

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



April 25, 2008

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NO. I-28-08

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
FOOD STAMP MANAGERS**REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL**

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation
Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by
One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

SUBJECT: FFY 2008 STATE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

For Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008, the California Department of Social Services, Field Operations Bureau (FOB), submitted State Exchange Program (SEP) requests totaling over \$119,000 to the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Of that amount, FNS has approved \$49,195 for California's SEP activities. Attached is a table identifying the SEP proposals that were approved.

Those counties with approved activities have already been notified. At that time, they were advised to schedule and complete their trips as soon as possible. FOB staff will make follow-up calls to determine the status of trips so that the funding can be shifted to other SEP activities when approved trips are not taken.

FNS has requested that all trips be scheduled by May 23, 2008. When the trips are scheduled, the county should provide the FOB with planned dates and attendees. All trips must be completed no later than September 30, 2008. Within 60 days after the trip is completed, the county must complete a Travel Expense Claim (TEC) [STD 262A] form for each person with reimbursable expenses. For exchanges between counties and other states, a completed SEP Evaluation Report must also accompany the TEC. No reimbursement can be made without these documents and a reimbursement cannot exceed the approved allocation for the trip. A blank TEC form, a completed sample TEC, and an Evaluation Form are attached.

All notifications regarding SEP and completed evaluation and TEC documents should be directed to Steve Hemmerling at the following address:

California Department of Social Services
Food Stamp Branch
Field Operations Bureau
744 P Street, M/S 16-32
Sacramento, CA 95814

If you have any questions regarding SEP, please contact Steve Hemmerling at the following telephone number, email address, or by facsimile:

Telephone: (916) 651-6556
Fax: (916) 654-1295
Email: shemmerl@dss.ca.gov

Thank you for taking the time to develop and submit your county's SEP proposal(s). This effort demonstrates your county's commitment to improving payment accuracy and further reducing California's Food Stamp Program error rate.

Attachments

State Exchange Projects Approved and Conditionally Approved by FNS
for FFY 2008
Travel Expense Claim Guidance
Article 12 – Allowances and Reimbursements
Travel Expense Claim [STD 262A] form
Travel Expense Claim completed example
State Exchange Program Evaluation Form

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

RICHTON YEE, Chief
Food Stamp Branch

c: County Food Stamp Program Managers
County Corrective Action Coordinators

ARTICLE 12 – ALLOWANCES AND REIMBURSEMENTS

12.1 Business and Travel Expense

The State agrees to reimburse employees for actual, necessary and appropriate business expenses and travel expenses incurred 50 miles or more from home and headquarters, in accordance with existing Department of Personnel Administration rules and as set forth below. Lodging and/or meals provided by the State or included in hotel expenses or conference fees or in transportation costs such as airline tickets or otherwise provided shall not be claimed for reimbursement. Snacks and continental breakfasts such as rolls, juice, and coffee are not considered to be meals. Each item of expense of \$25 or more requires a receipt; receipts may be required for items of expense that are less than \$25. When receipts are not required to be submitted with the claim, it is the employee's responsibility to maintain receipts and records of their actual expenses for tax purposes. Each State agency shall determine the necessity for travel and the mode of travel to be reimbursed.

A. Meals/Incidentals: Meal expenses for breakfast, lunch, and dinner will be reimbursed in the amount of actual expenses up to the maximums. The term "incidentals" includes, but is not limited to, expenses for laundry, cleaning and pressing of clothing, and fees and tips for services, such as for porters and baggage carriers. It does not include taxicab fares, lodging taxes or the cost of telegrams or telephone calls.

1. Rates - Actual meal/incidental expenses incurred will be reimbursed in accordance with the maximum rates and time frame requirements outlined below:

Breakfast up to \$ 6.00

Lunch up to \$10.00

Dinner up to \$18.00

Incidentals up to \$ 6.00

Total up to \$40.00 (Every full 24 hours of travel)

2. Time Frames - For continuous short-term travel of more than twenty-four (24) hours but less than thirty-one (31) days, the employee will be reimbursed for actual costs up to the maximum for each meal, incidental, and lodging expense for each complete twenty-four (24) hours of travel, beginning with the traveler's time of departure and return as follows:

a. On the first day of travel on a trip of more than twenty-four (24) hours:

Trip begins at or before 6 a.m. Breakfast may be claimed

Trip begins at or before 11 a.m. Lunch may be claimed

Trip begins at or before 5 p.m. Dinner may be claimed

b. On the fractional day of travel at the end of a trip of more than twenty-four (24) hours:

Trip ends at or after 8 a.m. Breakfast may be claimed

Trip ends at or after 2 p.m. Lunch may be claimed

Trip ends at or after 7 p.m. Dinner may be claimed

If the fractional day includes an overnight stay, receipted lodging may be claimed. No meal or lodging expenses may be claimed or reimbursed more than once on any given date or during any twenty-four (24)-hour period.

c. For continuous travel of less than twenty-four (24) hours, the employee will be reimbursed for actual expenses up to the maximum as follows:

Travel begins at or before 6 a.m.

and ends at or after 9 a.m.:

Breakfast may be claimed

Travel begins at or before 4 p.m.

and ends at or after 7 p.m.:

Dinner may be claimed

If the trip extends overnight, receipted lodging may be claimed.

No lunch or incidentals may be claimed on a trip of less than twenty-four (24) hours.

B. Lodging: All lodging reimbursement requires a receipt from a commercial lodging establishment such as a hotel, motel, bed and breakfast inn, or public campground that caters to the general public. No lodging will be reimbursed without a valid receipt.

1. Regular State Business Travel

a. Statewide, in all locations not listed in c. below, for receipted lodging while on travel status to conduct State business:

With a lodging receipt: Actual lodging up to \$84 plus applicable taxes.

b. When employees are required to do business and obtain lodging in the counties of Alameda, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara, reimbursement will be for actual receipted lodging to a maximum of \$140 plus applicable taxes. When employees are required to do business and obtain lodging in the counties of Los Angeles and San Diego, actual lodging up to \$110 plus applicable taxes.

2. State Sponsored Conferences or Conventions

For receipted lodging while attending State Sponsored conferences and conventions, when the lodging is contracted by the State sponsor for the event, and the appointing authority has granted prior approval for attendance and lodging at the contracted rate and establishment: Actual lodging up to \$110 plus applicable taxes.

3. Non-State Sponsored Conferences or Conventions

For receipted lodging while attending non-State sponsored conferences and conventions, when the lodging is contracted by the sponsor for the event, and the appointing authority has granted prior approval for attendance and lodging at the contracted rate and establishment: Actual lodging when approved in advance by the appointing authority.

Reimbursement of lodging expenses in excess of specified amounts, excluding taxes requires advance written approval from the Department of Personnel Administration.

The Department of Personnel Administration may delegate approval authority to departmental appointing powers or increase the lodging maximum rate for the geographical area and period of time deemed necessary to meet the needs of the State. An employee may not claim lodging, meal, or incidental expenses within 50 miles of his/her home or headquarters.

C. Long-term Travel: Actual expenses for long term meals and receipted lodging will be reimbursed when the employee incurs expenses in one location comparable to those arising from the use of establishments catering to the long-term visitor.

1. Full Long-term Travel - In order to qualify for full long-term travel reimbursement, the employee on long-term field assignment must meet the following criteria:

- The employee continues to maintain a permanent residence at the primary headquarters, and

- The permanent residence is occupied by the employee's dependents, or
- The permanent residence is maintained at a net expense to the employee exceeding \$200 per month.

The employee on full long-term travel who is living at the long-term location may claim either:

- Reimbursement for actual individual expense, substantiated by receipts, for lodging, water, sewer, gas and electricity, up to a maximum of \$1,130 per calendar month while on the long-term assignment, and actual expenses up to \$10 for meals and incidentals, for each period of twelve (12) to twenty-four (24) hours and up to \$5 for actual meals and incidentals for each period of less than twelve (12) hours at the long-term location, or
- Long-term subsistence rates of \$24 for actual meals and incidentals and \$24 for receipted lodging for travel of twelve (12) hours up to twenty-four (24) hours; either \$24 for actual meals or \$24 for receipted lodging for travel less than twelve (12) hours when the employee incurs expenses in one location comparable to those arising from the use of establishments catering to the long-term visitor.

2. An employee on long-term field assignment who does not maintain a separate residence in the headquarters area may claim long-term subsistence rates of up to \$12 for actual meals and incidentals and \$12 for receipted lodging for travel of twelve (12) hours up to twenty-four (24) hours at the long-term location; either \$12 for actual meals or \$12 for receipted lodging for travel less than twelve (12) hours at the long-term location.

3. Employees, with supervisor's approval, after completing the work shift remain at the job or LTA location past the Friday twelve (12)-hour clock will receive full per diem for Friday. Those staying overnight shall not receive any additional per diem regardless of the Saturday departure time. An employee returning to the temporary residence on Sunday will receive full per diem. This does not change Department of Personnel Administration policy regarding the per diem clock which starts at the beginning of the work shift on Monday. If the normal workweek is other than as stated above, the same principle applies.

The following clarifies Department of Personnel Administration policy regarding an employee leaving the LTA location on personal business:

The reference to leaving the LTA location for personal business and not claiming per diem or transportation expenses assumes that the employee stays overnight at a location other than the long-term accommodations.

D. Out-of-State Travel: For short-term out-of-State travel, State employees will be reimbursed actual lodging, supported by a receipt, and will be reimbursed for actual meal and incidental expenses in accordance with above. Failure to furnish lodging receipts will limit reimbursement to the meal/incidental rate above. Long-term out-of-State travel will be reimbursed in accordance with the provisions of long-term travel above.

E. Out of Country Travel: For short-term out of country travel, State employees will be reimbursed actual lodging, substantiated by a receipt, and will be reimbursed actual meals and incidentals up to the maximums published in column (B) of the Maximum Travel per Diem Allowances for Foreign Areas, section 925, U.S. Department of State Standardized Regulations and the meal/incidental breakdown in Federal Travel

Regulation Chapter 301, Travel Allowances, Appendix B. Long-term out of country travel will be reimbursed in accordance with the provisions of long-term travel above, or as determined by the Department of Personnel Administration.

Subsistence shall be paid in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Department of Personnel Administration. It is the responsibility of the individual employee to maintain receipts for their actual meal expenses.

F. Transportation: Transportation expenses include, but are not limited to, airplane, train, bus, taxi fares, rental cars, parking, mileage reimbursement, and tolls that are reasonably and necessarily incurred as a result of conducting State business. Each State agency shall determine the necessity for travel, and the mode of travel to be reimbursed.

1. Mileage Reimbursement

a. Effective July 1, 2006, when an employee is authorized by his/her appointing authority or designee to operate a privately owned vehicle on State business the employee will be allowed to claim and be reimbursed at the Federal Standard Mileage Rate (FSMR). **[Currently the FSMR is \$.505 per mile.]**

b. When an employee is required to report to an alternative work location, the employee may be reimbursed for the number of miles driven in excess of his/her normal commute.

2. Specialized Vehicles – Effective July 1, 2006, employees who must operate a motor vehicle on official State business and who, because of a physical disability, may operate only specially equipped or modified vehicles may claim the FSMR, with certification. Supervisors who approve claims pursuant to this subsection have the responsibility of determining the need for the use of such vehicles.

3. Private Aircraft Mileage – When an employee is authorized by his/her department, reimbursement for the use of the employee's privately owned aircraft on State business shall be made at the rate of 50 cents per statute mile. Pilot qualifications and insurance requirements will be maintained in accordance with the Department of Personnel Administration Rule 599.628.1 and the State Office of Risk and Insurance Management.

4. Mileage to/from a Common Carrier – When the employee's use of a privately owned vehicle is authorized for travel to or from a common carrier terminal, and the employee's vehicle is not parked at the terminal during the period of absence, the employee may claim double the number of miles between the terminal and the employee's headquarters or residence, whichever is less, while the employee occupies the vehicle. Exception to "whichever is less". If the employee begins travel one hour or more before he normally leaves his home, or on a regularly scheduled day off, mileage may be computed from his/her residence.

G. Receipts: Receipts or vouchers shall be submitted for every item of expense of \$25 or more. In addition, receipts are required for every item of transportation and business expense incurred as a result of conducting State business except for actual expenses as follows:

1. Railroad and bus fares of less than \$25 when travel is wholly within the State of

California.

2. Street car, ferry fares, bridge and road tolls, local rapid transit system, taxi, shuttle or hotel bus fares, and parking fees of \$10 or less for each continuous period of parking or each separate transportation expense noted in this item.

3. Telephone, telegraph, tax, or other business charges related to State business of \$5 or less.

4. In the absence of a receipt, reimbursement will be limited to the non-receipted amount above.

5. Reimbursement will be claimed only for the actual and necessary expenses noted above. Regardless of the above exceptions, the approving officer may require additional certification and/or explanation in order to determine that an expense was actually and reasonably incurred. In the absence of a satisfactory explanation, the expense shall not be allowed.

State Exchange Program Evaluation Form

Please complete this survey and return it to the CDSS, Field Operations Bureau, after the exchange. Thank you!

Name/Title	
Address	
E-mail	
Phone	
Fax	
Your State/County Agency	
State/County Agency Visited	
SEP Number and	FY 08- _____/ \$ _____
Purpose of Trip	

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Informative and helpful meeting attended and/or program observed.					
Hosting staff was helpful and knowledgeable about subject matter.					
I/we will be able to take information presented and replicate in my state/county agency.					
My/our overall satisfaction with the exchange is high and I/we will recommend changes in policy and/or activities of my state/county Food Stamp Program.					
	Yes	No	N/A		
Were you provided useful handouts and materials to be used in your state/county?					
Were your questions adequately addressed during the trip?					
Would you recommend other states/counties to visit this state's/county's program/project?					

Please describe 1 -3 action (s) to be taken by your state/county FSP as a result of the exchange and a timetable:

**STATE EXCHANGE PROJECTS APPROVED AND
CONDITIONALLY APPROVED BY FNS
FOR FFY 2008**

PROJECT	DATES	BUDGET
08-01; Western States Food Stamp Program (FSP) Directors' Meeting, San Francisco, CA	December 5-6, 2007	\$2,095
08-02; Big Cities Meeting, Dallas, TX.	April 1-3, 2008	\$5,500
08-03; Alameda to Los Angeles County to view its error review panel	To Be Announced (TBA)	\$500
FY 08-04; Alameda County and a California State representative to Illinois regarding its Express Food Stamp Project	TBA	\$2,000
FY 08-05; Fresno County to Nevada to review its Client Call Center and application assistance projects	TBA	\$1,2000
08-06; Los Angeles County to recognize county district offices which consistently achieve low FSP payment error rates	TBA	\$500
FY 08-07; Orange County to conduct training workshop locally	TBA	\$1,500
08-08; San Diego County to Missouri and possibly Tennessee to meet with quality assurance, corrective action, and FSP staff to discuss and view current best practices related to high FSP participation rate and payment accuracy	TBA	\$2,500
08-09; Santa Clara County to Riverside County to survey and analyze all issues related to FSP error rate, policy, quality control/quality assurance activities, corrective action strategies, best practice, and lessons learned	TBA	\$700
08-10; Solano County to Los Angeles County to learn the details of the "Seven Part Corrective Action Plan" to focus on efforts in reducing negative action errors, increased payment accuracy, and low negative error rates	TBA	\$700
08-11; Annual California FSP Conference, Sacramento	TBA but no later than the 2 nd week of Sept. 2008	\$28,000
08-12; State and County representatives to New York to observe innovative access projects	TBA	\$4,000

The following projects have received conditional approval. If the projects listed above are not completed, the conditionally approved projects will be funded.

PROJECTS	DATES	BUDGET
Alameda County to create an FSP reference guide	To Be Announced (TBA)	\$800
Los Angeles County with a California State representative to low negative action error rate states(s) to observe best practices		\$3,000
San Diego County to Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco Counties to discuss and observe how other CalWIN counties conduct business while maintaining a high level of accuracy	TBA	\$1,000
Disaster/Reports Training	TBA	\$2,000