TRAVEL GUIDELINES

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Caribbean Fishery Management Council
270 Muñoz Rivera Ave Ste. 401 San Juan PR 00918-1903
Phone: 787-766-5926 | https://www.caribbeanfmc.com

GENERAL POLICIES

All non-federal members of the Caribbean Fishery Management Council (Council), the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee, Advisory Panels, EBFM-TAP, OEAP, technical teams, work groups, ad hoc committees, staff, special consultants, and other individuals specifically invited to travel are eligible for reimbursement of allowable travel expenses when away from their home or regular work location on authorized Council business.
Travelers are expected to exercise the same care when incurring travel expenses that a prudent person would exercise when traveling at personal expenses.

TRAVEL ORDER

All travel must be authorized and approved in advance through a Travel Order (TO) before travel expenses are incurred or reimbursed. Authorized points of travel are identified on the TO. Any deviation from the authorized itinerary or points of travel that may result in additional reimbursable costs requires prior approval.

TRAVEL ADVANCE

Any travel advance issued will be deducted from the total amount of reimbursable expenses claimed on the Travel Voucher.

METHOD OF TRANSPORTATION

Travel may be performed by common carrier (i.e., air, train, or bus), privately owned vehicle, rental car, or other authorized means of transportation.
The Council will reimburse the authorized method of transportation that provides the greatest overall advantage to the Council, considering cost, travel time, convenience, and other relevant factors. If a traveler chooses a more costly method of transportation for personal preference or convenience, any additional cost is the responsibility of the traveler.

REQUIRED RECEIPTS

In general, travelers must submit receipts for reimbursable expenses of $75.00 or more. The Council reserves the right to request receipts or additional supporting documentation for unusual or questionable expenses below $75.00. Travelers are encouraged to retain receipts for all travel expenses, excluding meals and incidental expenses reimbursed under M&IE, until the travel claim has been reviewed and approved.

Table 1 Provides additional information regarding receipt requirements for specific expense categories.

Expense	Receipt Requirements
Meals & Incidental Expenses	Receipts are not required, regardless of the cost of the meal.
Tolls	Toll receipts (or E-ZPass statements) are required if the **total** of all tolls on a single trip exceeds $50.
Lodging	Original, itemized hotel receipts are required and must show the traveler's name, date(s) occupied, actual rate charged per room, and indication that the amount submitted for reimbursement has been paid in full (zero balance). Temporary lodging receipts issued upon registration are not valid. If the lodging receipt includes costs for parking, internet, phone, dining/room service, or other costs in addition to the room rate and associated taxes and fees, these should be deducted from the lodging total and listed in the appropriate category on the claim form.
Rental Cars	A rental agreement and receipt indicating a zero balance are required. Rental car self-fueling receipts should also be submitted.

Air, train and/or bus	Receipts are required for all common carrier fares exceeding $75.

Rideshare, Taxi, Limo, Shuttle or any hailing service fares	Receipts are required if the **total** of all taxi/shuttle expenses on a single trip exceeds $75.
Parking	Receipts are required if the **total** of all parking expenses on a single trip exceeds $75. If parking is included on a hotel receipt, the traveler should subtract that amount from the "Lodging" total and list it as a separate line item under "Other Expenses."

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

The following sections describe allowable travel expenses that may be claimed on the Travel Voucher and provide instructions for submitting a claim for reimbursement.

AIRFARE

When air travel is required, reservations should generally be made no less than 14 days before the scheduled departure date to avoid excessive airfare costs that may not be reimbursed. Travelers are expected to select the most economical airfare that reasonably meets the requirements of official travel.

Coach -class airfare must be used when available. Premium airfare requires prior authorization from the Executive Director and may be authorized only when justified by the circumstances.

The Council does not reimburse optional early check-in fees (e.g. "EarlyBird Check-In"). Any round-trip airfare exceeding $500 requires prior authorization from the Executive Director. The Executive Director may grant exceptions to this requirement for individuals whose airfare routinely exceeds $500 due to distance from meeting locations, limited access to a major airport, or other relevant factors.

International travel must be approved in advance by the Executive Director.

PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES

Use of a privately owned vehicle (POV) may be more costly than air travel by common carrier or rental car. When applicable, the use of a POV must be justified based on a cost comparison with other available transportation options, considering factors such as total travel distance, number of locations visited, number of travelers and other relevant circumstances.

When use of a POV is authorized primarily for the traveler's personal convenience, reimbursement may not exceed the cost of the authorized or otherwise applicable coach-class airfare, unless approved in advance by the Executive Director.

Mileage reimbursement for an authorized POV will be calculated by multiplying the applicable mileage reimbursement rate by the number of miles traveled, as verified using the PR Mileage Calculator https://act.dtop.pr.gov. Travelers may also be reimbursed for allowable parking, ferry, bridge, road, and tunnel fees. Fines or penalties resulting from parking or traffic violations are not reimbursable.

When two or more travelers travel together in a privately owned vehicle, the names of all travelers must be identified on the travel claim submitted for mileage reimbursement.

When traveling by air, authorized POV mileage to and from the airport and allowable airport parking expenses may be reimbursed. When another person drives the traveler to and/or from the airport, round-trip mileage may be reimbursed, subject to applicable reimbursement limitations.

RIDESHARES, TAXIS, LIMOS, AND SHUTTLES

Reimbursement is allowed for reasonable transportation expenses incurred for official business, including rideshares, taxis, limousines, and hotel/airport shuttles. Complimentary transportation provided by hotels should be used when practical. Reimbursement for transportation between the traveler's home or office and the airport may be allowed on the day of departure for official travel and between the airport and the traveler's home on the day of return.

RENTAL CARS

The use of rental cars can be costly and is generally discouraged. When a rental car is necessary, travelers should rent a mid-size or lower vehicle class, unless an exception for another class of vehicle is authorized in advance, or if the traveler is providing transportation for two or more additional individuals who are also on official travel. The traveler may accept a free upgrade to a larger car or use a free coupon, or other promotional benefit to upgrade. Receipts and the rental agreement are required for all expenses relating to the use of rental cars. When two or more people travel together in a rented vehicle, the names of all travelers must be stated on each travel claim submitted.

The Council discourages the use of pre-paid and post-return fueling options except in circumstances when it is deemed necessary due to time constraints, safety concerns, distance from a fueling station, or other factors. A written justification must be provided to justify pre-paid or post-return fueling. Rental car self-fueling expenses may be submitted with receipts as a separate line-item on the travel expense claim form.

Rental cars require prior authorization and must be approved in advance. If prior authorization was not obtained, a written justification explaining the business necessity and the circumstances must be provided for review and consideration for approval, if applicable.

The Council will not reimburse the costs for collision damage waiver or collision damage insurance available in commercial rental contracts for an extra fee. When reserving a rental vehicle, travelers are encouraged to utilize auto insurance coverage associated with their personal credit cards or through their business or personal insurance.

LODGING

Lodging for Council meetings and other Council functions is typically provided in a room block with a designated rate. These reservations are generally booked under the Council's master account, but it is the responsibility of the traveler to provide a form of payment at the time of lodging. Failure to cancel reservations without justification will require that the traveler pay for assessed penalties and/or cancellation fees. Paid itemized receipts for lodging must accompany the Travel Voucher Form (Expense claim form), and the receipt must indicate a zero balance. Temporary lodging receipts issued upon registration and credit card payment slips are not valid receipts.

When a traveler chooses, as a personal preference, to stay at a location other than the one selected by the Council, commuting costs between the meeting location and the alternate lodging location will not be reimbursed. Unusual circumstances that prevent the traveler from using the assigned meeting hotel accommodations may be considered by the Executive Director for reimbursement of commuting costs on a case-by-case basis.

If the applicable government lodging is insufficient, reimburseemnt above the established lodging rate may be requested on an actual expense basis, subject to prior approval and applicable limits. Actual-expense reimbursement must generally be approved in advance by the Executive Director.

MEALS AND INCIDENTAL EXPENSES (M&IE)

For each day in authorized traveler status, travelers may receive the applicable Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) allowance. Per diem rates vary by location and will be specified on the Travel Order (TO). Applicable rates for specific locations may be obtained through the Defense Travel Management Office | Home Per Diem Rate Lookup.

All travelers should claim the daily M&IE per diem allowance rather than actual expenses. Claims in excess of the authorized per diem allowance will not be reimbursed, regardless of the actual cost of the meal. Receipts are not required for meal and incidental expenses.

M&IE for Full and Partial Days

Travel status begins when the traveler departs from their home or office and ends upon return. The first and last days of authorized travel are reimbursed at 75% of the applicable M&IE rate. Full days in authorized travel status, including meeting or conference days, are reimbursed at 100% of the applicable M&IE rate, subject to any required meal deductions.

Provided Meals

Meals provided by common carrier or complimentary meals provided by a hotel or other nongovernment organization generally do not require a deduction from M&IE. However, the applicable M&IE allowance must be reduced for meals furnished by the Council, a government agency, or as part of a conference or meeting registration fee. The applicable meal amount will be deducted based on the established M&IE meal breakdown. If a traveler chooses to purchase a meal instead of consuming a meal provided at a meeting or event, the traveler will not receive additional reimbursement for that meal unless approved by the Executive Director. Light refreshments such as coffee, milk, soda, cookies, fruit, chips, are not considered meals and do not require a deduction from M&IE.

Tips and Gratuities

Tips for meals and housekeeping services are included in the M&IE allowance and are not separately reimbursable. Other necessary and reasonable gratuities may be reimbursable when adequately justified.

OTHER EXPENSES

Incidental travel expenses submitted for reimbursement (e.g., telephone, internet service, supplies, or other necessary services) must include an adequate explanation of the nature and business purpose of the expense and demonstrate that the cost is reasonable and related to official Council business.
Other authorized travel expenses may include airport parking, rideshare or shuttle services, excess baggage, workshop/meeting registration, business-related internet/Wi-Fi, shipping of meeting materials, baggage storage, photocopying/printing services, equipment rental, and other approved expenses necessary to conduct official business. Receipts and authorization must be provided as required by the applicable CFMC travel requirements.

TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES

Travelers must submit Travel Voucher Forms **no later than 30 days after the last day of travel**. To avoid delays in processing reimbursement, travelers should provide and explanation for expenses or circumstances that may appear unusual or require additional clarification. Examples include an earlier-than-expected departure, a delayed return following the conclusion of official business, or unusually high mileage.
All claims must contain a certification by the traveler that expenses claimed are valid official costs and do not include personal expenses. The certification also assures that the period of travel shown is accurate and that costs claimed will not be presented for reimbursement elsewhere, which would result in a dual reimbursement.

TRAVEL VOUCHER FORM INSTRUCTIONS

1. TRAVELER'S NAME: Enter your full name (or the name of the traveler).
IMPORTANT: The information required for the fields (2-7) will be provided to each traveler in the Authorized Travel Order (TO). Enter the information exactly as it appears on the Traveler Order.
2. MEETING NAME: Enter the name of the meeting or workshop as it is listed on the TO.
3. MEETING DATES: Enter the meeting dates listed on the TO.
4. LOCATION: Enter the location (city and state) of the meeting or workshop as it is listed on the TO.

5. TRAVEL ORDER NUMBER: Enter the TO number listed on the TO.
6. LODGING PER DIEM: Enter the per diem rate for lodging listed on the TO.
7. MEALS & INCIDENTAL EXPENSES (M&IE) PER DIEM: Enter the meals and incidental expenses per diem rate listed on the TO.
8. TRAVEL SCHEDULE: Enter the flight itinerary, including the date, departure time and arrival time.
9. DEPART RESIDENCE: Enter the date and time when you left your residence. If you voluntarily travel to a meeting location earlier than necessary, you should enter the date and time when you began official Council business.
10. FLIGHT: Enter the departure time of the connecting flight, if applicable and previously authorized by the Executive Director.
11. FLIGHT: Enter the arrival time of the connecting flight, if applicable and previously authorized by the Executive Director.
12. RETURN TO RESIDENCE: Enter the date and time when you returned to your residence. If you return later than necessary, enter the date and time when your Council business concluded.
13. AIR, BUS AND/OR TRAIN SUBTOTAL: Enter the total amount of air, bus and/or train fares. Please note that the Council does not reimburse early check in fees.
14. RIDESHARES/TAXI/LIMO/SHUTTLE OR ANY RIDE HAILING SERVICE FARES: Enter the total amount paid for rideshare, taxi, limo, shuttle or other ride-hailing services fares. Receipts are required when the fare for a single trip exceeds $75.
15. TAXI/LIMO/SHUTTLE EXPENSE SUBTOTAL: Enter the total amount of all rideshare or other ride-hailing service fares reported in Field 14.
16. PER DIEM BREAKDOWN (DAILY EXPENSES)
• **DATE:** Enter the date of each travel day on a separate line using the mm/dd/yy format.
• **LODGING:** Enter the lodging room rate for each day, as shown on your hotel invoice. Do not include additional expenses such as room service, internet, telephone charges, or parking. An itemized receipt is required for any expense exceeding $75.00.
• **MEALS AND INCIDENTALS:** When travel lasts more than 12 hours but less than 24 hours, the traveler receives 75 percent of the applicable M&IE rate. Full travel days are reimbursed at 100 percent of the applicable M&IE rate. If a meal was provided by the Council, another government agency, or as part of the conference registration fee, deduct the applicable meal amount. For current Meals & Incidental (M&IE) per diem rates, visit: https://www.travel.dod.mil/Travel
• **DAILY TOTAL:** Add the amounts in the M&IE and HOTEL columns. Enter the total and provide any necessary information in the EXPLANATIONS/REMARKS section.
EXPLANATIONS section.
17. DAILY EXPENSE SUBTOTAL: Add the amounts in the DAILY TOTAL column and enter the subtotal.
18. TRAVEL EXPENSES
• **PRIVATE VEHICLE MILES (POV):** Enter the total number of miles traveled in a privately owned vehicle (POV). Multiply the number of miles by the applicable mileage rate listed on the form and enter the amount in the field below. When two or more authorized travelers travel together in one POV, list the names of all travelers in the EXPLANATIONS/REMARKS section. Please click the link https://act.dtop.pr.gov/calculadora-de-millaje to calculate the miles traveled.
• **RENTAL CAR:** Enter the total cost of the rental car, as shown on the rental agreement. List rental-car fuel expenses separately under OTHER EXPENSES.
• **PARKING FEES:** Enter all parking charges, including parking charges shown on your hotel bill. A receipt is required for any individual expense exceeding $75.00.
• **ROAD TOLLS:** Enter the total cost of road and/or bridge tolls.
• **HOTEL TAXES**: Enter the total hotel taxes shown on your hotel receipt. A receipt is required if the total exceeds $75.
• **OTHER EXPENSES:** Enter the total amount of all other or miscellaneous expenses. List each individual expense in the EXPLANATIONS/REMARKS section.

19. TRAVEL EXPENSE SUBTOTAL: Add all amounts in the TRAVEL EXPENSES column and enter the subtotal.
20. GRAND TOTAL: Add the AIR, BUS, AND/OR TRAIN SUBTOTAL, RIDESHARE/TAXI/LIMO/SHUTTLE EXPENSE SUBTOTAL, DAILY PERDIEM EXPENSE SUBTOTAL, and TRAVEL EXPENSE SUBTOTAL. Enter the final amount.
21. EXPLANATIONS: Use this section to provide any explanations, details, or comments regarding your travel expenses.
22. SIGNATURE: Sign or type your name to verify the accuracy of the expenses listed on your claim form and certify that you will not receive reimbursement for these expenses from any other source.
23. RECEIPTS: Attach all required receipts. A lodging receipt is required regardless of the amount. Receipts are also required for each authorized expense exceeding $75.00. Physical or scanned receipts are acceptable. See the CFMC Travel Guidelines Summary for additional information regarding receipt requirements.
24. RETURN completed form and receipts: Submit the completed form and all required receipts within 30 days after completing your travel:

EMAIL: vivian_ruizcamacho_cfmc@yahoo.com
mairizarry_cfmc@yahoo.com

MAIL: Caribbean Fishery Management Council
270 Ave Munoz Rivera Ave., Suite 401 San Juan, P.R. 00918-1903

Questions? Contact Vivian Ruiz Camacho, Accountant Technician- vivian_ruizcamacho_cfmc@yahoo.com , (787) 408-7473
María de los A. Irizarry, Fiscal Officer mairizarry_cfmc@yahoo.com , (787) 379-6053

**FRAUDULENT CLAIM- Falsification of an item in an expense account works forfeiture of the claim (28 USC 2514) imprisonment for not more than 5 years or both (18 USC 287; ID 1001).

DISALLOWANCES

Disallowances to a reimbursement claim may occur during the review and processing of travel expenses. A claimed expense may be disallowed due to missing or insufficient documentation, discrepancies in cost comparisons, calculation errors, inadequate justification, lack of required prior authorization, or other circumstances that make an expense ineligible for reimbursement.
A disallowed amount may be reconsidered upon submission of the required receipt, supporting documentation, written justification, or other requested information. Travelers should provide sufficient explanation and supporting documentation for any expense that may appear unusual or requires additional clarification.

**FRAUDULENT CLAIM- Falsification of an item in an expense account works forfeiture of the claim (28 USC 2514) and may result in a fine of not more than $10,000 or imprisonment for not more than 5 years or both (18 USC 287; ID 1001).

NEED ASSISTANCE?

For travel assistance, please contact the appropriate staff member below or call our office at: (787) 766-5926
Travel Forms, Reimbursements, and Receipts: **Vivian Ruiz Camacho**| **Accountant Technician**
vivian_ruizcamacho_cfmc@yahoo.com
Approval of alternate Travel Dates: **María de los A. Irizarry**| **Fiscal Officer**
mairizarry_cfmc@yahoo.com
Reimbursement Processing and Status: **Luz Gonzalez**| **Administrative Officer**
luz.gonzalez_cfmc@yahoo.com
Hotel Reservation and Assistance: **Diana Martino**| **Meeting Coordinator**
diana.martino_cfmc@yahoo.com