

**San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency**  
**General Manager and Staff Travel Policy**  
**January 2014**

**I. Preamble**

This policy is intended to govern travel for business purposes by the General Manager and staff of the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency. Any travel by a staff member or the General Manager must be able to be justified as having value to the Agency, and the General Manager will be required to demonstrate that value for any travel by the General Manager or by any staff member at any time when requested by the Board.

The primary purposes of this policy are to:

- Provide transparency
- Allow the Board of Directors to provide needed oversight
- Prevent abuse

This policy is adopted by the Board of Directors of the Agency, who shall have the sole authority to revise, interpret, implement, and enforce it.

**II. General**

- a. Staff Travel. The General Manager shall authorize all travel by any staff member. The General Manager is accountable to the Board for all decisions regarding staff travel.
- b. General Manager Travel. The General Manager shall make all decisions regarding the General Manager's travel except as noted in II c. and d. below.
- c. Exceptions. The Board may, at any time, by majority vote at a regular or special Board meeting, determine that all travel by the General Manager must be approved in advance by the Board.
- d. Travel restrictions. At any time, the Board may by majority vote at a regular or special Board meeting restrict the travel of the General Manager or staff.

**III. Purpose of Travel**

- a. In general, travel by the General Manager or staff should be for one of three reasons:
  - i. To attend a conference, seminar, briefing, or training session on a relevant subject.
  - ii. To attend a meeting where the presence of the General Manager or staff member will benefit the Agency.
  - iii. To participate in an educational field trip or tour, such as those sponsored by the Water Education Foundation.
  - iv. There may be exceptions to this but the Board's expectation is that those exceptions would be rare.
- b. Participation in Meetings.
  - i. It is expected that, if the General Manager or a staff member participates in a meeting for which travel is required, that:

1. The General Manager or staff member will gather and bring back information important to the Agency; or
2. The General Manager or staff member will actively participate in the meeting, providing input representing the best interests of the Agency; or
3. Both of the above.

**IV. Method of Travel**

- a. Travel by the General Manager or staff member may be by motor vehicle (personal, rental, or Agency-owned) or by airplane, or by some combination. In all cases, all legitimate travel expenses will be reimbursed by the Agency, or paid through use of an Agency credit card.
- b. In the event the travel is by air, every effort shall be made to purchase the ticket well in advance in order to minimize the cost to the Agency.
- c. In the event the travel or a portion of the travel is via personal vehicle, the Agency will reimburse the staff member (or General Manager) for distance traveled at the current IRS reimbursement rate.
- d. In the event that the travel or a portion of the travel is by rental car, no size greater than “standard” shall be rented.

**V. Expenses to be Reimbursed**

- a. The Agency will reimburse the following expenses related to travel:
  - i. Travel to the airport, if appropriate. Every effort shall be made to fly out of Ontario Airport or Palm Springs Airport, the two closest airports to the Agency administration building.
  - ii. Airport parking.
  - iii. Transport from the airport to the final destination, whether by rental car, taxi, shuttle, or bus.
  - iv. Overnight stay at a hotel, as applicable and appropriate.
    1. Overnight stays in “luxury” hotels is not permitted unless it is for a conference held at that hotel and a “conference rate” is available.
    2. Every effort shall be made to find a hotel with a room rate less than \$200 per night (not including tax). The Agency will not pay for stays at hotels with higher rates unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable alternative.
    3. The Board has the discretion to enforce this provision by requiring the General Manager or staff member to pay all hotel costs in excess of a “reasonable” overnight rate, considering the city and the timing of the event. This action would be taken at a Finance and Budget workshop.
  - v. Meals. Expenses for meals must be reasonable. For example, no dinner will be reimbursed for more than \$30.00 (not including tip or other service charges). No lunch will be reimbursed for more than \$20.00 (not including tip or other service charges). These costs are for the individual alone. Should the General Manager or staff member pay for a meal for others, these limits do not apply to meals purchased for non-Agency employees. In such a case, the names of all attendees and the nature and purpose of the meal shall be noted in writing for the Board’s review.

1. Room service. The General Manager or staff member may order room service for a meal. The maximum cost provision above does not include any service charges or fees for room service.
  2. No reimbursement will be provided for a meal that is included in a conference or seminar registration fee. For example, if the General Manager or staff member attends an ACWA conference where lunches are included in the registration, that individual will not be reimbursed for a lunch that is taken elsewhere, unless it is a business lunch, in which case the other attendees and the nature of the business are to be noted on the receipt.
    - vi. Tips and incidentals. Incidentals may include overnight parking, wi-fi access, etc.
- b. The Agency will NOT reimburse the following expenses:
- i. Alcohol.
  - ii. In-room movies.
  - iii. Personal expenses
  - iv. Trips to hotel spas.
  - v. Entertainment (movies, concerts, plays, etc.)
  - vi. Any expense for a spouse or travel companion.

**VI. Miscellaneous**

- a. **Emergencies.** If the General Manager or staff member is away from home on Agency travel and there is a family emergency that requires the individual to return home immediately, the Agency will reimburse any additional costs incurred for this unexpected travel.

**VII. Receipts**

- a. The General Manager and Operations and Maintenance Manager will keep all receipts and include them with the monthly credit card bill.
- b. Staff members will keep all receipts for expenditures over \$5 and include them with their expense report.
- c. For expenses not paid with an Agency credit card, receipts are required for all expenses over \$5.
- d. The Finance Manager shall report to the Finance and Budget Committee any expense for which a receipt is not included.

**VIII. Review and Revisions**

- a. The Board may revise this policy from time to time by a majority vote of the Board at a regular or special Board meeting.
- b. The Board will review this policy at a Board meeting or workshop at least once every three years, starting in 2016, to ensure that it fulfills the needs of the Agency.

**Adopted by the Board of Directors on January 6, 2014 by a vote of 7 - 0.**