

Friends of Niskayuna Rowing Travel Policies

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Adopted by Board of Directors August 18, 2015

Travel is an area where we as an organization can incur significant costs. We must always be conscious of the fact that we are entirely funded by the parents of the rowers. Respecting this, some travel reimbursement policies that may be appropriate in professional setting are not appropriate for club purposes.

We must also always be conscious of IRS rules for reimbursements. If we reimburse an individual in excess of the actual expense, or IRS mileage guidelines, the excess amount must be reported to the IRS as taxable income. Receipts are required for all expenses in excess of \$10, in accordance with IRS rules.

Volunteers are also reminded that they can take a tax deduction for any expenses incurred for which they opt to not seek reimbursement. Please submit the receipts to the treasurer in order to get a receipt for tax purposes.

It is important for all expenses incurred during these trips to be reported, even if the individual is not seeking reimbursement, so that we can properly budget for the event in the future.

This policy primarily applies to extended duration, out of town regattas, such as Stotesbury Cup, SRAA Nationals, Head of the Charles and Head of the Schuylkill.

No policy can capture every contingency of a trip. For extended duration summer regattas such as USRowing Club Nationals and Canadian Henley, some deviation from this policy may need to be considered based on the conditions on site, and the needs to safely and effectively transport, supervise and feed the athletes. Every effort should be made to stay within the budget of the regatta.

Coaches

Coaches are employees, and therefore must be compensated appropriately.

Meals

Whenever possible, coaches are expected to eat with their team. One of the purposes of the chuckwagon is to feed the coaches as well as the rowers, reducing both the cost of food, and the time required for the coaches to stand in line to buy food. If dinner is being provided for the rowers, such as the pasta dinner on Friday night at Stotes, the coaches are expected to attend that dinner, and the amount of food prepared or purchased should be adequate so as to properly feed the athletes, coaches and chaperones.

In cases where meals are not provided, the coach is in transit to or from the regatta, or the coach's duties require him/her to be in a location away from a team at meal time, the coach may have to purchase food, within the following guidelines. Coaches are expected to get a receipt for all expenses in excess of \$10 in compliance with IRS rules.

- Breakfast- \$10
- Lunch- \$15
- Dinner- \$25
- Daily Total- \$50

Driving Personal Vehicles

Whenever possible, coaches are expected to travel in the team truck, or on a team bus. This reduces the expense, and the risk of an accident.

In the event that a coach must drive his/her own vehicle, mileage is to be based on the distance actually driven for club business, with Niskayuna High School being the ultimate starting and ending point.

Mileage will be reimbursed at the IRS rate, which is currently \$0.575 a mile.

Parking and tolls will be reimbursed at the actual rate charged. Receipts are suggested if available. EZ Pass statements can be used as receipts.

Lodging

Coaches will be housed in the same accommodations as rowers, with the exception of camping or being hosted in private homes, in which case hotel or dorm accommodations will be provided for coaches should they request it.

Coaches may be asked to share a hotel room with one other coach or chaperone of the same gender. When staying in college dorms, coaches will have a private room, but that room may share a common area with other adults of the same gender.

Volunteers

Limits on Reimbursement

All trips within 75 miles one way from the High School are considered local. The club will not reimburse volunteers for mileage or tolls for any trip that is within a 75 mile radius of the High School. The club will provide parents with a receipt for these expenses should the parent wish to take a tax deduction for the expense.

Chaperones

In accordance with the Chaperone Guidelines below, chaperones will be designated ahead of time. Travel reimbursement is only provided to designated chaperones, in accordance with the pre-negotiated terms.

Transportation

Designated chaperones will often be expected to serve double duty as carpool drivers, food tent staff or may be expected to ride on the team bus to the regatta if one is provided. For out of town regattas, if a chaperone is required to drive, they will be compensated at the rate of \$0.14 plus tolls and parking.

Meals

Meals for chaperones will follow the same policy as coaches as outlined above.

Lodging

Designated chaperones will be housed in the same accommodations as the rowers they are chaperoning.

Chaperones may be asked to share a hotel room or college dorm room with other chaperones and/or coaches of the same gender, in a manner that is proportionate to the number of beds in the room. Couples who are both chaperoning may be housed together, but may be asked to share a double room with another couple that is also chaperoning. Chaperones who wish to share a hotel room with a spouse who is not working as a chaperone will have their accommodations covered at a proportionate rate.

Carpool Drivers

When a parent is needed to transport athletes, other than their own child, to a regatta, they are eligible to receive mileage reimbursement of \$0.14 a mile, plus tolls and parking for the period where they are transporting those athletes. This driver must be pre-approved by the Athletic Director and the District Office. Reimbursement is based on the expectation that the driver is able to transport at least three athletes in addition to their own child(ren). To ease budgeting and increase flexibility for the parents, this reimbursement may be broken down in to a per athlete, per direction rate.

Example- St. Catharines Ontario is a 300 mile drive, and has \$11 in tolls. At \$0.14 per mile, the reimbursement would be \$53. If a parent is transporting four athletes, the reimbursement works out to about \$13 an athlete, each direction.

Parent drivers are often called upon to also serve as chaperones, and to assist at the food tent. The conditions of the reimbursement should be clearly outlined ahead of time and agreed to by both the parent and the club.

Towing the Chuckwagon

Regardless of distance, if the tow vehicle is charged a parking fee, that parking fee is reimbursable. For out of town regattas (Head of the Housatonic, Stotes, Nationals, etc.), the IRS rate for volunteers is currently \$0.14 a mile. The person towing the chuckwagon to these regattas will be compensated as follows:

- \$0.14 a mile
- Tolls
- Parking
- Lodging in accordance with the chaperone policy above.
- Meals in accordance with the chaperone policy above.

The person towing the chuckwagon is expected to also serve as an official chaperone and assist at the food tent. Ideally, the chuckwagon tow person should serve as the food coordinator for the event.

Any food purchased for the chuckwagon should be coordinated with the food coordinator for the event. In an effort to reduce the number of reimbursements, whenever possible, food

purchases should be made by the chuckwagon coordinator, the Program Director, a coach, or a designated chaperone using the club credit card.

Rooms for Parents

The club will make an effort to include rooms for parents in the team accommodation. These rooms are provided as a convenience to parents, so long as doing so does not interfere with the housing the athletes, and does not result in additional cost to the club or other families. Parents are expected to be respectful of the fact that while on the trip, their child is in the care of the coaches, and must follow all team rules, especially those pertaining to lights out times, departure times, leaving the regatta venue and team meals.

Frequently, housing and feeding the athletes requires non-refundable deposits and firm deadlines. When extending access to the team accommodations to the parents and families of the athletes, these deadlines will also apply.

When the team is staying in hotels, parents will be required to transfer financial responsibility for their rooms to their own credit card, and pay for their rooms directly if permitted under the team's contract with the hotel. If the team is required to pay for all of the rooms together, the parents will be charged for their rooms before we depart for the regatta. Rooms not guaranteed by a personal credit card before the published deadline will be released.

Division of Expenses

For all out of town regattas (i.e. Stotes, Nationals and Head of the Charles) and all summer regattas, the rowers' families will be responsible for covering all of the costs incurred in attending that regatta. These costs include:

- Entry Fees
- Trailering Expenses
 - Gas
 - Tolls
 - Parking Permits
- Transportation
 - Chartered Busses
 - Rental Vans and Fuel
 - NCSD Owned Vans/SUVs and Fuel
 - Carpool Driver Mileage
 - Tolls
 - Parking Permits
- Chuckwagon Towing
 - Mileage
 - Tolls
 - Driver/Cook Lodging
 - Food
 - Parking Permits
- Athlete Lodging
- Food

- Coaches Expenses
 - Food
 - Transportation
 - Lodging
 - Salary, if not included in season (i.e. summer)
- Chaperone Expenses
 - Food
 - Transportation
 - Lodging
- Equipment Rental
- Any full-group activities undertaken (for example, during a week-long regatta they athletes might all go to the movies)

Division of Entry Fees

It is our policy to divide all of the shared expenses evenly between all of the participants, however there may be an additional charge in the event that a small subset of athletes competes in an additional race over and above those of the main group, or if the entry fees for one subset of rowers is significantly higher than another.

Examples: one athlete rows a single in addition their team boat, in this case, that one individual would incur an additional expense to cover the entry fee of the single. If all boys row doubles, where the entry fees work out \$25 per athlete, and the girls all row eights where the entry fees work out to \$10 per athlete.

Spares

In the event that we take spares to a regatta, the spares are only responsible for their share of the transportation, lodging and meal expenses, which is typically 75% of the total cost of attendance.

Charging of Expenses to Parents

Prior to an out of town regatta, the travel coordinator will put together a budget for the event which will be approved by the Treasurer. The costs for the will be divided in accordance with this policy and will be communicated to the parents via email. Parents are expected to pay the budgeted costs prior to their athlete departing for the event.

For regattas such as Canadian Henley and US Rowing Club Nationals, where the duration of the stay is variable, a reasonable deposit will be calculated based on the minimum expected stay, and will be collected prior to the event. Any remaining expenses will be billed to the participants after the event.

Deviation from the Budget

In the event of unexpected costs of more than 7% of what was communicated to the parents, an additional charge will be made to the affected families for the additional expenses. In the event that the cost per athlete is more than 7% lower than expected, the affected families will receive a refund of their share of the savings.

Chaperone Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure proper supervision of our student athletes in accordance with district guidelines, clearly outline the responsibilities of those chaperones, and to provide a template for reimbursing chaperones for reasonable expenses they incur in fulfilling their duties. Being a chaperone for out of town events is frequently a very fulfilling volunteer opportunity for parents while cheering on their child, but chaperones must keep in mind that they are acting as volunteers and not as employees of the club or the school district.

Athlete to Chaperone Ratios

District guidelines call for a chaperone to student ratio of 1 to 10, with a minimum of three chaperones for overnight trips, and a male-female ratio that reflects the composition of the group. A ratio of 1 to 7 is recommended for all International trips. Coaches can be counted as part of the required chaperones to ensure adherence to these guidelines.

Chaperone Responsibilities

Chaperones are designated for each trip in advance, and in many cases will be called upon to serve multiple roles, including staffing the food tent, grocery shopping and/or transporting athletes between the regatta venue and the team accommodations. Chaperones assist the coaching staff in ensuring that the athletes in attendance follow the Niskayuna Schools code of conduct. They ensure that the athletes behave in a respectful and safe manner, and assist the coaches in ensuring that all the athletes are where they need to be when they need to be there.

Reimbursable Expenses

Please review the reimbursement guidelines above for more detail.

When calculating the cost of attending an out of town event, it is important to maintain control over the costs associated with that event. To that end, a sensible policy regarding reimbursing chaperones for their expenses is necessary. The predominant question that arises in this calculation is one of “which costs are being incurred as a result of being a chaperone and which costs would that parent have incurred simply by being a supportive parent?” Frequently, being a chaperone permits the parent access to transportation and lodging that is less costly than they could obtain on their own. In which case, parents are encouraged to decline reimbursement of these expenses.

The Travel Coordinator will put out a call for chaperones before any event where they are required, and will negotiate the reimbursement and/or team provided accommodations with those chaperones for each event.

Additional items may come up for discussion or question. The guiding principles should be prudence and maintaining rower safety and fiscal integrity of the organization.