	<b>POLICY</b>	<b>Motion No.</b>	<b>FF 1016-2013</b>
	<b>Travel</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>6/25/2013</b>
		<b>Responsible Department</b>	<b>Finance</b>
		<b>Attorney Review / Date</b>	[Attorney Name] [Date]

**SCOPE**


This policy applies to all individuals who travel or attend conferences for the College. It also provides the guidelines for travel, conference and meal expenses and to communicate the procedures for reimbursement. The requirement for prior written travel approval is emphasized. Prior approval establishes the work status of a staff member when away from the college campus, authorizes necessary travel, maintains proper control to ensure that employees are not in a travel status any longer than an assignment requires and assures the method of transportation and accommodations utilized are the most expedient and economical under the particular circumstances.

**POLICY**

It is the policy of Pennsylvania Highlands Community College to reimburse employees for all reasonable and necessary expenses related to and incurred during authorized travel for conferences, professional development or other College business. The College recognizes that employees who travel far from home to represent the College’s business interests must forego their usual living accommodations. Accordingly, the College will make efforts to provide comfortable and secure accommodations for lodging, meals and travel for employees. The College reserves the right to deny reimbursement of expenses that are considered lavish, extravagant or unnecessary. See Travel Procedures found on the employee myPEAK portal for complete details.

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The Travel Procedures are included on the following pages.

	<b>PROCEDURE</b>	<b>Motion No.</b>	<b>FF 1016-2013</b>
	<b>Travel</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>6/25/2013</b>
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## BACKGROUND

The objective of the college travel, conference and meal policy is to support reasonable and necessary staff travel expenditures for conducting college business, attending conferences or other related matters while away from the employee’s assigned campus. The intent of these procedures is to provide guidelines to ensure payments are fair, equitable, and efficient for both the traveler and the College.

The following procedures apply to all individuals who travel for conferences, professional development, or other College activities.

Circumstances warranting possible exceptions to this policy and the following procedures, must be directed to a Vice President or the President of the College and must be substantiated, authorized and documented prior to departure.

## PROCEDURES

### TRAVEL REQUEST FORMS AND APPROVALS

Travel/Conference Authorization Form - (myPeak/Employee/Forms/BusinessOfficeForms). All overnight and out-of-state travel must be preapproved. Employees are required to complete a Travel/Conference Authorization form and obtain approvals from their immediate supervisor, Vice President, or President in advance of their travel or conference event. Every effort should be made by the employee to estimate the cost of the conference and travel as accurately as possible. This form is forwarded to the business office and it is matched against any travel reimbursement requests that are received.

Mileage Expense – (myPeak/Employee/Forms/BusinessOfficeForms). This form is for employees who do local travel as a part of their regular college duties. Local travel includes meetings at local businesses, high school visits and travel between college sites. This form is used only for reimbursing mileage. Meals and other travel costs will not be reimbursed from this form. This form must be turned in to the immediate supervisor or Vice President for approval on a weekly basis and submitted to the Business Office by the end of the month in which the local travel occurred. Mileage expense reimbursement requests will usually be paid within 5 business days of receipt of completed forms.

Travel/Conference Expense Statement – Employees must document all request for travel expense reimbursements by completing this form. (myPeak/Employee/Forms/BusinessOfficeForms) All requests for reimbursement must be clearly itemized, be accompanied by appropriate receipts, be submitted on a timely basis and have the approval of the employee’s supervisor and Vice President prior to being submitted to the accounts payable department for reimbursement. Any travel reimbursement requests found to have discrepancies will be returned to the employee and may be resubmitted for payment the following month.

Timeliness of Mileage Expense and Travel/Conference Expense Statement Submissions – It is recommended that the Mileage expense and Travel/Conference expense statements

be submitted as soon as possible after return from the trip. Employees should submit expense statements within two (2) weeks of the trip to ensure accuracy and completeness of required receipt documentation. In addition, the IRS maintains rules for timeliness of filing expense statements. The IRS rules state that all travel expense reimbursements to employees must be accounted for within "a reasonable period of time" of when the expense was incurred. For IRS Purposes, a reasonable amount of time is considered to be 120 days. Accordingly, all Mileage and Travel/Conference expense reimbursement requests must be received within 120 days of when the expense was incurred. Mileage and Travel/Conference Expense Statements submitted after 120 days will still be accepted but the IRS requires that the reimbursement be treated as taxable to the individual receiving the payment. This will result in those amounts being taxed and will be added to the taxable gross income on the employees W-2.

Use of the College Credit Card – Employees are strongly encouraged to make their own personal travel arrangements and submit expenses for reimbursement. Under certain circumstances, the College credit card can be used to make hotel, airline, conference, rental car and other travel reservations. Employees wishing to use the College credit card must first obtain travel authorization and it must be noted on the Travel/Conference Authorization Form. Employees will then need to meet and work with the Purchasing Coordinator to make the purchases and or reservations.

#### EXPENSE GUIDELINES

Please note that employees will be required to evaluate and determine the most cost efficient method of travel. This includes analyzing the cost of using personal vehicles vs. rental cars and/or airline costs. The College will have the authority to deny any reimbursement of expenses that are considered lavish, extravagant, excessive, or are unsupported by required documentation.

Air Travel - The employee will make airline reservations based on the following criteria:

Expediency: Getting the employee to their destination in an expedient cost effective way. Connecting flights may be necessary to reduce cost.

Cost: Employees will fly coach class unless extenuating circumstances apply and are approved in advance of departure.

Air Carrier: An employee's preferred airline can be utilized as long as expediency and cost factors are equal.

Should travel plans change, it is the employee's responsibility to cancel any guarantee according to the airlines cancellation policy and to secure a cancellation number. Failure to do so will result in personal liability for any airline costs.

Lodging - The employee will make lodging arrangements based on value and convenience for the traveler. In addition, when attending a conference, travelers may stay at the conference hotel even if it is not the most economical option available.

If an employee is accompanied by a non-employee such as family or a friend, and therefore requires separate accommodations, the employee will be responsible for payment of any excess lodging accommodations.

Should travel plans change, it is the employee's responsibility to cancel any guarantee according to the hotel's cancellation policy and to secure a cancellation number. Failure to do so will result in personal liability for any lodging costs.

When requesting reimbursement, the original itemized hotel bill and the original receipt showing proof of payment must be attached to the Travel/Conference Expense Statement. The original receipt must contain the name of the traveler, the lodging dates, the name of the lodging establishment, the per-night cost, and the total cost of lodging.

You will not be reimbursed for the cost of in-room movie rentals, fitness center expenses, personal toiletries, or for other personal charges to the employees stay.

Meals - Employees will be responsible for obtaining their own meals while traveling. Meals are for the employee only and do not include entertaining guests.

The meals allowance will be reimbursed according to the lesser of actual expenses or the per diem amounts as provided by the US General Services Administration at <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem>. The allowance does not include alcoholic beverages and any other item that may be deemed to be excessive, unwarranted, or unnecessary in nature.

Car Rentals - Advance arrangements should be made by the employee if a car is required at the destination. Vehicle selection will be based upon the most cost-effective class that satisfies requirements for the employee(s) and any demonstration equipment. Rental cars will be approved only when necessary. Employees are encouraged to use hotel shuttles and taxis if possible.

If a rental car is your primary mode of transportation on the trip, arrangements can be made through the business office. The College has established a corporate account with Enterprise Rent-A-Car in Johnstown. All car rentals must be handled through this vendor.

Personal Vehicles - An employee using their own automobile for business will be reimbursed at the prevailing rate per tax guidelines for per-mile deductions. The employee must provide on the expense report, documentation including dates, miles traveled and purpose of each trip. Necessary tolls and parking costs are reimbursable expenditures providing the receipt documentation is included when requesting payment.

Employees will be reimbursed for the most direct or fastest route to their destination. Excess miles for personal travel while at your conference or meeting will not be included in the reimbursement. Mileage is typically measured from the employee's home office (location) to the destination and return. Mileage reimbursement is meant to cover only those miles incurred above and beyond the employee's normal commute to his/her home office. When your business travel originates from home, subtract your normal commute miles from the total miles associated with the trip.

Personal vehicles may be used in lieu of commercial airline travel. Mileage will be reimbursed at the current established rate but should cost the college no more than the commercial coach/economy airline fare.

The College assumes no responsibility for personal automobiles used for business. Further, any parking, speeding or other traffic violation is the sole responsibility of the employee whether using a personal car or a rental paid for by the College.

Telephone - Business-related telephone charges on an itemized lodging receipt and/or telephone charge card are reimbursable and they should be itemized under telephone expense. The official business involved and the date, phone # and party called must be identified on the hotel bill or receipt attached.

Miscellaneous Expenses - Any additional business expenses that are not categorized above should be listed under other expenses and documented with all pertinent information to substantiate the expense.

Non-Reimbursable Expenses - Some expenses are not considered valid business expenses by the college, yet may be incurred for the convenience of the traveling individual. Since these are not expenses for the business, they are not reimbursable. (The following can be used as a guide of expenses which are not reimbursable)

Examples include:

- Airline or travel insurance
- Airline or travel lounge clubs
- Movies or personal entertainment
- Alcoholic beverages
- Books, magazines, or newspapers
- Theft or loss of personal property
- Parking tickets, traffic tickets or car towing if illegally parked
- Baby sitter or pet care fees
- Unauthorized, unnecessary, or excessive vehicle mileage

#### EXPENSE REPORT PREPARATION AND REIMBURSEMENT

All business travel and entertainment expenditures incurred by employees of the College are reimbursed through the use of the Travel Expense Statement. Expense reports should be completed and turned in within two (2) weeks of return or incurrence of expenses.

Expense report forms must be filled out and totaled completely. Required receipts for items charged must be attached to the report. Items purchased by personal credit card and claimed for reimbursement must be accompanied with a detailed itemized receipt. A credit card signature receipt is not acceptable. Failure to include a detailed itemized receipt may result in the disallowance of the reimbursement. Any questions regarding completion of the report should be directed to the employee's supervisor or the Director of Finance and Administration.

Upon completion, the expense report along with all attachments should be turned into the employee's supervisor for approval. After approval, the expense report is submitted to the business office for processing and reimbursement. In order to expedite reimbursement, the employee should ensure that the report is completed properly, required documentation is attached, proper authorization is obtained, and any unusual items properly explained and documented.

Authorized expense reports will be reimbursed by a college check, normally within five working days after receipt by the business office.

Effective Date	Motion Number	Document Author	Description of Change
6/25/13	1016-2013	Finance	Initial Release
5/30/18		Finance	Revised (Denial of mileage reimbursement between Richland and Ebsenburg removed)
9/18/18		Finance	Revised-Added mileage wording to Timeliness of Submission Section