



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES & PUBLIC PROTECTION
DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY



DEMHS Federal Grant Travel Policy and Guidance

(Revised January 24, 2025)

This document shall serve as a guide to sub-recipients when utilizing Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP), Emergency Management Program Grant (EMPG), or other Federal Preparedness Grants to send individuals to trainings, conferences, and seminars. This document is not a comprehensive guide, and subrecipients should contact and work with their DEMHS Program Manager regarding specific documentation and eligibility requirements. Not all trainings, conferences, or seminars and their associated costs are eligible for reimbursement, therefore subrecipients should receive travel approval from the DEMHS Program Manager that oversees the intended funding source prior to any coordination of travel.

1. Travel Purpose:

- a. The purpose of the travel must fall within the scope of the intended funding stream. For example, under the HSGP program, there needs to be a clearly defined relation to the topic of preventing terrorism or be related to one of the annual National Priority Areas. Under EMPG, travel for Law Enforcement related trainings and conferences is strictly prohibited and the topic must have a clearly defined relation to Emergency Management. Travel is approved on a case-by-case basis and approval to attend a conference or training shall be received from the DEMHS Program Manager prior to booking.
 - i. Please provide an agenda and a registration confirmation for the conference or training in the reimbursement package. If there is a cost associated with the registration, please provide the receipt and proof of payment.

2. Lodging:

- a. Only “conventional lodging” is allowed under federal grant awards. Accommodations that are considered “conventional” are hotels, motels, and resorts. FEMA does not consider Airbnb, VRBO, or any other short-term apartment/room rental to be a “conventional” accommodation and are only allowable for reimbursement under highly specific circumstances and with prior approval from the DEMHS Program Manager. Nightly lodging costs are not to exceed the nightly rate identified by the U.S. General Services Administration. Depending on the funding program, additional costs such as State/Local tax, occupancy fees, and destination/resort fees are generally eligible and do not count towards the nightly base rate total. Any additional fees should be approved prior to travel by the DEMHS Program Manager. Additionally, when reserving a lodging accommodation, please take into consideration the distance between the training/conference site and the hotel. Some



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conferences may reserve room blocks that adhere to the GSA rate and may provide free shuttles to and from the event location.

- i. Please provide lodging confirmation, itemized receipt (with the cost breakdown of nightly rate, fees, and taxes), and proof of payment.

3. Meals:

- a. Meals will be reimbursed at the [U.S. General Services Administration per diem rate](#) for the specific area of travel. The daily rate should be reduced accordingly for travel days, and also for any meals included in the price of lodging or with the purchase of conference/training registration.
 - i. It is suggested that the traveler maintains these records for their own files. Please submit the DEMHS Federal Grant Travel Form (or a similar form from your organization) with the daily breakdown of meals you are requesting reimbursement for.
 - ii. Please pay special attention to collective bargaining agreements or organizational policies that may have different rates for meal per diem. The intended funding source will only reimburse up to the rate listed on the GSA website and in the event the CBA rate is less, the intended funding source will reimburse that amount with the expectation that it is not higher than the GSA rate.

4. Airfare and Rail:

- a. When traveling by air or rail, subrecipients must opt for the lowest-fare available in coach/economy class. Seat upgrades or add-ons are prohibited and are not reimbursable. Exceptions are given when an individual has an access or functional need that requires a seat upgrade or in the event of an emergency where an upgraded seat is the only available option. Subrecipients should seek guidance from their DEMHS Program Manager prior to travel if a seat upgrade is needed. Luggage and baggage costs are generally allowable; however, it is recommended that subrecipients opt for airlines that include this in the base ticket price.
 - i. Please provide booking confirmation, itemized receipt, and proof of payment for the flight and any luggage costs paid for separately.

5. Other Transportation:

- a. Personal vehicle mileage is an allowable cost for travel and will be reimbursed at \$0.70 per mile for travel on after January 30th, 2025. DEMHS recommends that a cost-benefit analysis is performed to determine that this would be a more economic option than air or rail transport. Personal vehicle mileage can also be requested for any distance traveled to and from transportation hubs (train station or airport) and parking costs may also be reimbursed. Mileage reimbursement is only an allowable cost for privately owned vehicles, if a rental vehicle, state owned, or municipal



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owned vehicle is used, mileage will not be reimbursed. Tolls are an additional eligible cost and can be reimbursed under the grant.

- i. Map of the route taken should be supplied in the reimbursement package along with any receipts and proof of payment for parking costs. If traveling on a toll road, a statement is required for pay-by-plate or E-ZPass if the traveler is seeking reimbursement.
- b. Rideshare/taxi transportation is an allowable cost to and from the transportation hub or to and from the hotel and training/conference site.
 - i. Gratuities to drivers are reimbursable under HSGP as long as they are reasonable and do not exceed 18% of the base fare.
 - ii. Gratuities under EMPG are not an eligible cost and cannot be reimbursed under the program.
 - iii. Receipts and proof of payment are required if requesting reimbursement for taxi/rideshare services.
- c. Vehicle rental is only allowed in highly specific scenarios and approval is needed from the DEMHS Program Manager prior to travel and making the reservation. The individual or local municipality is responsible for any additional protections, coverages, and insurance. Selection of the rental vehicle should be the most cost-efficient option for the number of travelers and any luggage or specialized equipment. When requesting the use of a rental vehicle, please supply a cost benefit analysis showing the amount of travelers and any specialized equipment with a breakdown of different transportation options (i.e. rideshare, airfare, etc.).
 - i. Rental agreement, confirmations, receipts, and proof of payment is required for this cost when filing for reimbursement. If reporting fuel costs, please provide a receipt and proof of payment.

6. Special Considerations and Requirements:

- a. Upon return from travel please fill out the DEMHS Federal Grant Travel Form (or a similar document supplied by your organization) to calculate reimbursement costs. There are sections in the form to report daily mileage, airfare/train ticket, vehicle rental, meals, lodging, other costs (rideshare, parking, tolls, etc.), and any adjustments/reductions of the total cost (ineligible costs, seat upgrades, meals provided by conference or training, travel day meal adjustment, and etc.).
- b. If the traveler decides to stay longer than the conference or training (plus the two travel days) for personal time or other official duties, then the traveler or the municipality will be responsible for any additional costs accrued.
- c. To calculate per diem costs including meals and lodging rates for destinations in the lower 48 states, please visit the U.S. General Service Administration website (<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>) and enter in the city and



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state or zip code of your destination. Please be sure to use the correct rates for the destination and the correct month/year of travel. For any destination without identified rates, the standard rate for the state will apply. If travel is required to Alaska, Hawaii, or any other U.S. Territory that does not have per diem rates listed on the GSA website, please contact your DEMHS Program Manager for information on how to proceed.

- d. Travel outside of the United States using federal grant money is restricted and is only allowed in specific scenarios with prior FEMA and DHS approval.
- e. The traveler or sponsoring organization assumes responsibility for any additional travel costs incurred that fall outside the purpose for travel. This includes any damage to lodging accommodations, rental vehicles, rideshare vehicles, etc. and any additional leisure activities.
- f. Federal grant funds may not be used to reimburse invitational travel that is paid for by the federal government or another state government agency.
- g. Be aware that some collective bargaining agreements have limits and restrictions on travel. Any minimum amounts that are higher than allowable per the above guidance will be the responsibility of the traveler's organization.
- h. In addition to the above DEMHS policies and guidance, travelers must adhere to both their organization's and/or their regional grant fiduciary's travel policies.

For any further questions or concerns regarding the policies and information outlined in this document, please contact your DEMHS Program Manager for additional information and program specific guidelines.