meal

- Business purpose of the meal
- Names of all individuals present at the meal (including all City employees and guests)
- c. Cardholders shall meet these documentation requirements by completing the Business Meal Documentation form and submitting this form along with an itemized receipt in the monthly expense report. The Business Meal Form is located on CityWeb: Documents and Forms -> Budget and Accounting.
- d. Alcohol is strictly prohibited on a City Purchasing card.
- e. Tips on meals are limited to a 20% maximum.

VI. Business travel

- a. Acceptable purchasing card travel expenses are as follows:
  - Airline tickets
  - Baggage fees
  - Hotels
  - Required event parking for City or personal vehicles used on travel
  - Ride share for City business
- b. Please review the Finance Travel Policy in full for details on all eligible purchasing card business travel expenditures.

VII. Other Conditions

- a. Sales tax exemption
  - Purchasing cards (p-cards) clearly identify the City of Grand Junction as the Government buyer of goods and services. Purchases made with the P-card in Colorado are exempt from sales tax, and this should be communicated to vendors upon checkout.
  - If sales tax is erroneously charged, the cardholder is responsible for informing the vendor of the City's tax-exempt status and requesting a refund of the sales tax.
  - The City's sales tax exemption also applies to hotels located within the state of Colorado.
- b. Items ordered via p-card must be delivered by the vendor within one billing cycle.
  - Payments for professional development (e.g., conference registrations) or travel are excluded from this condition.
- c. Items ordered via p-card must be shipped to a City address (never to a personal or home address).
- d. P-cards may be used for automatic bill payments, provided the vendor has a secure website and proper receipt documentation is retained.

VIII. Prohibited Use of Purchasing Cards

- a. The following items may not be purchased with a City purchasing card:
  - Cash and cash equivalents, including cash advances, cash refunds, and gift cards.
  - City Stores inventory items.
  - Optional travel expenses or upgrades, including:
    - Travel/trip insurance
    - Collision damage waiver (car rental CDW/LDW)

- Premium flight seat assignments (employees wishing to upgrade from coach/economy class may do so using personal funds)
- Travel expenses for spouses or non-business activities during travel. (If expenses for an employee and spouse are combined, use personal funds to pay for the entire purchase and then request reimbursement from Finance for the eligible employee expenses.)
- Vehicle repairs in the Grand Junction area for City-owned vehicles.
- Gasoline and oil purchases for City-owned vehicles in the Grand Junction area as the City will provide a dedicated Fuel card for Fleet vehicles for this purpose.
- Internal purchases made to the City (e.g., utility payments, movie tickets, etc.).
- Any other product or service that may reasonably be considered an inappropriate use of City funds.

IX. Lost or Stolen Cards

- a. The cardholder should immediately notify the P-Card Administrator and call US Bank Card Services directly at 1-800-344-5696 to report their card as lost or stolen.
- b. Employees will be asked to verify their information, which typically includes the following:
  - Card Number
  - Last 4 of employee ID (The bank will ask for this as the last 4 of social)
  - Mailing Address 250 N 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Grand Junction, CO
  - Phone Number: When the card is ordered, the number is set as a default to 970-244-1555, and it should remain that number unless the employee changes it during the card activation.
  - Card limits: Single Purchase and Monthly
- c. Any charges made by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party prior to the card being reported as lost or stolen are the responsibility of the Cardholder and Cardholder's department. All fraudulent charges must be disputed by the cardholder.
- d. It is the cardholder's responsibility to contact the merchant directly to attempt to resolve any dispute.
- e. If the cardholder cannot resolve the dispute, they should contact the P-Card Administrator for assistance.

X. Violations

- a. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with Chapter 7 of the Personnel Policy Manual, including:
  - Cancellation of the employee's P-card
  - Termination of employment and/or
  - Criminal prosecution
- b. All identified violations of the purchasing card policy must be promptly reported to the Purchasing Card Administrator, CFO, Cardholder, and Cardholder Supervisor.
- c. The Purchasing Card Administrator, Finance Department, and Department Directors have the authority to cancel a purchasing card at any time.
- d. The City has the right to deduct the full amount of unauthorized purchases from the cardholder's paycheck(s).
- e. The employee will be notified in writing before the deduction and given ten days to dispute the deduction.