

# State of Arizona Travel Policy Change for Cooperators

The State of Arizona adopted a new travel policy that not only updated lodging and meal rates effective 10/1/16 but also included some new rules. For a full description of the policy and rates you can visit <https://gao.az.gov/travel/welcome-gao-travel>.

We continue to operate under the special meal rates for wildland firefighting personnel until June 30, 2017. We are in the process of submitting a request to ADOA for the special meal rates after June 30, 2017 and once approved it will be sent to the fire departments and also be posted in the Invoice Workbook. **All reimbursements are still based on actual expenses** and rates provided in these policies are maximum limits per person. Below summarizes the changes that will go into effect for cooperators on **May 1, 2017** with some examples.

## NEW RULES

Travel days of departure and return involving an overnight stay = 75% of the full-day meal rates. The rates to be used are based on the destination location (the place where the employee arrives and spends the night). It doesn't matter the times of departure or arrival, the length of the travel day or the number of meals purchased and consumed. For example if full-day meal rate is \$54 \* 75% = \$40.50 max allowance for that travel day.

Travel days not involving an overnight stay: This typically would occur for incidents within Arizona. A single day reimbursement for travel more than 50 miles from both the traveler's residence and regular duty post, and over 12 hours, has a limit of \$20.00 per person. The meal has to be taken more than 50 miles from the traveler's residence and regular duty post. Please note that the requirement that the cooperator be self-sufficient for the 1<sup>st</sup> 12 hours still apply.

Breakdown of Meals: You no longer have to allocate meals between breakfast, lunch or dinner. In other words, if you qualify for full day rate of \$54.00 you don't have to show what was spent for each meal, just the total of what was spent for the day. For example if you spent: breakfast = \$14, lunch = \$14.50, dinner = \$19.25, total reimbursement = \$47.75 because you spent less than the \$54.00. If you had spent \$60 for meals, then you could only claim the \$54.00 max limit.

Meals Provided? When a meal is provided, reduce the total allowance amount by the specific meal provided according to the current meal guide below or the special firefighter meal rates depending on which meal rates you follow.

### Meal Expense Reimbursement Rates by Meal for Travel in the Continental US *as they correspond to their applicable full day rates (effective 10/1/16)*

Wildland  
Firefighting  
Effective  
to 6/30/17

<b>Breakfast</b>	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$10.00	\$11.00	\$12.00	\$13.00	\$12.00
<b>Lunch</b>	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$13.00	\$14.00	\$15.00	\$16.00	\$16.00
<b>Dinner</b>	\$21.00	\$24.00	\$26.00	\$29.00	\$32.00	\$35.00	\$27.00
<b>Full Day Rate</b>	\$41.00	\$44.00	\$49.00	\$54.00	\$59.00	\$64.00	\$55.00
Departure & Return Travel Day with over- night stay (75%)	\$30.75	\$33.00	\$36.75	\$40.50	\$44.25	\$48.00	\$41.25

Below are two examples; one uses the State's travel meal rates and the other firefighter meal rates for a travel day.  
*Scenario: Return travel day from Palm Springs, CA in June 2017 and would arrive home to Phoenix later that day. A full breakfast was provided by hotel that morning. You would use Phoenix's rate 75% rate.*

State travel policy: Return Travel allowance = \$36.75 – \$10 (breakfast provided) = **\$26.75** max allowance

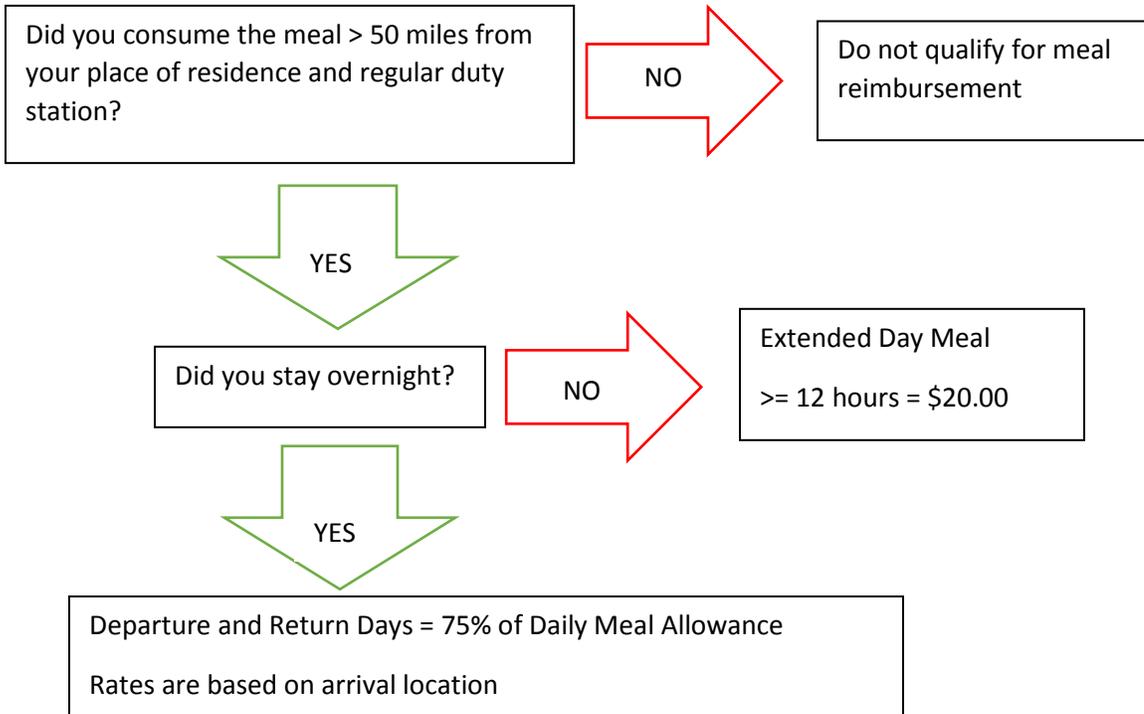
Firefighter policy: Return Travel allowance = \$41.25 – \$12 (breakfast provided) = **\$29.25** max allowance

Keep in mind that the rules in the General Provision still apply for in-state vs out-of-state assignments. As a reminder they are:

- Travel In-State: Lodging: Does not require a Resource S# or written approval [while in travel status](#). However, once they arrive at the incident a Resource S# is required or written approval from an Agency Representative for lodging reimbursement. On meals, cooperators are considered self-sufficient for the first 12 hours. If meals are not provided after 12 hours, then follow travel policy.
- Travel Out-of-State: Lodging & Meals: No Resource number is required for lodging or meals while in travel status. Once arrived at assignment and lodging or meals are not provided, simply include an explanation with paperwork.

See next page for a summary guideline for the new travel policy. There will be upcoming training provided to help you understand the new guidelines and answer your questions. Because of these changes a new meal & lodging claim form is also attached to this email.

# Travel Summary Guideline



## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- IF ANY MEALS WERE PROVIDED, THEN YOU NEED TO DEDUCT FROM ALLOWANCE. (SEE MEAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT RATE BY MEAL)
- DO NOT NEED TO ITEMIZE BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND DINNER.
- REIMBURSEMENT IS FOR MEALS PURCHASED OR MAX ALLOWANCE WHICHEVER IS LESS
- GRATUITY LIMITS:
  - RESTAURANT = 15 TO 20% OF PRE-TAX BILL
  - BUFFET, FAST FOOD, CARRY-OUT = 0

**Meal Expense Reimbursement Rates by Meal for Travel in the Continental US**  
*as they correspond to their applicable full day rates (effective 10/1/16)*

Wildland Firefighting Effective to 6/30/17

<b>Breakfast</b>	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$10.00	\$11.00	\$12.00	\$13.00	\$12.00
<b>Lunch</b>	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$13.00	\$14.00	\$15.00	\$16.00	\$16.00
<b>Dinner</b>	\$21.00	\$24.00	\$26.00	\$29.00	\$32.00	\$35.00	\$27.00
<b>Full Day Rate</b>	\$41.00	\$44.00	\$49.00	\$54.00	\$59.00	\$64.00	\$55.00

Departure & Return Travel Day with over-night stay (75%)	\$30.75	\$33.00	\$36.75	\$40.50	\$44.25	\$48.00	\$41.25
--	---------	---------	---------	---------	---------	---------	---------