



ASTSWMO, Providing Pathways to Our
Nation's Environmental Stewardship Since 1974

ASTSWMO Travel Policy

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General Overview

ASTSWMO's general policy is to ensure quick, equitable, and accurate reimbursement of travelers on pre-approved Association or grant-funded business. The Association recognizes that all travel performed on behalf of the Association is a voluntary and generous effort and, as such, travelers receive fair and complete reimbursement of all allowable claimed travel expenses. This requires the full cooperation of all parties in thoroughly understanding and adhering to the procedures and limitations of the Association's reimbursement policies.

Travel reimbursed through the Association will follow federal guidelines for travel expenditures to the maximum extent possible, as tailored to the special needs of ASTSWMO as a non-profit, non-governmental, corporate entity. These travel reimbursement policies and procedures represent the Association's modifications of those core federal guidelines and explain the conditions under which the Association will reimburse travelers who have participated in a reimbursement-eligible ASTSWMO-sponsored activity.

Only allowable expenses incurred due to those pre-approved, Association-sponsored Subcommittee, Task Force, Focus Group, or other meetings and activities will be reimbursed. Individual travel advance payments cannot be made to State travelers through the Association.

Claiming Reimbursement

ASTSWMO will directly reimburse the traveler, if expenses have been incurred by the individual, or ASTSWMO will reimburse the State, if it furnishes advance payments to the traveler. It is even possible to divide the total costs and reimburse appropriate costs directly to the State (i.e., airfare costs contracted directly by the State travel office) and other personal expenses directly to the traveler. **If reimbursing both the traveler and the State, two separate travel reimbursement forms, each with appropriate receipts, must be submitted for payment.**

Travelers may claim reimbursement only for the travel expenses associated with their attendance and direct, timely travel to and from the approved event. Meal and incidental expenses may be claimed from the time the traveler departs for the airport or train station (or the time you depart by car to drive to a meeting) until the time the traveler returns to home or work from the airport/train station. As noted in the Use of Privately-Owned Vehicle section, because travel within the Continental U.S. can be made in a single day by air travel, meals and incidentals will be limited to a single day if you drive to a meeting. (ASTSWMO does not reimburse travelers for hotel or meal expenses associated with additional stay-over days before or after the meeting; see the Special Travel section for more information.) Any personal time or travel interruptions must be clearly identified on the travel claim form and no reimbursements for personal expenses will be made for those periods. When exceptional circumstances require deviations from your planned travel (adverse weather, carrier breakdowns), **those exceptional circumstances must be clarified by a brief note included with your reimbursement submission**, in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

Please use the claim form provided to you by ASTSWMO staff for the specific sponsored event; it contains a specific code for accounting purposes, the current per diem rate for that particular meeting location,

and the current mileage rate. All reimbursable expenses must be **itemized** separately by date on the ASTSWMO Travel Reimbursement Form (*see sample*) provided by ASTSWMO staff for the meeting for which you are claiming reimbursement. **Please note that this form is a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet coded for the specific meeting attended, with a first page for recording in-kind services. Please use the form provided for the meeting, as this will reduce calculation errors and shorten processing time.** If the travel exceeds six (6) days, copy the form as a continuation sheet, and enter the cumulative amounts on the final page. **Be sure to sign the form to certify that the claim is correct. ASTSWMO cannot process a claim without an original certification signature.** Additionally, ASTSWMO recommends making a copy of your reimbursement and all pertinent receipts before sending them to the Washington office in case they are lost in the mail.

Key points:

- ASTSWMO provides reimbursement for pre-approved travelers attending pre-approved meetings, conferences, etc. only.
- ASTSWMO reimburses for expenses only as allowed by the Association's travel reimbursement policy.
- The Association can reimburse both the traveler and the State for their respective costs, but requires a **separate reimbursement form for each entity receiving reimbursement**.
- Use only the form provided to you by the Association for the meeting or other event that you are attending. The form has been specially coded to account for current per diem and mileage rates, as well as our funding sources.
- Expenses must be itemized by day.
- Please include a note of explanation if;
 - Your travel deviates from the prearranged schedule due to circumstances beyond your control.
 - Any other irregularity occurs with your travel, expenses, or form.
- Make a copy of your entire reimbursement packet before sending it in case it is lost in the mail.
- Signature is required.

Required Receipts

Each item of expense exceeding **\$75** must be supported by an **original** receipt issued by the vendor. **Failure to include these original receipts is one of the most common oversights for individual travelers and results in a significant delay in their reimbursements.** Only in those cases where ASTSWMO will be reimbursing the State rather than the individual, and the State regulations require that the original receipt be retained in the State records, are legible copies acceptable with the annotation on the form that "The State of _____ retains the original receipts." This requirement for a receipt includes such common items as meals, taxis, and airport parking charges when the total exceeds \$75. In those cases where a receipt is not submitted with the request for reimbursement, the Association must limit the reimbursement for that item to no more than \$75. In exceptional cases where receipts could not be obtained or are lost, please contact the ASTSWMO office to review alternative ways to present evidence of payment. Necessary receipts for lodging costs, transportation by common carrier, meals and incidentals, and other allowable expenses are discussed below. If the traveler is concerned with the presence of personal account numbers

on any original receipt provided to ASTSWMO, that information may be obliterated or cut out as long as the required itemized information is fully legible. ASTSWMO accepts no responsibility for misuse of any personal credit account information provided with reimbursement claims.

Key points:

- Expenses totaling over \$75 must be supported by an original receipt.
 - Airfare
 - Hotel
 - Taxi (to and from airport)
- If necessary receipts are lost, contact ASTSWMO to discuss your options.

Transportation

Reimbursement for common air carrier or railroad expenses will be paid at no more than the standard coach class rate. When a choice of common air carrier is available, expenses will be reimbursed not to exceed the lowest cost of that standard coach class in arriving at the destination. While use of Privately Owned Vehicles (POV) for extended travel is discouraged, and the Association accepts no liability for such use in any case or instance, reimbursement is possible subject to special restrictions described in detail below.

Reimbursement for Air & Train Travel

Air travel is the most frequently used mode of transportation for State members. ASTSWMO will reimburse travelers with **prior** approval to receive reimbursement for expenses incurred in relation to ASTSWMO-sponsored meetings or activities for **non-refundable airline fares and for reasonable agent or airline service fees for ticketing or ticket changes**. ASTSWMO reimburses for a standard coach fare. Acceptable airfare receipts include the customer's copy of the ticket or a paid invoice from a travel agency or airline, either of which **must reflect the traveler's name, the dates and destinations of travel, and the total costs paid**. If extra airfare is required (e.g., a necessary change in flights), the traveler must ensure that he/she obtains a counter receipt for the additional amount in order to receive reimbursement. State travelers are required to use electronic airline tickets and their receipt is an e-mail confirmation of the ticket transaction. These e-mails are acceptable receipts, if they contain the same minimum information noted above, and travelers should include all pages of the document. Some passenger airport check-in stations also allow passengers to print out a receipt that normally contains this same information. We have found that even minimum documentation intended more as a traveler itinerary can be strengthened by the inclusion of other evidence of actual use of the flight such as boarding passes in order to meet these minimum information criteria. Service fees charged by travel agencies and airlines are an allowable expense, but their cost must be documented on the invoice or by a separate receipt.

ASTSWMO will reimburse each funded attendee for one bag at the least expensive price, regardless of whether the fee is for carry-on or checked luggage; the cost of checking luggage beyond the least expensive bag is the responsibility of the traveler. For example, if a traveler pays for two bags, the first is carried on at \$25 and the second is checked at \$35, ASTSWMO will reimburse \$25 for the first bag only. Alternatively, if the first bag is free and the second is \$30, ASTSWMO will reimburse the traveler for the \$30 bag fee.

ASTSWMO does not reimburse for premium seat upgrades or first class airfare. If there is an extenuating circumstance that requires a premium seat upgrade or first class ticket for any leg of your travel, the traveler must submit a request to the Executive Director. The request must be approved by the Executive Director prior to purchasing the ticket.

If you decide to change your travel plans and, for example, take an earlier flight, the stand-by fee cannot be reimbursed as a travel expense. However, you can claim it as an incidental expense (as you may with other personal travel, such as taxi/metro fare to/from restaurants and other taxi/metro fare during your trip that is not related to ASTSWMO business), but it is subject to the same daily limit as all meal and incidental costs.

We encourage travelers to confirm their registration before booking non-refundable tickets. If you book your flight before receiving registration and reimbursement confirmation and then are unable to register and/or receive reimbursement, ASTSWMO will not be able to reimburse you for the cost of your ticket. If you mistakenly book your flights for the incorrect dates, ASTSWMO can reimburse you for the new cost of your ticket but not for the change fees.

ASTSWMO does not reimburse the cost of travel insurance.

If train is the primary mode of transportation, a receipt or ticket with the price of the fare must be included.

Key points:

- **ASTSWMO reimburses for non-refundable tickets only.** If you wish to purchase a refundable ticket for reimbursed travel, you must have the Executive Director's approval prior to purchase.
- The airfare or train receipt must show the traveler's name, the dates and destinations of travel, and the total cost of travel.
- Confirmation emails, airline-provided itineraries, boarding passes, etc., can be used alone or in combination to provide the required information: passenger name, itinerary with dates and times, and total airfare cost.
- ASTSWMO reimburses for reasonable service fees.
- ASTSWMO will reimburse you for the least expensive of your bags, regardless of whether the fee is for a carry-on bag or a checked bag.
- You must provide a receipt for **any** change of travel costs.
- ASTSWMO does **not** reimburse for premium seat upgrades or first class airfare.
- ASTSWMO **does** reimburse for train travel.
- Stand-by fees cannot be claimed as a travel expense but can be claimed as an incidental expense.
- If you book your flight before receiving registration and reimbursement confirmation and then are unable to register and/or receive reimbursement, ASTSWMO will not be able to reimburse you for the cost of your ticket.
- If you book your flights incorrectly and must change them, ASTSWMO will cover the cost of the corrected ticket but not the cost of the change fees.

Unused Tickets

Due to funding rule limitations, ASTSWMO cannot be responsible for airline penalty tickets should the traveler be unable to make the flight. Travelers are personally responsible for such non-refundable common carrier tickets, and ASTSWMO cannot reimburse for these expenses if the non-refundable ticket is not used. However, if a non-refundable airline ticket is purchased by a member and not used for the original travel, most airlines, assuming proper prior notifications are made, will allow that ticket to be applied to a future trip, with the addition of a change fee (usually around \$150). ASTSWMO can reimburse a member for both the ticket cost and the change fee when that ticket is used for travel to and from an ASTSWMO-approved event. In the event the ticket cannot be used for ASTSWMO travel and the only option is to rebook for personal travel, then approval must be received from the ASTSWMO Executive Director. However, the traveler must be sure to obtain a receipt for the change fee amount.

Key points:

- ASTSWMO will not reimburse for unused non-refundable tickets.
- ASTSWMO will reimburse for the change fee associated with changing a non-refundable ticket once the ticket is used for ASTSWMO-sponsored travel. In the event the ticket cannot be used for ASTSWMO travel and the only option is to rebook for personal travel, then approval must be received from the ASTSWMO Executive Director. You must provide a receipt for the change fee for reimbursement.
- ASTSWMO will cover the additional cost of a new ticket only when an unused ticket is rebooked for ASTSWMO-funded travel.

Special Travel

ASTSWMO recognizes that there will be occasions when travelers must engage in State business or even personal travel in conjunction with ASTSWMO-sponsored travel. For that reason, the Association has developed a process for exceptions to its normal procedures for air or rail travel that will allow State travelers to take personal time or stopover in other locations en route to or from an ASTSWMO event. **However, these exceptions to policy require that prior approval has been obtained from the ASTSWMO Washington, DC, office even if the special fare costs less than the standard fare. Retroactive approval cannot be given.** Any traveler contemplating taking personal time or making a stopover en route to or from the ASTSWMO event should carefully read the requirements necessary for prior approval (Enclosure 1) governing exceptions to ASTSWMO travel policies.

Key points:

- If the itinerary consists of anything other than travel directly to the meeting and home again on the pre-approved dates, the Special Travel form **must** be submitted **prior** to travel.
- Even if the special fare is less than the standard fare, a form must be submitted prior to travel.
- Please include a copy of the Special Travel Form's approval page, as faxed or emailed back to you with staff signature and approved travel cost, when you submit your reimbursement to ASTSWMO.
- **Special travel must be approved prior to travel. If no approval, then the reimbursement for air or train fare will be denied.**

Use of Privately Owned Vehicles (POV) or State Vehicle

If the traveler voluntarily elects to use a POV or State vehicle for transportation to a reimbursable event when the **total round-trip mileage does not exceed 500 miles**, ASTSWMO will reimburse for such use at the Association's prevailing mileage rate. ASTSWMO's mileage rate is normally the most recent federal rate for POV reimbursement, although ASTSWMO may not put a new rate into effect for its own reimbursement purposes on the same effective date as the federal government. Please calculate your mileage at the rate indicated on the reimbursement form for the meeting attended. The traveler is responsible for any gasoline, mechanical repairs, etc., as the mileage rate is intended and priced to cover all of those expenses. Because travel within the Continental U.S. can be made in a single day by air travel, no additional reimbursement for any individual hotel expenses will be made, and meals and incidentals will be limited to a single day. **Hotel parking costs will be reimbursable up to the full cost of self-parking. If self-park is not available, ASTSWMO will reimburse the full cost of valet parking. A receipt is required when the total cost of the parking exceeds \$75, regardless of the daily rate.** If multiple days of parking exceed a total of \$75, a receipt or receipts must be submitted with the reimbursement request. Please remember that only the driver/owner of the vehicle may claim the mileage rate, and passengers may not.

When a State vehicle is used, ASTSWMO will reimburse for tolls, hotel parking (see above paragraph), and fuel costs. Travelers using this form of transportation should indicate "State Vehicle Used" in the Transportation section of the ASTSWMO travel form to clarify their use of that transportation mode. . Out of pocket expenses for fuel, parking and tolls may be claimed by the driver on his/her individual travel form, but these expenses must be properly supported by receipts. If payable to the State then a separate reimbursement form must be submitted.

ASTSWMO reserves the right to verify any mileage claimed using commonly available trip mapping websites, such as Google, Yahoo, or MapQuest.

If the total round-trip mileage for either a POV or State vehicle will exceed 500 miles, no reimbursement can be made for mileage or any other associated cost unless prior approval has been obtained from the ASTSWMO Washington, DC, office. Retroactive approval will not be granted. Any traveler contemplating use of either a POV or State vehicle in excess of 500 miles round trip should carefully read the notification requirements necessary for prior approval (*Enclosure 1*) that govern exceptions to ASTSWMO travel policies.

Key points:

- POV and State vehicle travel is reimbursable up to 500 miles round-trip.
- When the round-trip mileage is greater than 500 miles, the Special Travel Form must be used to obtain **prior** approval. Retroactive approval won't be granted.
- ASTSWMO will not reimburse for any additional hotel nights incurred due to car travel.
- Hotel parking is reimbursable. If self-parking is available, ASTSWMO reimburses up to the cost of self-parking. If only valet is available, ASTSWMO reimburses the full cost of valet parking.
- Tolls must be supported by receipts.
- If a State vehicle is used, please indicate as such on your Travel Reimbursement Form.
- When a State vehicle is used, reimbursement must be made directly to the State.

Rental Vehicles

As a policy, ASTSWMO **will not** reimburse travelers for the cost of rental vehicles unless the use of a rental vehicle is essential due to the location of the meeting, lack of public transportation, or other necessity. ASTSWMO will approve car rental only on a case-by-case basis, and **prior approval by the Association is required in order to receive reimbursement for car rentals**. If you believe that a rental vehicle is appropriate in a given travel situation, please refer to *Enclosure 1* for the necessary procedures which must be followed in order to obtain **prior approval** for the use of rental vehicles. When a pre-approved rental vehicle is hired, the contract and final receipt, including those receipts for any additional gasoline purchases, must be included with the reimbursement claim to document the use and all associated costs. **ASTSWMO will neither provide approval of expenses incurred for the use of rental vehicles after the travel has taken place** nor reimburse any rental-related expenses incurred in that travel, such as parking, tolls, etc.

Key points:

- ASTSWMO does not reimburse for the costs associated with rental vehicles unless the rental vehicle is absolutely essential to meeting attendance.
- Prior approval is mandatory for reimbursement and will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Use Enclosure 1.
- When approved, the contract and final receipts (including those for gasoline) must be included with the Travel Reimbursement Form.

Meals & Incidental Expenses

The maximum allowances for hotel, meals and incidental expenses will be closely aligned to those set by the executive branch of the federal government. ***Current rates for the specific location and time period are located at the government website: <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem>.***

Meals

Although ASTSWMO **does not pay a daily per diem rate** as many States and the federal government do, the total daily reimbursements for meals and incidental expenses claimed by individuals will be made on the basis of actual costs and capped at no more than the maximum allowable federal per diem rates for meals and incidentals for the city concerned. Daily meal and incidental rates vary according to the city in which the sponsored event occurs. You will find that information on the GSA web site noted above. Please note that this is only a maximum reimbursable amount per day. This cap, or maximum limit, on meals and incidentals does not change ASTSWMO's basic policy of reimbursement on the basis of actual costs only. **State travelers should continue to report actual itemized costs paid for meals and incidentals in all cases**. Even if your State reimburses you on a per diem basis, **we can reimburse only on the basis of actual costs paid, and the actual cost is the figure which must be entered on your reimbursement form for each meal or daily incidental total**. The cap or maximum federal daily payment will come into effect only should actual expenditures exceed this federal limit for the day (e.g., your total daily M&I expenses are \$77.50 on a given day spent in Washington, DC, which has a maximum cap of \$69.00 per day, in which case you would receive only the federal maximum of \$69.00 for that day).

Claims for meals should not be made when a meal is provided by ASTSWMO and the traveler had the opportunity to consume that meal. When a meal is provided at the sponsored event (i.e., a lunch with a

speaker), ASTSWMO retains the right to deduct up to the actual cost for that specific meal from the total allowable daily maximum meals and incidentals rate available to the individual and/or mark that meal as “provided” on the reimbursement form so that travelers cannot claim expenses for that meal. Please ensure that you make an individual entry for **each** meal/incidental expense, by day, in the space provided for expenses claimed. **Claims without itemized meal costs for each day claimed will be returned to the traveler for completion before payment can be made. Please do not include the unallowable costs of alcoholic beverages in meal costs.**

Key points:

- Reimbursement is made on the basis of actual cost and capped at the federal daily per diem rate.
- As always, all expenses over \$75 must be supported by a receipt.
- When the Association provides a meal, it retains the right to a) deduct the actual cost of that meal from that day’s maximum reimbursable amount or b) disallow travelers to claim costs for that meal, assuming the traveler purchased the meal instead of taking advantage of the meal provided.
- **The Association does not reimburse for the costs associated with alcohol, including the cost of the beverage itself, taxes, and gratuities.**

Incidentals

Incidental Expenses include tips, gratuities, and transportation for personal reasons (i.e., travel to and from restaurants). ASTSWMO does not place dollar limits on incidental expenses, but they must be included within the daily cap or maximum payment for meals and incidental expenses for that date. For example, if a traveler uses taxis to go to and from dinner while in Washington, DC, those costs would be listed as incidental expenses within the M&I section of the reimbursement form, along with any tips to the driver, bellmen, etc. The day’s maximum M&I reimbursement will be limited to the maximum daily rate for the destination city.

Key points:

- Tips, other gratuities, and transportation to and from the hotel to meeting location must be included as incidental expenses (as opposed to claiming them as other or travel expenses).
- The daily Meals and Incidentals Maximum applies to these costs.

Lodging

Hotel arrangements will be at the best available government, convention, or corporate rate provided by hotels and **must be supported by a complete hotel receipt which itemizes the daily rate, taxes, and room-night usage claimed by the traveler. Credit card receipts, etc., that do not reflect this itemized information are not acceptable substitutes.** In cases where ASTSWMO has established a special room block and meeting rate at or near the meeting location (or at an overflow hotel), those facilities **must** be used, and their contracted rate will be the maximum amount of lodging costs reimbursable to an individual. If the room is shared by someone not participating in the ASTSWMO activity, only the single rate may be claimed by the ASTSWMO traveler. When the traveler cannot obtain the government rate

for the area or the negotiated rate for the hotel under ASTSWMO contract, it is his/her responsibility to discuss the situation with the ASTSWMO staff to explore lodging alternatives **prior** to making the travel. **ASTSWMO reserves the right to limit reimbursement to either the government rate or contract rate in any case where the traveler pays a higher rate for his/her hotel room.**

Travelers will only be reimbursed for the number of travel days/hotel nights indicated in the ASTSWMO announcement of the sponsored event. Should the traveler have an individual requirement for additional days/nights based on travel distance, inadequate flight schedules, etc., it is their responsibility to contact the ASTSWMO office and resolve the matter **prior** to travel.

Key points:

- A complete, itemized, original hotel receipt is required for reimbursement.
- The Association will not reimburse for hotel costs exceeding the pre-approved rate.
- When the room block is full and the traveler cannot find a room at the negotiated rate, the traveler should contact ASTSWMO staff to find a solution.
- ASTSWMO will reimburse for the number of nights indicated on the Association's event announcement.
- If special travel requires additional nights stay, the traveler must submit a Special Travel Form for pre-approval. However, the cost of additional nights stay in the hotel is not reimbursable.
- If standard travel requires an additional night in the hotel due to travel distance, inadequate flight schedule, etc., please contact your program staff at the ASTSWMO office.

Other Allowable Expenses

ASTSWMO has a limited ability to reimburse travelers for some other allowable individual expenses. Please note that receipts are required for any cost over \$75 for any of these indicated activities.

Registration

Registration fees for meetings and events are **not** normally reimbursable by ASTSWMO. Prior approval from ASTSWMO's Washington office is required before any payment can be made for such registration fees. Approval for registration fees will not be provided after the fact.

Airport, Train Station, & Hotel Parking

ASTSWMO will reimburse for the cost of standard airport or rail station parking costs. ASTSWMO will not reimburse for the use of valet parking, special daily rate lots, or for any other services performed while the automobile is left with a parking service, such as carwashes, etc. For hotel parking, ASTSWMO will reimburse up to the full cost of self-parking. If self-park is not available, ASTSWMO will reimburse the full cost of valet parking. **A receipt is required when the total cost of the parking exceeds \$75, regardless of the daily rate. This also applies to transportation to/from the airport on the arrival and departure dates.**

Local Transportation

Costs of taxis, limo/van services, bus, or rail transportation costs are fully reimbursable for the costs of local transportation only when required **to reach and return from the sponsored activity** (e.g., from the

airport to/from the hotel, from home to/from the airport, the Hall of States to/from the hotel for a Task Force or Focus Group meeting). However, use of these same local transportation services for **personal use** (e.g., a taxi from the hotel to a restaurant) is considered an **incidental expense** and is only reimbursed within the daily maximum for the meeting location. If a trip via any of these methods exceeds \$75, a receipt is required. Please list taxi expenses separately if the combined use exceeds \$75 and thus appear to require a receipt. This listing can be a pen and ink annotation at the bottom of the form.

State-specific Reimbursements

When ASTSWMO is reimbursing a State for the travel of an individual, it will make every effort to allow as reimbursable any expenses already paid by the State under the State travel regulations. However, ASTSWMO retains the right to determine whether any other expenses are allowable under the Association's interpretations of its grant responsibilities and other federal regulations. When individual travelers are requesting reimbursement directly from ASTSWMO, those reimbursements must be in accordance with these ASTSWMO procedures, without regard to their State's travel regulations.

Unallowable Expenses

Travelers should not request reimbursement for personal items, alcoholic beverages, resort fees, ATM fees, entertainment, or pay-TV, as no reimbursement can be made for these expenses. While attending ASTSWMO sponsored activities, travelers should not assume that reimbursement will be paid for expenditures such as convenience printing, secretarial services, audio-visual supplies, equipment rental, or other business services. Please consult with on-site ASTSWMO staff before making any such expenditure to determine if that service can be provided in another manner or if it will be allowable.

ASTSWMO will not reimburse travelers for checked luggage beyond the cost of a traveler's least expensive bag. This includes charges for carry-on bags; if an airline charges for carry-on luggage, ASTSWMO's policy to reimburse for the cost of the least expensive bag will apply to the less expensive bag, even if that bag is a carry-on.

ASTSWMO will not reimburse the additional cost for upgraded (i.e., extra leg room, exit row) seats. If standard fare seats are not available and you must upgrade your seats or fares to book your preferred flights, you must contact ASTSWMO before booking the flight.

ASTSWMO will not reimburse refundable airfare unless an exception has been approved by the Executive Director.

ASTSWMO will not reimburse the cost of travel insurance.

ASTSWMO will not reimburse for the cost of the original or primary ticket when a member uses companion airfare to travel.

ASTSWMO does not purchase or reimburse travelers for carbon offsets.

Travelers must confirm their registration before booking non-refundable tickets. If you book your flight before receiving registration and reimbursement confirmation and then are unable to register and/or receive reimbursement, ASTSWMO will not be able to reimburse you for the cost of your ticket. If you mistakenly book your flights for the incorrect dates, ASTSWMO can reimburse you for the new cost of your ticket but not for the change fees.

For Task Force and Focus Group meetings: ASTSWMO will not reimburse the cost of taxis between the hotel and the Hall of the States unless the taxi is shared with another ASTSWMO member or meeting attendee.

Communications Services

ASTSWMO will not reimburse for calls or other communications services, including internet access, even though the expense might be for official State business. ASTSWMO will not reimburse for personal calls home or for other personal arrangements or activities. These include expenses for use of telephones, faxes, messenger services, etc.; these expenses can only be reimbursed when the use of that service is directly in support of the ASTSWMO sponsored activity (e.g., telephone calls to airlines regarding flight adjustments, telephone calls to speakers regarding schedules or agenda changes). If you are claiming such a communications cost incurred in support of the sponsored activity (such as a call for a taxi or shuttle reservation), list the expense under "Other" expenses and annotate the actual purpose of the expense at the bottom of the form.

Payment of Reimbursement

Reimbursements by the Association will be made either to the individual or State, as indicated on the claim form. **In all cases, reimbursement to individuals will be in the amount of actual costs incurred, and not at a per diem rate.** As indicated above, reimbursement for each day's meals and incidentals will be limited to maximum federally authorized levels. Direct payments made to States will be at the actual costs the State paid to employees, except that reimbursement for meals and incidentals will be subject to the same federal rate limits for meals and incidentals that apply to individuals. Payments will be made by check mailed to the individual or State office at the address specified on the claim form. **It is recommended that an individual traveler's check be mailed to their home address to avoid delays in mail delivery through State agency offices.**

All individual reimbursement claims must be made on the ASTSWMO Travel Reimbursement Form provided to you for the specific event or activity (see sample at *Enclosure 2*) and must be accompanied by any required original receipts. **ASTSWMO requests that you complete the form in Excel and that you not use a form forwarded to you from a coworker.** As you complete the travel claim form, please refer to the ASTSWMO Travelers Checklist (*Enclosure 3*) to make sure you have avoided the most common errors we encounter.

Deadlines & Limitations

All individual claims must be postmarked within **30 days** of the completion of travel; **ASTSWMO will not reimburse claims submitted outside of the prescribed timeframe.** If the individual employee obtains reimbursement from a sponsoring State, and the Association will be requested to reimburse the State, ASTSWMO also must be provided the travel claim form within **30 days** of travel completion. **In all cases,**

the traveler must personally sign the claim form to certify its accuracy. If forms are received unsigned, they will be returned to the traveler for completion, and cannot be processed until the signed copy is received. **Similarly, faxed copies of the form are not sufficient for reimbursement; a fax received within 30 days does not exempt you from the 30-day postmark rule.**

ASTSWMO requests that all reimbursement checks be deposited within 30 days of the issue date and reserves the right not to reissue checks not deposited after 60 days.

Key points:

- **Reimbursement claims must be postmarked within 30 days of the travel for which you are claiming reimbursement. Faxes are not acceptable.**
- Do not forget to **SIGN** the Travel Reimbursement Form!
- **ASTSWMO will not reimburse claims submitted outside of the prescribed timeframe.**
- Please do not send your reimbursement to ASTSWMO program staff; this may delay your reimbursement. **Please address it to the attention of the Accounting Department.**
- Deposit your reimbursement check within 60 days.

Unusual & Unforeseen Events

In any unusual situations, the best course of action will always be to reach prior agreement with the Association's Washington office (telephone 202-640-1060, fax 202-331-3254, or e-mail), but if that is not possible (as is the case in some emergencies, i.e., flight cancellations for weather, medical emergency, etc.), the traveler will need to include a brief written explanation of the situation in question with the reimbursement form. This will allow prompt discussions of options and payment decisions, and it will serve as documentation for the Association's financial files. There is no requirement for any claim form or letter of elaboration to be formal or typewritten. As long as the materials are legible and coherent, they will meet all Association needs for quick action. The Association will consider each case on its own merits and, wherever possible, accommodate the traveler's unusual circumstances, as long as they were beyond his/her control.

Attending ASTSWMO Events on Personal Time

Due to recent reductions in out-of-State travel by many States, it is very important to note that, if a traveler is taking vacation time to attend a meeting, ASTSWMO will only reimburse the traveler if the State approves the use of vacation time. **If the traveler has asked to use vacation time to attend a meeting and the State has denied that request, then ASTSWMO will not reimburse the traveler.**

Combined Business Trips

It is often the case that members must conduct ASTSWMO and other business while on a single trip. The organization appreciates the efficient use of time and jet fuel but cannot fully fund airfare for trips on which a traveler conducts business for other organizations. In these cases, ASTSWMO will fund the airfare in the proportion equal to the time that the traveler spends on ASTSWMO business on the trip. For example, if the airfare is \$900, and the traveler spends two days on ASTSWMO business and one day on other business, then ASTSWMO will reimburse 2/3rds of the airfare costs (\$600).

In-kind Reports

ASTSWMO is able to meet its cooperative agreement funding match only through use of in-kind time spent by State participants at ASTSWMO-sponsored meetings. To do so, ASTSWMO must be able to document that time by number of hours, which ASTSWMO converts to a dollar amount and documents for EPA at the end of each grant year cycle. It is extremely important to the Association's ability to continue to support travel to sponsored events that State employees complete the In-kind page of the reimbursement form and return it to us with the travel reimbursement claim. The in-kind hours can and should include time spent in preparation for and attendance at meetings sponsored by ASTSWMO and/or EPA that are funded from the grant, including travel time to and from the meeting.

The exception is when the individual's salary is already being partially or fully paid with federal grant funds furnished directly to the State. In that case it would be inappropriate for ASTSWMO to make a match claim for that portion of the individual's time being paid from federal funding. The traveler should prorate the non-federally funded time spent at the meeting and report that portion of time as the in-kind match contribution. This same condition would apply if part or all of the traveler's State salary is being used by his/her agency as an in-kind match to a federal grant. If either of these situations is operative in your individual case, please do not report in-kind hours, or reduce the hours reported to the percentage of your salary not paid by federal funds or used as a State agency match for federal grant funds.

This report requires only a couple of minutes to prepare, but it is very important to continuing to find resources for the Association's work. We ask State participants in our sponsored activities to assist us by completing the In-Kind form (page 1 of the Travel Reimbursement Form) and sending us this important report with your reimbursement claim.

Key points:

- The In-kind Reporting Form is essential to continue ASTSWMO's travel funding.
- If your salary is 100% grant-funded, claim no (0) in-kind hours.
- If your salary is partially grant-funded, provide in-kind hours that are proportional to the part of your salary that is **not** grant-funded. For example, if your salary is 40% grant-funded and you spent 10 hours on an ASTSWMO event, you would provide 6 hours of in-kind time.

Questions

ASTSWMO encourages you to call the ASTSWMO offices with any questions you may have, especially if you encounter any unusual circumstances. Any ASTSWMO staff member can assist you by phone or email, either directly or by referring your question to more appropriate staff for response. All staff contact information is available on <http://astswmo.org/>.

Enclosures:

1. Special Travel: policy, procedures, and forms for stopover, extended stay, auto travel in excess of 500 miles, and other special travel requests
2. Checklist for ASTSWMO Travelers