STATE BAR OF TEXAS
Business Expense Reimbursement Policies and Procedures

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

The enclosed internal policy, "State Bar of Texas Business Expense Reimbursement Policies and Procedures," is adopted pursuant to Section 3.07.01 of the State Bar Board Policy Manual (see below). To the extent this internal policy conflicts with a provision of the State Bar Board Policy Manual, the provision of the Board Policy Manual takes precedence.

3.07 Reimbursement of Expenses

3.07.01 General.

A. Policies and Procedures. The Executive Director shall prepare State Bar business expense reimbursement policies and procedures and shall submit substantive revisions of such policies and procedures within thirty (30) days to the Board Audit and Finance Committee for approval.

B. Applicability. Subject to the provisions of this Policy Manual, the expense reimbursement policies and procedures shall apply to travel and other business-related expenses incurred by State Bar staff, Board members, standing committee members, special committee members, task force members, other entities funded by the State Bar, and State Bar volunteers acting on behalf of and at the direction of the Bar.

The following policies apply to State Bar Staff, Board Members, TYLA Board Members, Committee Members, Task Force Members, and Commission For Lawyer Discipline Members and Other Volunteers. This policy can be used as a guide for other State Bar-related entities.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

***All expense reimbursement requests must be submitted no more than 45 days after an event and must be accompanied by sufficient substantiation of the expenses, pursuant to Section 3.07 of Board Policy. Reimbursement requests may not be submitted prior to the event being held. ***

Expense reimbursements, including substantiation, may be subject to the Public Information Act.

This policy covers reimbursements for expenses incurred by cash, personal credit card, and State Bar corporate credit card, or direct bill expenses charged to the State Bar.

Teleconferencing and Videoconferencing Considerations: For each State Bar meeting, careful consideration should be given to whether business can be handled remotely through teleconferencing or videoconferencing, without travel by all or some of the participants. Whenever possible, remote meetings are strongly preferred over in-person meetings. The State Bar has technology that will facilitate presentations to participants through videoconferencing. For further information on this service, please contact your staff liaison or travel coordinator.

Event Accommodation Preference: If the State Bar provides meals and lodging at an event, expense reimbursements submitted in lieu of the meals and lodging provided at the event will be limited to the cost of lodging provided. Meals will not be reimbursed. If special needs or circumstances exist, separate meals and/or lodging may be necessary, but are subject to State Bar approval by staff liaison or travel coordinator prior to incurring the expense.

Expenditures for Non-State Bar travelers: Expenses for spouses, companions, relatives, or friends will not be reimbursed except as provided in the State Bar Board Policy Manual.

Early Arrival and Late Departure for Non-State Bar Business: Occasionally, a State Bar traveler may wish to arrive early for a meeting or event or stay over after a meeting for non-State Bar-related purposes. The State Bar will not reimburse expenses incurred as a result of such early arrival and/or late departure.

Travel Arrangements should be made as far in advance of the event or meeting as possible in order to take advantage of available special fares or rates. Absent substantiated special circumstances, reimbursement for expenses incurred for last-minute travel arrangements might not be fully reimbursed.

Discounted Rates: The State Bar member benefits program offers discounted rates on car rentals and hotels. The State Bar publishes discount programs for car rentals and hotels in the *Texas Bar Journal* and on the State Bar website at texasbar.com/discounts.

Budgetary Restrictions: Certain departments and programs impose additional limitations on expense reimbursements. Please check with your staff liaison or travel coordinator for further information.

Expense Reimbursement Form Required: The State Bar Expense Reimbursement Form is available upon request. The form is required to be completed and submitted to the State Bar. The staff contact and address are printed on the form. Reimbursement forms should be emailed or mailed to the appropriate liaison C/O, PO Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711.

Signature Required. The Expense Reimbursement Form must be signed by the person for whom the reimbursement request is being made. An electronic signature is acceptable. The form must be completely filled out to prevent delay in processing the request.

Receipts Required. The reimbursement request must include itemized receipts for expenditures and must include all information described below, depending on the expense. Receipts should be submitted neatly, with small receipts taped to a letter-sized paper. Tips and miscellaneous expenses for which no bill or receipt is provided are reimbursable without a receipt and should be documented on the reimbursement form. On occasion, a traveler may lose a receipt. The traveler should list the expenses incurred, including the name of the vendor, total amount incurred, the date incurred, and a statement that no alcohol was purchased. Excessive loss of receipts may result in a denial of reimbursement.

Payment Processing:
The State Bar offers both electronic payment and check payment. Electronic payment through direct bank transfer is available to all reimbursement recipients upon receipt of a completed "Vendor Authorization Agreement for Electronic Payment Form" (Attachment A)

For payment by check, please allow two to three weeks from receipt by State Bar personnel to process the reimbursement and issue a check for payment. For electronic reimbursement, please allow between one and two weeks from receipt. Reimbursement checks will be mailed to the address on the form. For electronic payments, a remittance email will be sent to the email address identified on the EFT vendor form. Employees can pick up reimbursement checks from the Accounts Payable staff.

Questions? Please see the second page of the travel reimbursement form for staff contact information.

Modifications to Reimbursement: The State Bar reserves the right to modify an expense reimbursement request to bring the request into compliance with this policy. The State Bar will provide the traveler with an explanation for modifications to the submitted reimbursement request.

TRANSPORTATION

The State Bar will reimburse the following expenses incurred when traveling on State Bar business:

Commercial airline travel will be reimbursed at the least expensive rate available for travel. Travel insurance or 3rd party booking fees are not reimbursable. Fully-reimbursable flights are as follows:

Southwest Airlines: "Wanna Get Away Plus" fares are preferred; business select fares will be reimbursed only at the WGAP rate. Early bird check-in fees and one checked bag are reimbursable.

Other Airlines: Economy or Economy Plus fares (whichever is less) and one checked bag will be reimbursed.

Timely Booking: To receive a low fare on airline travel, the traveler should book flights well in advance of the departure date, such as 30 days in advance. Depending on the circumstances, the State Bar may reduce reimbursements for premium, first-class flights or for flights booked less than two weeks before the departure date.

Special Circumstances: Under certain circumstances, a premium or urgent flight may be necessary. Notification and prior authorization are required from the appropriate State Bar staff to ensure full reimbursement. If the traveler anticipates a high likelihood of flight transfer or cancellation, the traveler may be reimbursed for the cost of the least expensive fully refundable ticket.

Cancellation Fees: The State Bar will not reimburse the cost of flight cancellation or transfer fees, unless the transfer or cancellation was due to a change in the State Bar schedule of events, illness, or other special circumstances. If a flight that has been paid for by the State Bar is cancelled, rebooked, or rescheduled, and a credit is given to the traveler, the credit must be used for future State Bar business purposes.

Bus transportation. The use of bus services such as Vonlane or Greyhound is reimbursable.

Taxi or rideshares are reimbursable**.** The use of taxis, airport bus, or rideshare services is encouraged for short trips or distances because they are typically more cost-effective than car rentals.

Car rental expenses and related fuel charges and tolls used by rental car will be reimbursed by the State Bar. Car rentals should be limited to economy, standard, or intermediate vehicles when possible. On certain occasions, volunteers or employees may require a larger, high-grade rental car when sharing rides or carrying equipment. Only the volunteer or employee renting the car is eligible for reimbursement. Travelers should refuel the vehicle before returning it to avoid additional fees.

Discounted Rates: Discounted car rentals should be used when possible. Elected and appointed officials (including directors) and employees should use the State of Texas travel program for car rentals. Please contact your travel coordinator or staff liaison for details on the rate and procedures. The discounted program should only be used for travel for official State Bar business. The discounted rates are with Hertz, Avis, and Enterprise.

Personal Vehicle Mileage will be reimbursed at the current reimbursement rate set by board policy. For the current calendar year, mileage will be reimbursed at $0.70 per mile. The reimbursement rate for the calendar year will be updated in January. Travelers who use their personal vehicles to travel may claim mileage from their place of departure, such as their home or office, to the destination. Support for the mileage, such as driving directions showing estimated mileage for the trip, may be requested. Fuel expense will not be reimbursed when claiming mileage.

Private Aircraft – Additional Passengers: A member who owns or leases a private aircraft is entitled to reimbursement up to the amount that would have been paid or reimbursed to each passenger had the passenger(s) incurred the reimbursable cost of coach airfare.

Parking and Tolls: Parking and toll expenses are reimbursable. Fines, such as parking tickets or towing fees from parking illegally are not reimbursable.

MEALS

Actual reasonable expenses for meals incurred while traveling on State Bar business will be reimbursed. Meal expenses must be accompanied by detailed receipts listing all items purchased. The receipt copy showing only the total cost of the meal and the tip will not be sufficient detail to substantiate a meal expense. The names of all reimbursable guests must be indicated on the receipt.

Alcohol Expenses will not be reimbursed.

Meals provided with the meeting: If a meal is provided with the meeting or event, the transportation to and from the meal and the cost of a meal at another location is not reimbursable.

Meals prior and post meeting: Meals incurred while traveling directly to and from an event are reimbursable.

LODGING

The State Bar will reimburse lodging expenses at reasonable, single occupancy or standard business room rates when traveling on State Bar business. When the hotel is at a conference or convention site with a special conference rate, reimbursement or corporate credit card approval will be limited to the conference rate.

Length of stay: To the extent possible, meetings should be scheduled so that attendees can arrive for the meeting and leave the same day. The State Bar will only reimburse hotel stays when necessary. Hotel stays must be approved in advance by State Bar staff, unless otherwise notified.

Cancellation Fees: The State Bar will not reimburse for the cost of lodging cancellation fees unless special circumstances are demonstrated. Cancellation fees incurred on direct bill reservations will be the responsibility of the individual. Cancellation fees can typically be avoided if notification is provided within three days of the reservation date.

Tips: Tips are reimbursable without a receipt, but should be itemized.

Parking at the host hotel: Parking at the advertised hotel parking rate is reimbursable.

Discounted Rate: Discounted hotel stays are available through the State Bar of Texas member benefits program.

OTHER EXPENSES

Other reasonable and necessary expenses of conducting State Bar business may be reimbursed, including such items as copying, postage, WiFi, and long-distance telephone calls. Before incurring charges for printing and copying jobs that exceed the minimal expense, please contact your staff liaison for alternative options. When possible, printing and copying jobs should be completed in advance of the meeting for maximum savings to the State Bar. The cost of Wi-Fi in hotel guest rooms will be reimbursed if Wi-Fi is necessary to conduct State Bar business.

Attachment A

State Bar of Texas
Vendor Authorization Agreement for Electronic Payment

CHECK ONE: ☐ NEW ☐CHANGE

Vendor Name: _____

Vendor Address: _____

Vendor authorizes the State Bar of Texas to initiate credit entries to the account indicated below. If monies to which Vendor is not entitled are deposited into such bank account, Vendor authorizes the State Bar of Texas to direct the bank to return these funds. This authorization remains in effect until written notification from Vendor is received by the State Bar of Texas canceling this agreement.

Bank Name:_____

Routing Number:_____

Account No.:_____

Account type: ☐ Checking ☐ Savings

By signing below, the signor asserts that they are authorized to complete the Vendor Authorization Agreement and that the information provided is accurate and complete.

Name (authorized signor):_____

Title:_____

Signature:_____ **Date:**_____

Phone Number:_____

Email address:_____
(We will send a remittance email to this address.)