

# Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Travel Policy

## I. PURPOSE

To establish regulations for employees to travel for business purposes and to reimburse employees for expenses that are incurred in the normal course of business travel. Business travel is defined as any travel required for work purposes as approved by management.

## II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of Sault Tribe including all government entities, programs, and enterprises including all Kewadin Casinos properties traveling for tribal business purposes.

## III. POLICY

Business travel expenses incurred within the Sault Tribe organizational chart will be controlled and practices of the federal guidelines followed.

This policy covers employees, combining personal travel with business travel, as well as program participants, business related travel paid by outside organization, and recruitment.

Applicable managers, directors, and executive directors are required to ensure training is necessary and budgeted for upon approval.

Services include flight arrangements, train arrangements, hotel bookings, car rental reservations, and other travel related services inside and outside of the seven county service area. Travel inside the service area does not require a travel authorization form. However, all arrangements performed by Northern Travel will require a travel authorization form.

## IV. Procedures

Procedure: Employees are responsible to ensure preauthorization and assure compliance with this policy. Twenty-one (21) days or more is requested to obtain the most cost advantageous method of travel with at least 72 hours' notice to complete unplanned travel. Any travel received with less notice may be deemed Non-Compliant.

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### A. Request for Employee Travel

A current "Sault Tribe Travel Authorization" must be filled out completely prior to any arrangements being made. All travel outside the seven county service areas will be made through Northern Travel. Arrangements will be made to best accommodate the traveler, with all itineraries being completed in a cost effective and efficient manner. Services include: flight arrangements, hotel bookings, car rental reservations, and other travel related services.

1. **Combining Personal Travel with Business Travel.** Any employee synchronizing personal travel with business travel must note on travel authorization form which days are personal; additionally any costs associated with personal days are borne by employee. Please note that reimbursement will be for "business related" travel only.
2. **Business Related Travel Paid by Outside Organization.** All business travel requires a travel authorization form regardless of payment. This is to ensure that all parties are aware and that costs will be reimbursed or paid up front by another organization. Funding Source must be noted on form.
3. **Unplanned Travel.** The Tribe recognizes that not all travel is planned and the necessity to facilitate unplanned travel shall occur. Any unplanned travel shall require approval prior to departure (email notification) from the appropriate manager/director.
4. **Routine Travel.** Many departments throughout the tribe have routine travel trips that are planned and budgeted, a travel authorization form must be utilized to approve all occurrences requiring travel to these specific meetings.
5. **Service Area Travel.** Any travel within the service area does not require a travel authorization. However, any arrangements made through Northern Travel will require a form. For clarification purposes, travel within the service area may require director's approval, see immediate supervisor for clarification. Travel advances/reconciliations will still be required for reimbursement (see Preparation/Reconciliation).
  - a) For all travel within the service area "standard per diem" shall be utilized (see Federal Register for prevailing rates).

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### B. Request for Non-Employee Travel

1. **Program Participant.** The tribe has many departments that are involved with all aspects of building a community. Travel of non-Sault Tribe employees who are not paid consultants (e.g. community members, tribal partners, volunteers, parents, children traveling for the Tribe) will require program director approval and travel expenses will be reimbursed according to these policies.
2. **Consultants.** In adhering to federal tax law, we are prohibited from paying for consultant's travel expenses. All travel expenses will be the responsibility of the consultant including hotel charges and other related charges at our properties.
3. **Recruits.** In an effort to provide the best service and to keep up with professional demands, pre-employment familiarization/interview trips may be deemed necessary. Appropriate approval required, additional considerations may apply, check with Northern Travel.

### C. Approval

All travel requests must have the appropriate director or manager approval, see immediate supervisor for clarification. Directors are required to ensure training is necessary and budgeted. Any travel not budgeted must be noted and have Executive approval.

1. **Supporting Documentation.** All travel outside the service area may require supporting documentation indicating the event attending with dates (brochure, meeting notice, etc.). Any travel dates exceeding one-day before or one-day after event dates require clarification/justification. All pertinent travel information should be forwarded with request to Northern Travel, including but not limited to group discounts codes, etc.

### C. Charter Service

Charter Service is available if cost effective and/or deemed necessary. Any requests for Charter Service must have Executive authorization.

### D. Cancellation

All cancellations must be approved by appropriate director, as many items may be non-refundable such as airline tickets, hotel deposits, registrations, etc. Northern Travel must be notified of all cancellations immediately.

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## **E. Invoice**

All invoices for Northern Travel (air arrangements, hotel billings, etc.) will be directly deducted from appropriate cost center and line item noted on travel authorization. Various divisions will be billed for services and payment must be made within 14 days of receipt of invoice.

## **V. PERSONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Arrangements may be made for employee's personal travel and family members in conjunction with business travel. Arrangements will be made similar to business travel, with a quote being approved by employee. Please note: Personal travel has lower priority than business travel, please have all information readily available (dates, destination, etc.). Payments must be made in full (check, cash, etc.) at time of booking.

### **A. Services**

Personal arrangements are a non-essential service and as such, are subject to workload, possible fees, and approval. See Northern Travel for details.

### **B. Spouses**

The tribe appreciates the fact that employee's may find it necessary or convenient to bring spouses or family members on business trips. Employees can book trips via Northern Travel for their personal needs provided it's within the scope of travel and additional services are not required. Payment arrangements required prior to booking.

## **VI. FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS**

Flight arrangements will be made to best accommodate the traveler, provided it's cost-effective for the tribe. Please note times of training, meeting, seminar, or event to allow for travel times. **All flight seat assignments will be made in coach class.**

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## A. Flight Considerations

Any cost-effective flight itineraries (red-eye flights, extra nights stay, etc.) will be weighed with overall cost saving and employee's schedule. All flights made will be for most direct route, any cost savings associated with multi-stops will be discussed with traveler/director. In determining most cost effective flights, all routes will be from local airport areas; non-local airports may be requested if cost-effective (construct costs\* vs. actual with parking, mileage, additional time, etc.). Traveler may submit suggested flight itineraries, but final arrangements subject to costs, etc.

\* In determining the construct costs of a trip, days and times for most direct route that the tribe would have sent an individual are utilized; 21 day notice is required for construct costs comparison.

Quotes will be given with a recommendation for lowest price itinerary, which the traveler or department contact may accept. If higher priced itinerary requested, Executive Approval is required on an Overage Form.

Any additional costs associated with flight changes regarding personal changes are the responsibility of the employee and payment will be required prior to booking.

## B. Itinerary

Traveler or department contact will be given an itinerary showing dates and times with confirmation numbers. Actual tickets/boarding passes must be picked up at airport on date of travel, please arrive at suggested time prior to departure (usually one hour prior).

## C. Vacating Scheduled Flight

If your seat is involuntarily vacated, any compensation must be submitted to Northern Travel-- traveler will be reimbursed for any additional costs. Voluntarily vacating your seat is discouraged when traveling on business, and is not permitted if it interferes with work schedule. If voluntarily and it does not interfere with business schedule and all additional travel expenses are borne by the employee, then traveler may keep any compensation received. The employee must notify Northern Travel of any and all occurrences.

**Compensation includes: any monies, free ticket vouchers, coupons, etc.**

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## D. **Additional Considerations**

If unforeseen circumstances prevent you from boarding flight, please check directly with airline to obtain next available flight. Supervisor approval may be required if additional charges are incurred for missed flights, flight changes, etc. Without prior approval, any additional costs may be the responsibility of the employee.

## VII. **TRANSPORTATION & MILEAGE**

### A. **Car Rental**

Car rentals are available if approved and requirements are met (credit card, age limits, etc.). Consideration should be given to conference location, hotel, distance to airport, etc. All cars reserved will be mid-size, unless a compact or a mini-van is requested and/or required. All upgrades and extra amenities (navigation systems, etc.) are prohibited and additional charges will not be reimbursed.

1. **Insurance.** All insurance coverage offered by the car rental agency must be declined-- the Tribe is a self-insurer. If an accident should occur, please obtain the following information: place and time of accident; responding police department along with incident report number; names of other people involved, and a copy of the rental agreement. Complete an organization incident report immediately, along with copies of any of the above information and submit it to the Risk Management department. You are responsible for any additional cost resulting from the unauthorized use of a rental automobile for other than official travel-related purposes.
2. **Payment.** Payment must be made directly to car rental agency. This amount may be included on your advance, or charged to your credit card then reimbursed, all receipts required for reimbursement. **Direct Billing:** Direct billing is available in some instances. These areas are limited— see Northern Travel for details. All direct billing must have prior approval and is limited to stipulated item; any additional items may be the responsibility of the traveler.

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### B. **Personal/Government Vehicle Mileage Allowances**

For any travel exceeding 50 miles one-way a company vehicle must be utilized, if available. If an employee chooses a personal vehicle when a company vehicle is available, mileage will be reimbursed at the Reduced Personally Owned Vehicle Rate —as established annually by the Federal Register. If a company vehicle is not available or travel is less than 50 miles one-way, then the POV rate would apply.

Also note, verification stating that no vehicle was available must also accompany any POV reimbursements beyond 50 miles one-way.

1. **Eligible Driver.** To be eligible to drive for tribal business employees must pass a yearly insurance check to utilize company vehicles please contact the Sault Tribe Insurance Department for further information.
2. **Vehicle Availability.** Those departments that have vehicles designated for that purpose may be required to utilize the department vehicle; this will need to be verified with immediate supervisor. For clarification, those departments that do not have designated vehicles may be required to utilize motor pool vehicles. When an outlying area does not have access to vehicles (department or motor pool) the director shall determine if travel is required to obtain a motor pool vehicle or if it is most advantageous to allow personal vehicle.
2. **Motor pool.** Check with supervisory on utilizing motor pool vehicles for conducting tribal business; please see “Motorpool Policy.” To be eligible to drive for tribal business employees must pass a yearly insurance check to utilize company vehicles—please contact the Sault Tribe Insurance Department for details. A motor pool form must be completed to reserve a vehicle.
3. **Rate.** Mileage will be reimbursed concurrent with that of the federal register guidelines, for personal owned vehicles “POV” (please check with Northern Travel for current rates). Company vehicles will only be reimbursed for actual gas used, receipts required.
4. **Travelers.** If more than one person is traveling to same location, it is expected that they travel in same vehicle (up to four travelers). And mileage will be given accordingly. If a traveler chooses to travel separately, they are ineligible for mileage reimbursement and all costs are borne by employee.

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5. ***In-town mileage.*** Exempt positions are not entitled to in-town mileage, as this may be claimed on personal tax return(s). In-town mileage shall be deemed any travel within city limits. Non-exempt positions shall be entitled to all mileage as prescribed.
6. ***Insurance.*** When using a privately owned vehicle for tribal business, an employee should have adequate insurance coverage. An accident should be reported to the driver's own insurance carrier. There will be no financial recourse from the Tribe.
7. ***Construct Costs.*** Mileage for travel is not to exceed the cost of flying to a designated area. If traveler chooses to drive, they will receive lesser amount-- ticket price (construct costs) vs. mileage as determined by Northern Travel. Additional Per Diem associated with driving, i.e. extra days, additional parking, etc. will be compared to the total of a construct cost including transportation. Additional costs above construct costs may be at employee's expense.

### **C. Parking**

Parking fees associated with approved travel is reimbursable unless exceeds construct costs as described.

1. Parking fees will be reimbursed up to the most cost effective method available. Valet parking is only reimbursed when no other options are available.
2. Only parking fees associated for official tribal business are reimbursable.
3. When long term parking is required, every effort should be utilized for most cost effective method, including economy lots, taxi alternative, etc.

### **D. Taxi/Shuttle**

When performing official travel and the use of a taxi/shuttle service is deemed necessary, you will be reimbursed the usual fare plus tip if no courtesy transportation is available. Receipts required for all transportation costs.

1. ***Courtesy transportation.*** You should use courtesy transportation service furnished by hotels/motels to the maximum extent possible as a first source of transportation between a place of lodging and the airport terminal, local destinations, etc. You will be reimbursed for tips when you use courtesy transportation service.

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2. *Advance/Reconciliation.* It may be necessary to advance taxi monies when traveling to high-cost areas check with Northern Travel for estimated amounts.

**All transportation monies must have a receipt.**

## VIII. MEAL ALLOWANCES

Trips that are twelve or more hours in duration will be reimbursed according to the Federal Register. Motel receipts are required for all overnight stays.

### A. **Locality**

The Federal Register will be used for all locations. Meal allowances will be based on the traveler's destination. If a destination or county is not on the register, the current standard rate will be used.

### B. **Times**

Departure and arrival times must be noted on all travel vouchers. Day trips that exceed 12 hours but are less than 24 will receive 75% of applicable meal rate. Trips that are 24 hours or more will receive 75% on day of departure, 100% on full travel days, and 75% on return date of applicable meal rate.

When travel is		Your allowance is
Less than 12 hours		0 percent of M&IE rate.
More than 12 but less than 24 hours		75 percent of M&IE rate.
24 hours or more, on	The day of departure	75 percent of M&IE rate.
	Full days of travel	100 percent of M&IE rate.
	The last day of travel	75 percent of M&IE rate.

Per Diem rates are to off-set the costs associated with business travel exceeding 12 hours. All tips are included in meal rates; additional tips will not be reimbursed.

### C. **Reduced Meal Rates**

It may be appropriate to utilize a reduced meal rate for groups, service area travel, or other travel circumstances. Any reduced rates for meals must be noted on the request prior to the trip.

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## D. **Conference Meals**

Conferences that provide a meal must be deducted off meal allowances. Each meal has its own rate, see Northern Travel for current rates. Continental Breakfasts are NOT considered a meal and no deduction is required.

## E. **Meal Additional Considerations**

When staying with family or other non-traditional locale, meal allowance is up to per diem based on location, receipts required to substantiate incurred costs. Meal per diem limited to individual meal costs incurred up to prescribed per diem.

## IX. **LODGING ALLOWANCES**

Hotel preference will be given to conference location within the per diem guidelines unless otherwise indicated.

### A. **Rates**

Hotel rates will be based on locality. If hotel costs exceed Federal Register's guidelines, must have Executive authorization on "Hotel Overage Form" limited to Federal Travel Regulation guidelines. Actual lodging receipts are required (credit card receipts are not valid receipts). All tips are included in hotel rates; additional tips will not be reimbursed.

### B. **Additional Charges**

Any additional fees from a lodging establishment required to stay or for business use/purposes shall be reimbursable with receipt.

1. **Taxes.** Hotel taxes are not included under lodging expenses. They are reimbursable as a miscellaneous expense. Check with hotel for tax rate. Please note: Every effort should be utilized to lower travel costs including utilizing government rate & tax exemptions, consult with Northern Travel.
2. **Fees.** Any fees associated with obtaining lodging (resort fee, etc.) are entitled to reimbursement. Internet service and business center related charges may be reimbursed if deemed necessary subject to supervisor approval.
3. **Incidentals.** Most hotels require a personal credit card or cash deposit to cover incidentals. The tribal credit card used to secure and/or pay for a room is NOT available for this purpose. Any additional amenities not associated with obtaining lodging (movies, room service, etc.) are deemed personal and are not entitled to reimbursement.

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## **C. Non-Conventional Lodging**

Any lodging not incurred at a hotel/motel must be reasonable as determined by the Tribe and have receipts in order to be reimbursed. Costs are limited to hotel per diem amount (cabin/campsite, etc.). When staying with family or friends, amount is limited to actual additional costs your host incurs in accommodating you—must be substantiated and can not exceed per diem amount.

## **D. Conference Lodging**

Hotel preference will be given to conference site within the per diem guidelines. Travelers attending a conference, and staying at the host hotel, may be allowed up to 25% over the maximum lodging rate for locality.

## **E. Hotel Payment**

Some travel arrangements may require full payment prior to travel, or if a traveler requests that the hotel is paid (must be noted on authorization). Check with Northern Travel for complete details.

## **X. REGISTRATION**

As a general rule, registration fees are processed utilizing Accounting Services and require a disbursement voucher. Northern Travel may process registration fees for:

- 1) Unplanned travel,
- 2) Registration were paying by check is unavailable, and/or
- 3) Online registration that require credit card for payment.

For all registration, all information must be provided including but not limited to: name, event/classes attending, total costs, etc. Please provide registration forms filled out to expedite payment. Registration must be noted on authorization form to be processed.

## **XI. PREPARATION/RECONCILIATION**

To receive travel monies for approved travel, please use following procedures:

### **A. Before Travel**

Prepare travel voucher (travel advance/reconciliation form); be sure to fill out completely. Using the Federal Register for hotel and meal rates based on destination. Prepare a disbursement voucher for your travel advance. Submit all to Accounting Services with a copy of approved Travel Authorization form (if necessary), noting date needed.

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1. **Advances.** Advances may be deemed necessary to facilitate travel needs. Please ensure advance requests are authorized and submitted to Accounts Payable at least 14 days prior to the trip. Handcuts checks are for emergency/unplanned situations only (fees apply). No advances will be processed for under \$100.00, these will be processed as a reconciliation.

### B. While Traveling

Record your beginning and ending odometer readings if traveling by automobile. All costs require an actual receipt; with exception to meal allowances with a traditional lodging receipt. Credit card receipts are not acceptable in place of vendor receipts. Employee shall have proper identification (i.e. government I.D., tax exemptions, etc.) to receive all available discounts at hotels, airfare, etc.

**Additional Considerations.** Missed flights that require additional costs must be approved by appropriate director. Emergencies that require a travel to return home unexpected must notify director immediately, Northern Travel can provide assistance if needed. Travel Contingency- if you are unable to proceed with per-approved travel itinerary, any additional costs for travel arrangements require approval. Failure to get approval may deem any additional costs as Non-Compliant.

### C. After Travel

A trip report may be required by your immediate supervisory. Prepare a travel voucher/travel advance form listing actual expenses and time of travel; reference the disbursement voucher if one was received. Prepare a disbursement voucher if you are entitled to further reimbursement, with proper authorizations. If monies are to be returned, please make check payable to "Sault Tribe". **Receipts must be received within 14 days upon completion of travel.** If receipts are not received or any outstanding debts are not resolved within the specified time frame, Accounting Service will hold future travel checks for the cost center, until the matter is resolved and/or secure monies through payroll deduction until resolved.

**Please note:** all requests for reimbursement must be made in a timely manner. Any requests for reimbursement must be submitted in the month the travel dates occurred. Any requests, including monthly reports submitted past 14 days may result in no financial recourse from the Tribe.

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### **X. NON-COMPLIANCY**

All employees who travel are responsible for compliancy to this chapter. Failure to follow and/or observe these policies may forfeit tribe's responsibility to pay travel expenses.

-Failure to receive prior approval may result in no financial obligation from the tribe.

-Any and all efforts will be made to reconcile travel including but not limited to payroll deductions of undocumented travel expenditures.

-False claims of travel expenditures may constitute fraud and may lead to employee reprimand including termination.