

GUAM ETHICS COMMISSION

TRAVEL POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: GETHC POLICY 7

Effective Date: 12/29/2023

SECTION 1 – GENERAL

The goal of this policy is to ensure that all persons traveling on Guam Ethics Commission (GEthC) business receive sufficient funds for reasonable costs incurred for the trip and while traveling. All travelers are required to be knowledgeable of the content of this policy and follow it prior to initiating any and all official travel. All travelers are expected to be prudent in the incurrence of costs during travel and to ensure that all decisions are made in the best interests of the constituents we serve, the tax dollars we use, and to fulfill the Commission's purpose to hold officers and employees accountable to the Ethical standards established in Guam law. An employee traveling on official business is expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds. This policy has been written to provide effective and efficient support for travelers and reduce fraud, waste, and abuse during official travel. All travel documents are subject to audit reviews. Respectful, professional, and cost-effective behavior and reasonable choices are expected out of every traveler on official travel. This policy covers all official travel.

This policy and all forms mentioned herein are available on the Guam Ethics Commission website (<https://guamethics.com>) under Commission Policies.

SECTION 2 – PURPOSE OF TRAVEL

All travel must be consistent with the strategic planning, goals, and mission of the Guam Ethics Commission.

SECTION 3 – DEFINITIONS

- a) Days. The term "days" means business/work days of the government of Guam. It also means official travel days, including weekends and holidays.
- b) Baggage. The term "baggage" means GEthC or private property to be used exclusively for official business, wearing apparel needed by the traveler for the work part of the journey, including written materials and other Commission-related materials brought back from the journey. In general, one (1) checked bag, based on the airline's standard weight and linear measurements, will be covered at GEthC expense. Any additional fees (e.g., second bag, special items, oversized and overweight baggage) are the responsibility of the traveler unless approved by the Executive Director and deemed necessary for business travel.
- c) Employee. The term "employee" is defined as staff, both full and part-time (<40 hours a week), who possess an official Guam Ethics Commission personnel action (GG-1).

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- d) Event. The term event is defined as a course, class, workshop, meeting, symposium, conference, speaking engagement, research, etc.
- e) Federal Allowable Rate (FAR). Federal rates on per diem, Meals & Incidental Expenses (M&IE), reimbursable mileage for Privately Owned Vehicles, and other such expenses as found on the U.S. General Services Administration travel site: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/1053070>
- f) Meals & Incidental Expenses (M&IE). Amount of allowance allocated for meals and other basic needs – incidental expenses – while traveling is based on GSA-approved rates. Generally, while on a plane, the traveler would only receive M&IE because there is no lodging. The M&IE rate for the entire trip is set at the Event location. Following the federal guidelines, the M&IE allowance already includes taxes and tips, so travelers will not be reimbursed separately for those items. If claiming actual expenses, taxes, and tips is allowable. If doing actual, a combination of restaurant food and food groceries is allowable to the maximum of the M&IE rate. Exceptions to these rates need prior approval.
- g) Lodging. Commercially available living quarters that are for rent and are listed on the Internet or in a local phonebook.¹
- h) Miscellaneous travel expenses. Travel expenses mean necessary expenses incidental to official government travel, excluding expenses for Lodging and M&IE, such as ground transportation. Miscellaneous travel expenses are not part of per diem. (See Section 10 for additional details).
- i) Out & Back. The term is used to refer to flight plans that take the traveler directly to the Event or GETHC-related travel and directly back to Guam in the most direct way and with no personal side trips.
- j) Per diem allowance. Per diem (Latin meaning “for the day”) allowance means a daily flat rate of allowance for Lodging and Meals and incidental (M&IE) expenses (See Section 9, Table 4 for details). While on a plane, per diem is not given because no lodging is required; only M&IE is given. Lodging only starts upon landing at the location of the Event and ends on the day of checkout. Travelers claiming lodging costs that exceed the Federal Allowable Rate will be required to submit receipts for Lodging. Per diem for Lodging plus M&IE is limited to seven (7) days in one location. In instances where a traveler is in a location for more than seven (7) days, the Lodging portion will only be reimbursed on actual receipts. The traveler will continue to receive the M&IE portion of the per diem for each day on travel status beyond the seven (7) days. The traveler may also opt for reimbursement based on actual receipts for the whole trip. Projected costs for Lodging must be estimated and approved on the TA. Any deviations will require prior approval of the Executive Director. NOTE: if the traveler is on the SAME work trip, but then moves to a “significantly different” location(s), as determined by the Executive Director, the per diem for Lodging option will reset for another seven (7) days, etc.
- k) Receipts. All requests to cover work-related lodging costs for 7 days or longer in one location or for lodging that exceeds the federally authorized rate by GSA must be accompanied by a printed official receipt provided by the lodging vendor or website where the lodging was purchased. Lodging costs on the receipt should have a zero balance, indicating that the lodging was paid in full. Employees sharing lodging are required to obtain receipts showing their name, their part of lodging costs, and a zero balance; GETHC will not determine or calculate lodging costs for employees who have chosen to lodge together. Generally, receipts are not required for the meal portion of M&IE, except in those cases where food costs in a high-cost location are justifiable and approved by the Executive Director.
- l) Traveler. The term “traveler” means persons who are traveling under the GETHC Travel Authorization (TA) form.

¹ Lodging taxes are not included in the GSA Federal Allowed per diem rate. The Federal Travel Regulation §301-11.27 states that in GSA, lodging taxes paid by the federal traveler are reimbursable as a miscellaneous travel expense limited to the taxes incurred on reimbursable lodging costs.

SECTION 4 – TYPE OF TRAVEL COVERED

This travel policy covers off-island travel only. Types of travel include events and travel as described in Definitions (Section 3).

SECTION 5 – TRAVELERS AUTHORIZED TO TRAVEL AT GUAM ETHICS COMMISSION EXPENSE

The following are authorized to travel under the GETHC Travel Authorization form while on official business for the Commission:

- a) Commission Members
- b) Employees
- c) Non-employees rendering service to the Commission – only with advance written authorization from the Chairperson and Director.

SECTION 6 – TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION FORM (TA)

All travelers are required to fill out and submit a Travel Authorization form (TA) to the DOA Office no less than 20 working days prior to the initiation of travel.

After-the-fact travel request. Expenses incurred for unauthorized travel, i.e. travel where a TA was not submitted prior to the trip as per these guidelines, will not be reimbursed.

Official support for travel “side activities.” Any side activities around an official event, such as a meeting with professional colleagues before/after an official event (meeting), are required to be included in the TA (purpose, who, date, time, place) and approved by the Executive Director. Commissioners and the Director have the discretion to make these decisions while on travel status.

TA processing. A Travel Authorization form (TA) is required for all travel conducted under this Travel Policy. No costs for travel shall be incurred until approval is received from the Executive Director. The TA should be sent to DOA as early as possible, but no less than 20 business days before the start of travel. It is a best practice to start moving the paperwork from the traveler’s desk 3 weeks before the travel date to clear all internal signature requirements. The TA shall include items listed in TA Attachments.

TA attachments. A complete set of documents needs to be submitted DOA with the TA. These attachments include:

- a) Agenda for Events. What is typically supplied by an event organizer.
- b) Airfare quotes as required in Section 7.
- c) Airfare receipt with proof of payment (if the traveler pays for ticket by himself or herself).
- d) Approved Leave form (for GETHC employees).
- e) Form ACC-VNB001 (Vendor Electronic Funds Transfer Authorization Form).
- f) Traveler Acknowledgement Form (See Appendix B).
- g) Copy/screenshot of current per diem rate for each work location where per diem allowances are to be paid GETHC. See GSA website for current Federal Allowable Rates <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>
- h) Event registration with the required payment amount.

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- i) Medical clearance forms justifying the need for atypical travel privileges (as appropriate *and as approved by DOA*)

Making departure plans for before the Event has officially ended. It is important that the traveler fully attend the Event for which the Commission is providing financial support and Administrative Leave. Leaving a meeting significantly early – as compared to the originally submitted meeting agenda, especially to start personal leave, will accordingly reduce originally approved per diem, except in the case of emergencies as approved by the Executive Director.

SECTION 7 – AIR TRAVEL QUOTES

Air travel is to be planned for the most economical, direct route. All travel will be at an economy class fare. Any upgrades will be at the expense of the traveler. The Executive Director may make exceptions to this for medical reasons, in which case, the submittal of a medical certificate is required with the TA. Economy plus or similar upgrades may be granted for travelers to accommodate medical conditions or physical characteristics, i.e. taller than 6’3”, etc. GEThC recognizes that multiple connections, long layovers, and far flight distances can take a physical toll on travelers. Some accommodations may be allowed if submitted in writing prior to travel and approved by the Executive Director on the TA.

Required quotes for air travel

1. The travel request shall be prepared by GEThC staff and must be submitted to DOA for review at least Twenty (20) working days prior to the commencement date of travel. The traveler may elect among the two options below to secure their airfare:
 - a. *Traveler Booked Airfare:* In accordance with 5 GCA §5213; a minimum of three positive quotations shall be received for airfare with the award given to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. If a traveler elects to book their airfare the travel authorization form will authorize payment to the traveler not to exceed the fare indicated by the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. An attestation shall be kept in the travelers file to document the solicitation and receipt of three positive quotes: or
 - b. *Booking through Travel Voucher:* GEThC will include the cost for airfare and will make the purchase through a travel voucher paid directly to the travel agency in rotation. Per 5 GCA §5001(f), agencies who elect to purchase travel vouchers shall utilize the approved Travel Agency Listing from the DOA Division of Accounts Travel Section. Must be attached to the Travel Request and Authorization indicating the order of selection.
 - i. If there are **multiple travelers** from one agency going to the same destination and for the same purpose *and* the Airline Tickets total \$15,000 or more, the **“three quotation requirements must be adhered to” and must be attached to the Travel Request and Authorizations** (Form ACC-TRA001).²
 - ii. In the event a travel agency is bypassed on the Approved Travel Agency Rotation Schedule, the agency/department must provide justification for the non-selection ensuring all good-faith efforts have been made for any possible issues.
 - iii. All quotations must include: Regular Fare, Advanced Purchase Fare, and Full Fare amounts.

² DOA Organization Circular #10-005
GEThC Travel Policy (October, 2023)

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2. GEThC Executive Director and Certifying Funds Officer must sign and approve the Travel Request and Authorization Form authorizing the representative to travel on official Government business.
3. GEThC shall submit proof to DOA that the funding for the contract is available throughout the entire contract.
4. Booking and/or paying for a flight at the last minute. Airfares typically increase within the last 21 days before a flight. Thus, travelers are strongly urged to purchase airline tickets no less than twenty-one (21) days prior to the trip as long as they have the Executive Director’s approval. While there will be the occasional situation where an invitation to appear in a location comes at the last minute, travelers should not encourage late invitations. When a traveler books and pays for a flight where costs are significantly different from what would have been the cost 21 days prior to the flight, the traveler may be required to pay the difference out of their personal funds per instructions by the Executive Director. Multiple instances of last-minute bookings and/or purchases will jeopardize future travel opportunities for the traveler. The Commission and the Executive Director have the right, responsibility, and authority to delay or cancel a trip or completely withhold travel privileges.
5. When a traveler is allowed to arrive only one (1) day before an Event. When a traveler attends an Event where the location can be reached within 8 hours of flying time from Guam, the traveler may only book a flight that arrives the day before the Event starts. Airfare quotes should indicate one (1) day arrival before the next day’s Event.
6. When a traveler is allowed to arrive two (2) days and one (1) night before an Event.
 When a traveler will travel outside of the Pacific region – more than 8 hours flying time, the traveler may request to leave Guam early enough to arrive two (2) days and one (1) night before the Event to allow for one (1) rest day. In this case, an “extra” night per diem (lodging and M&IE) will be covered. Airfare quotes should indicate two (2) days of arrival before the Event (see Table 1 for details).

Figure 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Midnights (Lodging)	14th Guam	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th (20th Guam)
Calendar day Action	Leave Guam	Arrive	morning afternoon	morning afternoon	morning afternoon	Travel to Guam	Arrive Guam

100% per diem days (or Lodging at actual cost) 100%
 M&IE only (front end & back end)

NOTE: If the traveler stays in the same city as the official work event on the last night of the event, they will be paid the lodging (with receipt) and M&IE portion of per diem to cover the next day. The traveler would then only get M&IE, no lodging, on the day following the end of the event when they start official travel back to Guam. If, however, the traveler chooses to move to another city to start their personal side trip on the morning, afternoon, or night of the last event day, they will not be entitled to any lodging per diem nor M&IE because they would not “need” support as official GEThC work has been completed. In this case, they would only receive M&IE as they would with a normal Out & Back trip once they start the final journey home on the last day of their side trip. The amount of M&IE would be calculated from the location of the official event rather than where they ended their side trip, as if they simply took an Out & Back trip.

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7. Planning a personal side trip while on official travel.

Travelers are allowed to add side trips to their business travel on the front end, the back end, or in the middle of work events if there are two work events separated by time. There are no limits to the number of Annual Leave days taken before, after, or in between work that the traveler can take; that amount of time is set by available Annual Leave and administrator authorization. If Annual Leave is not available, and the traveler wants to take a side trip, they will need to take Leave Without Pay.

8. **Final Action by the Department of Administration**

Upon receipt of the travel request, the DOA Travel Coordinator shall prepare the Order for Transportation Tickets (aka “Travel Order,” Form ACC-TRF001) for the Director of Administration’s signature (or his/her designee) authorizing the travel agency to issue an airline ticket for the traveler. Upon approval by the Director of Administration (or his/her designee), the DOA Travel Coordinator retains a file copy for the processing of advance per diem.

- i. The travel agency or Traveler’s employer shall inform the traveler when the travel reservation is complete and provide the confirmation number to the traveler. The Division of Accounts shall retain the original Travel Order in the “**Travel**” file of the Division of Accounts and begin any approved Travel Advances per Section 3.5.10 of this policy;
- ii. Per Executive Order 2012-02, GEthC is still required to secure the lowest possible cost (economy rate).
- iii. Once the Travel Request and Authorization are reviewed and finalized by DOA Division of Accounts-Travel Section Supervisor, the Travel Agency will proceed to secure the reservation of the approved airfare based on the final approved airfare costs.
- iv. After the final Travel Itinerary and Ticket (or Boarding Pass) have been issued to the requesting agency traveler, the Travel Agency must submit the related invoice to DOA Division of Accounts – Travel Branch Supervisor for reconciliation and filing.

SECTION 8 – TRAVEL CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

Per 5 GCA §23104, the traveler has **no later than ten (10) working days after return to Guam** to submit the following items to be removed from obligations to the government (Accounts Receivable) related to their travel.

Documents required to clear travel obligation(s).

The following documents (or copies) are required to be submitted by the traveler no later than ten (10) working days after return to Guam.

- a. **Standard Travel-related documents:** Boarding Passes; Certificate of Participation or Completion; Registration Receipt (if applicable); or other proof of attendance.
- b. **IF additional per diem and/or disbursement was approved:** Hotel receipts; Meal receipts; Ground Transportation receipts; and/or other travel-related receipts which must substantiate expenses that were paid with per diem PLUS those receipts should justify expenditures that exceeded the amounts provided to the traveler.
- c. **Other:** other documents may be required or may (rarely) be considered strictly on a case-by-case basis and are not guaranteed to be approved.

Failure to Comply

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GEthC emphasizes the importance of complying with the preceding travel policy.

- a. **Incomplete Pre-Travel Requirements:** Failure to submit required documents prior to travel departure may result in delay and/or denial of the preparation and/or release of advance per diem allowance.
- b. **Non-submission of Post-Travel Requirements:** Failure to submit required documents within ten (10) days after return to Guam may and will result in DOA's initiation of one or both of the following actions:
 1. Suspension of Travel privileges; **and/or**,
 2. Collection of Travel receivables via EFT from traveler's account as allowed by 5 GCA §23108.

SECTION 9 – TRAVEL COST REIMBURSEMENT

Flat per diem. This allowance is based on the GSA Per diem rate for an Event location. Per diem covers Lodging and M&IE expenses. In cases where lodging costs will in fact exceed the maximum GSA-allowed Lodging cost, the actual cost of lodging will be covered with prior approval (see, Actual costs) and M&IE remain at the GSA rate.

Per Diem Rates. GEthC follows the Federal per diem allowances as promulgated by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) under their Joint Travel Regulations. Allowances are at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>. Per diem has two parts: Lodging and Meals & Incidental Expenses (M&IE).³

Per diem for Lodging plus M&IE is limited to seven (7) days in one location. In instances where a traveler is in a location for more than seven (7) days, the lodging portion will only be reimbursed on actual receipts. The traveler may opt for reimbursement based on actual receipts for the whole trip or to continue to receive only the M&IE portion of the per diem payment and not maintain actual receipts for the trip. Projected costs for Lodging must be estimated and approved on the TA. Any deviations will require prior approval of the appropriate administrator. NOTE: if the traveler is on the SAME work trip, but then moves to a “significantly different” location(s), as determined by the appropriate administrator, the per diem for Lodging option will reset for another seven (7) days.

Official Travel Status. Begins three (3) hours before scheduled takeoff and ends two hours (2) after the traveler's plane lands in Guam. All time is counted as Guam time. Travel outside of these limits, including side trips, should be taken as Annual Leave (or as Administrative Leave if granted by the appropriate administrator).

Event day(s). Event days are determined by the number of midnights on a business trip. Figure 2 shows a 3-day conference and the possible times a traveler might leave an activity to come directly back either to Guam or to start a personal side trip.

³ The Executive Director and Commissioners will receive one hundred twenty-five percent (125%) of the maximum GSA per diem rate in alignment with the Government of Guam travel policy.

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Figure 2. Event days

	15	16	17	18
Option 1.	morning afternoon	morning afternoon	morning afternoon	Travel to Guam
	15	16	17	18
Option 1a	morning afternoon	morning afternoon	morning	Travel back to Guam
	15	16	17	18
Option 2.	morning afternoon	morning afternoon	morning	Go on Annual Leave
	15	16	17	18
Option 2a.	morning afternoon	morning afternoon	morning afternoon	Go on Annual Leave

In all cases per the above options, the amount of Event days will be counted as 3 days

Understanding how many days are involved with travel and per diem. Table 3 shows examples of a 3-day conference (15th to the 17th) and the calculated per diem that can be claimed. *All travel times are Guam time.*

Table 1. Examples of Lodging per diem and M&IE for various trip distances based on a 3-day conference (15th, 16th, 17th). These examples are for illustrative purposes only.

A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.	H.
Destination	Flight times (incl. transit)	Date leaving Guam	Date Arriving to Event	Rest Days	Date leaving event	Date arriving Guam	Estimated total Subsistence Allowance
Manila, Philippines (Per diem: \$300/night)	4 hours	14th (Morning)	14th	None	18th (Morning)	18th (Afternoon)	(\$300 x 4) + 1 M&IE (1 backend)
Honolulu, Hawaii (Per diem: \$294/night)	7.5 hours	15th (Morning)	14th	None	18th (Morning)	19th (Evening)	(\$294 x 4) + 1 M&IE (1 backend)
Los Angeles, CA (Per diem: \$209/night). <i>Example of a non- East Coast state.</i>	15.5 hours to LA, 18 hours for return flight	13th (Morning)	13th	14 th (two days, one night)	18th (Morning)	19th (Evening)	(\$209 x 5) + 3 M&IE (1 front & 2 backend)
Washington, DC (Per diem:\$300/night). <i>Example of an East Coast state.</i>	28 hours to DC, 30 hours for return flight	13th (Morning)	13th	14 th (two days, one night)	18th (Morning)	19th (Evening)	(\$300 x 5) + 3 M&IE (1 front & 2 backend)
Note: Front M&IEs are allowable for a travel duration over 8 hours. (See Appendix A for additional explanations).							

Event travel and per diem. As defined in Definitions, an “event” is a course, class, workshop, meeting, symposium, conference, speaking engagement, etc., generally numbering in days to a week. Generally, the traveler will receive a flat location-specific lodging per diem and M&IE allowance, but different types of

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travel have different allowable expenses (Table 4). Lodging receipts are required for all trips longer than 7 days, but receipts for M&IE are not required if the per diem method of cost reimbursement is being utilized. Other expenditures must follow the “Allowed & Un-allowed Expenditures” list below (Table 5).

Scenario 1: Travel time within the same area:

Travel Time (Flight time)	Additional Coverage
< 8 hours	No Lodging per diem
> or = 8 hours	1 day per diem

Scenario 2: HAWAII; refer to Table 3, item 2, column H

Scenario 3: Travel to U.S. mainland (except Hawaii); refer to Table 3, items 3 and 4, column

Lodging where the event is held. If the Event has official lodging associated with it, GEThC recognizes that being closer to the activities can translate into benefits for the Commission. In cases where the actual cost of lodging (plus taxes) is greater than the highest rate allowed by the GSA for the Lodging portion of per diem for that location, the Commission will pay the additional lodging cost *subject to prior approval*. A request for additional allowance for lodging shall be made on the TA form, NOT after the traveler has returned to Guam. The lodging receipt will be required for this method and the Commission will reimburse only for actual lodging costs incurred.

Booking lodging prior to traveling. It is strongly recommended that final lodging reservations be made well prior to scheduled arrival at the Event site to take advantage of early booking savings.

Lodging receipts. All travelers must present lodging receipts with their Travel Clearance for travel longer than 7 days in one location. As noted earlier, per diem for Lodging plus M&IE is limited to seven (7) days in one location. In instances where a traveler is in a location for more than seven (7) days, the lodging portion may only be reimbursed on actual receipts. Those travelers traveling longer than 7 days in one location without lodging receipts will only be entitled to lodging reimbursement at the rate set for staying with friends and family (Table 4). The receipt must state the amount of the charge, the date, the name and the location of the establishment, and an explanation of the charge. Express checkout service, where the hotel bill is placed under the guest's door on the morning of departure, is an acceptable receipt if the traveler has reviewed it and the above requirements are stated. Charges for lodging, meals, parking or other services must be itemized. Personal expenses charged to the hotel bill such as in-room movies, mini-bar service, grooming, or exercising expenses are not allowable and are not eligible for reimbursement.

Actual expenses. In general, the cost of Lodging and M&IE cannot be above the GSA approved rate for a location unless authorized by the proper administrator on the TA (<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>). In lieu of using flat per diem for Lodging and M&IE, travelers may claim to recover actual expenses based on proper receipts. In general, the cost of lodging will predetermine the allowance option. The chosen reimbursement method must be on the Travel Request and authorized by the proper administrator prior to travel initiation. Other allowable miscellaneous expenses are under Section 10. (Also refer to Section 9, Per Diem Allowance, above).

Lodging deposits and cancellations. When a reservation is not needed, it is the traveler's responsibility to cancel it. The traveler will not be reimbursed for any charges or fees assessed due to failure to cancel a reservation unless there are circumstances beyond the traveler's control.

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Package deals. When a room, meals, etc. package is used, the traveler must list the items in the package. If, for example, a spa fee were included in the package, that fee would not be reimbursable.

Annual leave during the trip period. If a traveler goes on annual leave during the trip, personal leave starts at 8 a.m., Event location time, on the day following the Event, as validated through an approved Leave Form. (See also, Making departure plans for right before the Event has officially ended, Section 7, for additional rules).

Meals with other employees when all are on travel status. When several employees are on travel status and dine together, the fact that they are dining together does not constitute a business group meal. Since each employee is on travel status, each would have a per diem available and will be reimbursed accordingly.

Layover (scheduled). A traveler is entitled to Lodging per diem (at layover location), with receipts and M&IE during a layover as dictated by 1) the flight condition or 2) when it is more cost-effective to do so as determined by cost comparison.

Layover (unscheduled). Travelers will not be penalized for flight delays caused by airlines, weather, or other acts out of their control. Travelers should, however, make the best effort to take the next available flight to resume the intended travel. Unavoidable overnight lodging due to flight delays will be reimbursed based on actual receipts unless already paid by the airlines.

Break days between official business travel days. For travel days between official business days, the following applies:

- a) If the break is due to personal reasons, the traveler is not entitled to any travel compensation and personal leave of absence will apply.
- b) If there are open days within the official business (ex. in between workshop days in different state/s), these will be considered travel days, and the traveler is allowed per diem, subject to prior approval. This should be discussed before the start of the travel with the person authorizing the travel. The traveler is required to stay during the break period in the lower cost location (as identified by the GSA per diem rate for Lodging). For example, if the first Event is in Los Angeles (per diem = \$209/day), and the second is in St. Louis (per diem = \$181/day) a week later, the employee should travel to St. Louis right after Los Angeles to wait for their second Event because it is a less expensive location.

Spouses/families of employees. Family members and other companions may accompany employees on business trips if all expenses resulting from their presence are borne personally by the employee or companion. In all instances, the conduct of GETHC business shall be of first importance during business travel. The traveler is responsible for documentation to prove that any personal travel did not result in additional costs for the Commission.

SECTION 10 – ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWED MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

Reimbursements with receipts. Original receipts must include a business name, a date, an amount, and an itemized description of the product or service purchased.

Electronic receipts.

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- a) Electronic receipts are acceptable, provided that the detail contained in an electronic receipt is equivalent to the level of detail contained in an acceptable paper record. For example, an electronic receipt must show the name of the payee, the amount of the charge, the transaction date, and the form of payment. When required to ensure adequate documentation of the cost incurred, the traveler is responsible for providing additional detail (e.g., a receipt with itemized hotel charges).
- b) E-mailed or faxed documentation provided by the airline or travel agency for electronic ticketing is acceptable for substantiating such expenses. A copy of the faxed itinerary and receipt, or a copy of the emailed itinerary and receipt printed locally should be attached to the travel completion.

Currency conversion. Use one of the following methods.

- a) OANDA (<http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>)
- b) Credit card statement
- c) Currency conversion receipt is acceptable

The following are examples of miscellaneous expenses that are allowed and un-allowed in addition to the per diem allowances (Lodging and M&IE):

Table 2

Item of Cost	Allowable	Unallowable
Airport Departure Tax(s)	X	
Alcoholic beverages / minibar		X
Athletic room fees or other access fees for areas of lodging / optional resort fees/charges		X
Baggage fees for personal items		X
Car rental		X
Car rental insurance - Third Party Liability Coverage – only		X
Cash paid to another traveler		X
Check cashing charges; conversion of currency, cost of traveler’s checks	X	
Clerical assistance	X	
Clothing purchases [1]		X
Conference/workshop fees	X	
Costs incurred by traveling companions and family		X
Excess baggage means in excess of the weight or size greater than what the airline companies would allow as “free of charge”. Claims for reimbursement will be allowed if excess baggage was authorized or if it becomes necessary to take or bring back workshop or other allowable materials that benefit the Commission. (Also refer to Section 3.).	X	
Flight insurance		X
Frequent flyer program fees or airline clubs		X
Gifts for meeting hosts or friends		X
Hotel Valet or Parking Fee	X	
Laundry, cleaning and pressing of clothing. Employees are expected to take enough clothing for 7 travel days.		X
Lodging taxes. (See note in Definitions)	X	
Mandatory resort fees/taxes	X	

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Other approved allowable expenses. Miscellaneous necessary expenses incurred by the traveler in connection with transacting Commission business are allowable when approved by the official authorizing the travel.	X	
Passport and visa fees for official business only.		X
Personal purchases such as reading materials unrelated to official business		X
Premium TV channel charges / in-room movies in hotels		X
Tips to porters, baggage handlers, bellboys, hotel maids, and similar. Tips to waiters and similar are only allowed when claiming actual expenses.		X
Room service		X
Taxi, subway, tram, and similar transportation for work activities such as: transportation to and from airport and to and from business-related meetings and to and from business-related meals or purposes. Uber, Lyft, Grab, and other similar services are acceptable forms of travel during a trip.	X	
Traffic fines or towing charges.		X

SECTION 11 – CHANGE IN TRAVEL PLANS

The person authorizing the travel must approve changes to the travel plans before the travel is initiated. If the trip is already underway when a potential change arises, the traveler must contact his/her administrator for written approval to change a trip if a request will be made for the Commission to cover the cost of the change. The burden of the cost of travel change(s) is subject to the rules of the funding supporting the business travel.

Changes to the itinerary before or during travel.

If a traveler changes his or her plane ticket (or other travel expenditure) to suit a personal need or desire or to fix a mistake they made in planning, costs associated with the change will be borne solely out of personal funds, not the Commission.

If a ticket is changed (or other travel expenditure) due to unforeseen issues/circumstances not the fault of the traveler, such as a family emergency, the Commission may cover some or all of the change in costs with appropriate administrator approval.

Traveler gets ill while traveling. If a traveler becomes unable to travel due to illness while on travel status due to no action of his/her own, the traveler will be provided per diem for the additional days of sick leave status until they can return to Guam. A medical certificate or other form of validation to support illness is required. This time will be considered Sick Leave, and Administrative Leave will be adjusted accordingly. See *Emergency evacuation or emergency medical condition while on official business* below.

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Emergency evacuation or emergency medical condition while on official business. If the condition occurred while performing official business, the Commission will cover reasonable costs.

Postponed or canceled travel. In the case where a trip is canceled for any reason, refundable plane tickets and stipend will be refunded and the funds will go back to the original account. Plane tickets that are non-refundable will be used for the employee's next travel. Charges or lost refunds resulting from failure to cancel reservations shall not be reimbursed unless the traveler can show that such failure was the result of circumstances beyond the traveler's control.

SECTION 12 – SALARY WHILE ON TRAVEL STATUS

The traveler shall be on administrative leave and receive his/her regular salary during the authorized travel time. If a traveler becomes sick during travel and is unable to conduct GEThC business, the traveler will be required to use sick or accrued leave during that period. Overtime pay will not be allowed for employees on travel status.

SECTION 13 – MAXIMIZING EFFECTIVENESS

It is extremely expensive to send people off-island for activities. Therefore, in order to maximize the effectiveness of the dollars spent for travel, employees on travel status are encouraged to take advantage of all reasonable chances to take part in additional training and learning opportunities at the conference or event, i.e., pre-conference, applicable roundtable sessions, etc.

Per Diem

Travelers will be covered for lodging per diem, except from departure from and return to Guam, in which case only M&IE applies (see Table 4). Amounts of per diem for lodging and M&IE as below:

1. When traveling to locations within the same region as Guam, travelers can only claim one day of M&IE. Exception to this are travels requiring 8 or more hours i.e. "island hoppers", where a traveler will be entitled to one day per diem.

Example: A traveler has a conference from the 15th to the 17th in Manila, Philippines. The traveler leaves on the 14th and arrives the same day. The traveler is entitled to 4 days per diem (14th to the 17th) and one M&IE for their return.

2. When traveling to Hawaii, a traveler will be entitled to charge per diem. It is highly advised that the traveler leave the day of the conference/business day on Guam time, so the traveler will arrive in Hawaii the night before the start of their official business.

Example: The conference is from the 15th to the 17th in Honolulu, Hawaii. The traveler should leave on the 15th (Guam time), and will arrive on the night of the 14th. The traveler can claim up to 4 days per diem (14th to the 17th) and one additional M&IE for their return.

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3. For business locations in the U.S. mainland, a traveler can claim up to 2 days additional M&IE while airborne (See Table 3, ColumnH).

Example: Conference from the 15th to the 17th in Los Angeles, California. The traveler leaves on the 13th and arrives on the 13th in California. The traveler is entitled to 5 days per diem (13th to the 17th) and can claim an additional 2 days of M&IE for their return from their location. One (1) day for rest is allowed.

4. For business locations in the U.S. mainland, a traveler can claim up to 2 days additional M&IE while airborne (See Table 3, Column H)

Example: Conference from the 15th to the 17th in Washington DC. The traveler leaves on the 13th and arrives on the 13th in Washington DC. The traveler is entitled to 5 days per diem (13th to the 17th) and can claim an additional 2 days of M&IE for their return from their location. One (1) day for rest is allowed.

SECTION 14 – TRAVEL CLEARANCE

Official Travel Clearance (TC) shall be due to the GEthC within ten (10) business days starting the first day the traveler returns. The Traveler must sign the travel document to certify that the trip was taken and all expenses were incurred. The Traveler is liable for any false claims. The TC contains the following:

- a) Trip Report (form available on GEthC website).
- b) Boarding passes or e-ticket/QR codes (if unavailable, use frequent flyer record, photo of you at the Event with a time stamp, name badge from Event, printed luggage tag, or provide some alternative form of verification that you attended the Event paid for by the GEthC).
- c) Taxi/Transportation receipt as proof of payment.
- d) Copies of Certificates of Completion (if travel included a course of some type).
- e) Foreign currency conversion.
- f) Lodging and M&IE original receipts.
- g) Other receipts for Allowed Miscellaneous Expenses (Section 10).
- h) Receipts and the administrative approval email(s) for approved additional expenses.
- i) Revised itinerary, if any, and an explanation of the change.

Reminder notices will be sent out by GEthC staff 3 days prior to the travel clearance due date.

SECTION 15 – ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLIANCE

- a) Travelers who do not comply with travel policy, guidelines, or procedures are subject to restrictions such as future travel. A traveler will not be authorized further travel until GEthC Office clears prior travel arrangements.
- b) Administrators or administrative officers who submit or approve non-compliant TA's are subject to loss of authority to approve TA's following consultation with them and with the approval of their supervisor.

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- c) Travelers, administrators, and/or administrative officers submitting fraudulent TAs are subject to disciplinary action.

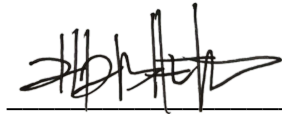
EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy shall be in effect upon the adoption of the Commission at a publicly announced / open meeting and signed by the Chairperson of the Commission

AMENDMENTS

The Commission may make any amendments to this policy as it deems necessary, provided that such action be done by an affirmative vote of five (5) members at a publicly announced / open meeting.

M APPROVED AND ADOPTED



CHRISTOPHER A. CRUZ
CHAIRMAN

12/29/2023

Date

Adopted: December 2023

GUAM ETHICS COMMISSION
Kumisión i Ginihan Areklamenton Guåhan

Traveler Acknowledgement Form

I, _____ (traveler's full name), acknowledge that I have read and been informed about the content, requirements, and expectations of the Guam Ethics Commission Travel Policy adopted on **10/01/2023**. As a Guam Ethics Commission employee governed by this policy, I agree to abide by the policy guidelines and understand that non-compliance could result in restriction to future official travel and other administrative actions determined by the GEthC Chairperson and the Executive Director.

Employee Signature: _____

Employee Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

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**STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY, RELEASE AND AUTHORIZATION TO PARTICIPATE
IN GUAM ETHICS COMMISSION EVENTS**

I, _____, an employee of the Guam Ethics Commission (“Commission”). I have agreed to participate in the _____ during (dates) _____. My participation in this event is wholly voluntary. In consideration of being allowed to participate in this event, I hereby state and agree as follows:

1. By my signature below, I certify that my health insurance policy will adequately cover me while outside Guam, and I release and absolve the Commission of all responsibility and liability for any injuries, illnesses (including death), claims, damages, charges, bills and/or expenses I may incur while I am abroad.
2. I understand that the Commission reserves the right to make changes to the Program itinerary at any time and for any reason, with or without notice, and the Commission shall not be liable for any loss whatsoever to participants by reason of any such cancellation or change. The Commission is not responsible for penalties assessed by air carriers that may result due to operational and/or itinerary changes, regardless of whether the participant or the Commission makes a flight arrangement. Any additional expense resulting from the above will be paid by the participant. The Commission reserves the right to substitute hotels or accommodations or housing of a similar category at any time. Specific room and housing assignments are within the sole discretion of the Commission.
3. I understand and acknowledge that the Commission does not assume responsibility or liability, in whole or in part, for any delays, delayed or changed departure or arrival times, fare changes, dishonors of hotel, airline or vehicle rental reservations, missed carrier connections, sickness, disease, injuries (including death), losses, damages, weather, strikes, acts of God, circumstances beyond the control of the Commission, force majeure, war, quarantine, civil unrest, public health risks, criminal activity, terrorism, expense, accident, injuries or damage to property, bankruptcies of airlines or other service providers, inconveniences, cessation of operations, mechanical defects, failure or negligence of any nature howsoever caused in connection with any accommodations, restaurant, transportation, or other service or for any substitution of hotels or of common carrier beyond the Commission’s control, with or without notice, or for any additional expenses occasioned by any of the foregoing. If due to weather, flight schedules, or other uncontrollable factors I am required to spend additional nights, the Commission will not be responsible for my hotel, transfers, meal costs, or other expenses. My baggage and personal property are at my risk entirely. The Commission reserves the right to decline to accept or retain me on the event at any time should my actions or general behavior impede the operation of the event or the right or welfare of any person, including but not limited to my own welfare.
Similarly, if my conduct violates any policy or procedure of the Commission, I understand that I may be required to leave the event in the sole discretion of the Commission’s agents and representatives, and may be referred to the appropriate Commission officials for further disciplinary or other action. In such an event, no refund will be made for any unused portion of the event. The right is reserved by the Commission, in its sole discretion, to cancel the event or any aspect thereof prior to departure; and, in the Commission’s sole discretion, to cancel the Program or any aspect thereof after departure, requiring that all participants return to Guam, if the Commission determines or believes that any person is or will be in danger if the event or any aspect thereof is continued.

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4. I, individually, and on behalf of my heirs, successors, assigns, and personal representatives, agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Commission and their employees, agents, officers, Commissioners and representatives (in their official and individual capacities) from any and all liability, loss, damage or expense, including attorney's fees, that they or any of them incur or sustain as a result of any claims, demands, actions, causes of action, damages, judgments, costs or expenses, including attorney's fees, which arise out of, occur during, or are in any way connected with my participation in the event or any travel incident thereto.

5. I hereby acknowledge that I have read, understand, and will abide by each of the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

Dated: _____

Signature

Name (Printed)