

Pacific Northwest Swimming Rules and Procedures	PNS Travel Policy
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## Pacific Northwest Swimming

### TRAVEL (VOLUNTEER) & EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

Pacific Northwest Swimming (PNS) will pay for reasonable travel expenses for volunteers that are incurred in the performance of their duties for PNS. The following requirements regarding travel arrangements apply to all PNS volunteers when traveling on PNS business. The requirements also apply to all contracted-service personnel, when travel arrangements are offered by PNS management and accepted by the contracted service personnel's employer. Volunteer travel procedures will be monitored by the Finance Division to ensure that policies and best business practices are followed. The responsibility and authority to implement and enforce this policy is placed with the Finance Vice Chair and General Chair.

**1.0 Approvals.** Travel approval must be obtained prior to making any reservations. The approved PNS Travel Request/Authorization form must be submitted by e-mail to the office for approval at least 21 days prior to departure. The travel authorization must include the following items:

- Event Name (ex. Convention)
- Approving Vice Chair or committee chair
- Name(s) of traveler(s)
- Date(s) of Program
- Travel dates
- Airport location

**2.0 Travel Arrangements.** All travel arrangements, excluding hotel reservations, may be made through your vendor of choice. In general, the PNS Office does not make travel arrangements.

**2.1 Air Travel.** All travel reservations shall be made through your own travel portal or agency and paid for by the traveler. Requests for reimbursement must be made within 60days following the travel, or will not be reimbursed.

Any arrangements not pre-approved will not be reimbursed.

- A. The traveler should reserve flights at least 21 days prior to travel to ensure the greatest opportunity to obtain the lowest fare and preferred itinerary. PNS reserves the right to refuse future travel to those that violate this and incur higher priced tickets.
- B. The least expensive routing for air travel based upon PNS's guidelines and the traveler's flexibility will be preferred. Discounted, coach fares will be used. Business class will be reserved only at the traveler's expense.

- C. Benefits accrued from frequent flyer programs may be retained and used by the individual traveler. However, a volunteer's participation in a particular airline's frequent flyer program should not override the selection of the most cost-effective, reasonable reservation.

The following criteria will be considered in determining the most reasonable airfare cost:

- 1) One stop or connecting flights will be required if savings of \$250 or more is achieved without extending the total one-way air travel time by more than two (2) hours.
- 2) Alternative airports should be considered.
- 3) Volunteers may select any flight or carrier within \$100 of the lowest fare offered, provided the flight is within a two-hour time window of the desired departure/arrival time (ex. Traveler wants to leave at 4 p.m.-range would be 2-6 p.m.).

Additionally, if the domestic airfare exceeds \$600, the traveler must send an explanatory note to the General Chair at [generalchair@pns.org](mailto:generalchair@pns.org).

- D. **Alternate Airports.** Alternate airports should be considered for travel to cities where multiple commercial airports exist, e.g. Boston, New York, Dallas, Houston, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, etc.

**Document Delivery.** This passenger receipt must be submitted with the Volunteer Reimbursement form.

Note: In the case of a cancellation or flight change, it is imperative that the traveler arranges for proper credit or refund. PNS will not reimburse for flight reservations cancelled by the traveler.

**F. Unused Tickets.** It is the responsibility of the traveler to cancel his or her reservation prior to the departure of the first flight on the itinerary. Ignoring this responsibility will result in additional costs for the traveler.

Charges for re-ticketing, schedule changes, etc. are reimbursable if incurred for a valid business reason and approved prior to travel. If there is a change in an itinerary that results in additional cost, the traveler must provide notification to the Finance Vice Chair upon completion of travel.

## 2.2 Ground Travel

- A. **Personal Vehicles.** Personal vehicles may be used if it saves time and is less expensive than renting a car, taking a taxi or using alternate transportation. When two or more people on PNS business share a vehicle, only the driver may claim reimbursement for mileage, parking and toll charges.

If a traveler prefers to take his/her vehicle on approved PNS business, mileage costs up to the equivalent airfare expense may be claimed. (To determine the equivalent airfare, use an on-line booking tool—at least 21 days prior to departure date--to plot

the trip and then print the screen before purchase.) Mileage reimbursement amounts will be in accordance with the IRS regulations.

- B. Rental Cars.** A traveler may rent a vehicle when renting would be more advantageous to PNS than other means of commercial transportation, such as a taxi. Midsize cars (or more economical) should be used when possible. When traveling with a group, rental cars are to be shared to minimize costs.

The traveler should refuel the car prior to returning the vehicle to the rental agency to avoid the high fuel surcharges. Travelers should use self-park at hotels, versus valet parking.

Volunteers should decline all optional insurance coverage except when traveling internationally (including Canada). Your personal car insurance generally provides adequate liability protection for the vehicle. If your policy's coverage warrants it you may choose to provide the optional insurance, but this extra expense will not be reimbursed by PNS.

In the event of an accident in a rental car, an accident report must be prepared and filed with the local police as well as the car rental agency. If you are involved in an accident in a rented vehicle and are convicted of a violation of any alcohol or drug statute, you will be personally responsible for all damages as well as possible disciplinary actions.

- C. Other Ground.** Expenses for taxis, shuttles or public transportation for business purposes are reimbursable with receipts.

Travelers may use their personal automobiles to and from the airport. Travelers will be reimbursed for actual parking expenses and mileage. Economy parking should be utilized.

- 2.3 Hotel.** Hotel reservations may be made through your preferred online portal. Travelers should use common sense when making hotel bookings and should look for reasonable rates within that market, whenever possible. Groups of ten or more people can be booked by USA Swimming staff members through the Marriott Hotel (USA Swimming Sponsor) group agent.

Cancellations of hotel reservations must occur within the required cancellation window— note: this could be as much as 72 hours prior to arrival – if the need arises. Charges will not be reimbursed unless the cancellation was caused by circumstances beyond the traveler's control. A fair and reasonable evaluation will prevail in such circumstances.

Hotel incidentals will not be reimbursed (including phone or internet service) unless approved prior to the trip.

- 3.0 Meals (Per Diem) and Entertainment.** Generally, per diem or meals reimbursement is provided by PNS. Other expenses incurred by the General Chair (or designee, approved by the General Chair) during the course of business (i.e., group meals, meeting snacks, etc.) will be reimbursed. Per diem should be fair and reasonable, and not exceed the US Government per diem policy.

- 4.0 Incidentals.** The incidental portion of daily per diem is defined by IRS as fees & tips to porters, baggage carriers, and hotel staff, and fees for carts. Reimbursements for these items will not be granted.
- 5.0 American Express/Visa Travel Cards.** PNS does not offer a corporate card to volunteers who travel.
- 6.0 Spousal/Non-PNS Travel.** Spouses, friends or family members may accompany volunteers traveling on PNS business, provided their travel expenses are paid for by the volunteer, and there is no net expense to PNS. Volunteers may combine personal and business travel providing it is at no cost to PNS.
- 7.0 Annual Meeting.** Travel expenses to the USA Swimming annual meeting (United States Aquatic Sports Convention) for PNS volunteers, including the voting delegates, National committee Chairs, USA Swimming Board members and other members as appointed by the executive committee will be reimbursed by PNS. This policy extends to committees electing to conduct a committee meeting immediately prior to or immediately after the annual meeting.
- 8.0 Convention Hospitality and Meals.** With the approval of the General Chair, snacks and soft drinks may be provided in a common location for all traveling PNS delegates.
- 9.0 Audits/Controls/Enforcement.** PNS has audits and controls to ensure that travel expenses are managed and cost-effective. PNS's Finance Division will monitor use of preferred suppliers and provide reports to the PNS Board of Directors, as necessary.
- 10.0 Policy Exceptions.** Exceptions to the policy require approval by the Division Vice Chair and General Chair. Policy exceptions can be made to reasonably accommodate employees and volunteers with disabilities.

## **EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

Only authorized volunteer expenditures will be reimbursed. Reimbursement for out-of pocket expenses is allowed on those occasions where authorized individuals are required to spend their own money. This procedure applies to all volunteers that travel for PNS.

### **1.0 Volunteer Reimbursement Request Guidelines**

**1.1 Deadlines.** Volunteer reimbursement requests must be submitted no later than 60 days after the date expenses are incurred in order to receive reimbursement. Expenses submitted later than 60 days will NOT be routinely processed and may not be reimbursed.

**1.2 Completion & Documentation.** Reimbursement requests must be completed in sufficient detail to permit determination of the business purpose and reasonableness of the expenditures. Adequate documentation must accompany each reimbursement request. If volunteers submit reimbursement requests via mail, they must include original itemized hotel receipts, travel itinerary reflecting time and cost of travel, and receipts for ALL expenses. Include the name of the program to be charged and a detailed description of the expenses incurred.

When receipts cannot be obtained or have been lost and all measures to obtain a duplicate receipt have been exhausted, a statement should be provided explaining why such receipts are not being submitted with the expenses report. PNS does not normally

reimburse volunteers for expenses of \$25 or more unless a receipt is included. Credit card statements reflecting airline baggage amounts and airport parking will be accepted in the absence of actual receipts.

Itemized receipts are required for all hospitality and hotel folios must be provided for hotel stays. See section 3.0 on page 5 for more information regarding hospitality receipts. If receipts for hospitality are lost, it is the traveler's responsibility to contact the restaurant and request a duplicate itemized receipt. This policy also includes line items on hotel folios that are hospitality in nature.

Volunteers may submit their signed Volunteer Reimbursement Request with supporting documentation via mail, fax, or email. If submitting by mail, send to:

Pacific Northwest Swimming  
~~501 30<sup>th</sup> Street NE, Suite E~~ P.O. Box #2235  
Auburn, WA 9807102  
Attn: Treasurer  
If submitting by email, send to [Office@pns.org](mailto:Office@pns.org)

**1.3 Other Traveler's Expenses.** Volunteers are NOT to pay for another person's room. All travelers are to pay for their lodging unless on a group direct bill or arrangements are made ahead of time and paid by use of the PNS corporate credit card.

**1.4 Large Hospitality, Reception, and Room Rentals.** These expenses are NOT to be paid for with personal credit cards. Arrangements for payment need to be made prior to the event/trip by either direct billing or with the PNS corporate credit card.

## **2.0 Non-Reimbursable Expenses**

The following types of expenditures incurred by PNS volunteers will not be reimbursed unless specifically authorized by the approving manager:

### General

- Personal expenses that would be incurred by the employee/volunteer regardless of the volunteer's work-related responsibilities
- Amounts spent in excess of those considered reasonable
- The costs of the personal leg of an approved trip that is extended for personal reasons
- Annual fees, late fees, or finance charges on personal credit cards
- Expenses relating to unlawful activities (i.e. parking tickets, moving violations, fines)
- Air phone expense, other than in an emergency
- Laundry or dry cleaning
- Courier and messenger services unless transferring work related materials that could not be checked on the plane or carrier in the train or car.
- Incidentals for fees & tips given to porters, baggage carriers, and hotel staff.