



# Georgia Department of Education

## Policies and Procedures

Policy Title:	<i>Travel Regulations and Use of State Vehicles, State Schools</i>		
Policy Number:	<i>SS-7000 Descriptor Code-DJD</i>		
Release Date:	<i>09-01-02</i>	Last Revised:	<i>11-22-03</i>

### Purpose

To describe the conditions to which employees of the State Schools must adhere when in official status.

### Applicability

This policy applies to all full-time classified and unclassified employees of the State Schools.

### Definitions

*State Vehicles:* Vehicles purchased with state funds or through rental agreement. Included are all vehicles (sedans, vans, school buses, pick-up trucks, etc.) that are part of the State School vehicle allotment and maintained by the State School.

*Personal Vehicles:* Vehicles purchased and maintained by the employee for personal use.

*Official Travel:* Travel for the purpose of conducting the business of the State School utilizing a state vehicle or personal vehicle when seeking mileage reimbursement.

### Policy

All State School employees must adhere to all *Statewide Travel Regulations* as promulgated by the Department of Audits and Accounts and the Office of Planning and Budget. *Statewide Travel Regulations* are posted on the Department of Audits and Accounts website at <http://www2.state.ga.us/Departments/AUDIT/m&lg/trvlpg.html>. Hardcopies may be obtained in the office of the School Director. Employees of the State Schools shall be aware of the *Statewide Travel Regulations* and adhere to them.

All official travel must serve the interests of the state and be defensible in the event of public criticism or question by higher authority.

**General Provisions**

State School employees must obtain prior approval from the School Director of the State School for official travel to conduct school business.

Use of State Vehicles

State School employees are encouraged to utilize state vehicles for travel within the state of Georgia. When using a State vehicle, all employees must abide by any rules, regulations, and guides promulgated by the State for use of their vehicles.

Use of state vehicles is only permitted for State School business. Use of a state vehicle is not permitted for personal use. The circumstances under which an employee may use the state vehicle for travel between the employee's place of residence and place of employment are very limited and require prior approval from the School Director.

The employee who has requested the use of the state vehicle is responsible for that vehicle. The employee may not allow others to use that vehicle. Under no circumstances shall a state vehicle transport families, friends, associates, persons not employed by the state, or persons not in a direct business relationship with the State School. In addition, a state vehicle may not be used to transport items of cargo unrelated to the conduct of official business.

When using a state vehicle, the State School employee must complete the Employee Expense Statement Form detailing the state vehicle usage, regardless of whether additional travel reimbursement is requested. It shall be the duty of the State School to ensure that the reported state vehicle usage complies with DOAS rules, regulations, guides, and this policy. Further more, the State School must report suspected violations of DOAS or DOE policies to the appropriate Deputy Superintendent. Neither the State School, nor the accounting office, nor the Chief of Staff may discriminate against employees based on status or pay grade level. Employees may be required to repay the Department for any impermissible uses of a state vehicle.

Requesting Reimbursement for Travel Expenses

State School employees must obtain prior approval from the School Director for all in state and out of state travel. The request for travel reimbursement must match the approved travel request. When requesting reimbursement of travel, employees must follow the policies and procedures of the *Statewide Travel Regulations*. Employees requesting reimbursement for any expenses not provided for under the *Statewide Travel Regulations* shall not be eligible to receive reimbursement. Employees will be asked to repay any amounts reimbursed for activities not provided for in the *Statewide Travel Regulations*. Employees shall use

the Employee Expense Statement Form when requesting reimbursement for appropriate travel expenses.

It shall be the duty of the State School Director or designee to review each travel reimbursement request to ensure that the requested reimbursement complies with the *Statewide Travel Regulations*. Supervisors who fail to ensure that employees are abiding by the *Statewide Travel Regulations* can be required to repay any amounts reimbursed to employees for activities not provided for in the *Statewide Travel Regulations*.

The School Director shall have the authority to remove any reimbursement requests for activities not provided for in the *Statewide Travel Regulations*.

#### Out-of-State Travel

State School employees are authorized to conduct out-of-state travel to attend/participate in conferences and meetings related to State School goals. Prior authorization of the School Director and the Deputy Superintendent for Finance and Business Operations must be obtained before out-of-state travel is taken. Employees who participate in out-of-state travel prior to the necessary authorization will not be entitled to reimbursement for any travel expenses associated with the out-of-state travel.

Employees seeking prior authorization for out-of-state travel must use DE Form 0004. When requesting reimbursement for travel, employees must use the Employee Expense Statement Form. Justification and a detailed itinerary must be submitted with the Employee Expense Statement Form. Travel expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with that itinerary. Employees will not be reimbursed for meals provided at a conference as a part of conference registration without appropriate documentation as to why the employee failed to participate in the meal provided through registration.

It shall be the duty of the State School to ensure that the requested reimbursement complies with the *Statewide Travel Regulations*. Supervisors who fail to ensure that employees are abiding by the *Statewide Travel Regulations* can be required to repay any amounts reimbursed to employees for activities not provided for in the *Statewide Travel Regulations*. Furthermore, it shall be the duty of the State School to review requests for statewide travel reimbursement. The School Director and the DOE Accounting office shall have the authority to remove any reimbursement requests for activities not provided for in the *Statewide Travel Regulations*. Neither the DOE Accounting office nor the School Director may discriminate against employees based on status or pay grade level.

**Travel with Students**In-State

Prior authorization is needed from the School Director or designee to travel off school premises with students. State School employees must utilize the established procedures to request approval for travel with students. Students at the State Schools must be transported in school buses for school activities. State vehicles other than school buses may be used for emergency purposes. State School employees must possess a commercial drivers license to transport students in school buses.

Out- of- State

Prior authorization is needed from the School Director or designee to travel out-of -state with students. Employees traveling out of state with students must submit an authorization for out-of-state travel request (DE Form 0004) with a list of the adults participating in the trip. A separate authorization for out-of-state travel request (DE Form 0004) must also be submitted listing the students who will be traveling out of state. The school must submit with the travel request a detailed travel itinerary indicating the travel routes, travel times, stops in route, and accommodations. The school is responsible for establishing and documenting standards of student conduct for participation in out-of-state travel activities. The school is also expected to collect and maintain emergency contact and medical information for students participating in out- of-state travel.

**Authority and/or  
Cross-Reference**

- DOE *Statewide Travel Regulations* Policy (HR-1119)