

Columbus Aquatic Club Travel Policy

1. Travel Expense Reimbursement for Columbus Aquatic Club Employees may be considered reimbursable when done at the request of the Board. This may include travel for meets, professional development, or official Club business. Reimbursed expenses shall be considered deductible expenses for Columbus Aquatic Club tax purposes.
2. Authorized Rates: Travel expenses are reimbursed at the standard GSA authorized Per Diem Rates according to the rules set forth below.
 - a. Mileage is authorized according to GSA published rates for the distance from the standard practice location to the meet location. If the Columbus Aquatic Club Contractor, Employee or Volunteer believes this rate is insufficient to cover travel expenses, they should seek authorization from the Board prior to incurring additional expenses.
 - b. Per Diem is authorized to cover hotel costs, meals and incidentals when overnight stays are required.
 - i. Overnight stays are authorized when the expected meet attendance time is more than 12 hours per day, when the meet is greater than 90 miles away, or when the Board determines that other factors such as meet session times, weather, traffic, cost, or other factors necessitate an overnight stay. Meet attendance time includes travel time, time on deck, and breaks between sessions that day.
 - ii. Per Diem for meals and incidentals is paid at 50% for days that require less than six hours of travel, which includes travel time plus meet session time.
 - iii. Per Diem rates for some localities include seasonal adjustments. If the Columbus Aquatic Club Employee is unable to find a hotel within 110% of the listed GSA Lodging, they should submit a request for an increased authorization to the Board prior to the meet entry deadline.
 - c. Airline travel may be authorized by the Board on a case by case basis when the meet is extraordinarily significant and the time/cost to drive makes it an unreasonable option. Specific limits for this expense will be established at the time of authorization.
 - d. A rental vehicle may be authorized by the Board on a case by case basis in situations where airline travel is required and public transportation/shuttles are not available or when travelling as a team and utilizing it in lieu of a POV. Specific limits for this expense will be established at the time of authorization.
 - e. The Board, Coaches and Employees must work together to provide good financial stewardship for the Club in conducting travel. This may include ensuring the required number of Employees travel for the shortest time reasonable to conduct the team's business. Extended stays, additional employees, or other deviations may be requested and will be considered in light of prudent financial policies and the best interests of the Club.

3. Authorized Travel for Meets: One Columbus Aquatic Club Coach will be authorized to travel to a meet attended by the Club. Travel is subject to the following requirements:
 - a. The Club's meet attendance has been approved by the Board. This may be a meet that was included in the proposed slate at the beginning of the season, or a meet added and authorized by the Board during the season.
 - b. The Club meets minimum participation levels for the meet. If the Club has fewer than *5 swimmers scheduled for each session*, the Coach should reconsider the Club's participation in the meet or consider reducing the sessions attended. This should be done prior to submitting meet entries, and should consider all factors such as budget, significance of the meet to the participating swimmers, and impact to the overall program.
 - i. Exceptions to the minimum attendance rule should be strongly considered when swimmers have achieved qualifying times for USA Swimming competitions, such as LSC Championships or higher. This does not apply to swimmers competing as professionals.
 - ii. On very rare occasions, the coaches may elect to offer a swimmer the opportunity to attend a meet without a coach or the Board may offer the parents the opportunity to help over the cost of the coach's travel.
4. Authorized Travel for Professional Development: On occasion, the Board, in consultation with the Head Coach, may identify opportunities for professional development that will have a significant positive impact on Club activities. Travel to these opportunities may be authorized by the Board, if the budget and staffing levels allow for it. Any travel authorized will follow the guidelines set forth in para. 2. *Authorized Expenses* and follow team policies for reimbursements or advances.
5. Authorized Travel for Official Club Business: On occasion, the Club may deem it necessary to send a Club representative to attend an event of legal, professional or USA Swimming significance. These will be considered and approved on a case-by-case basis with due consideration for budget and importance of the event in question. Any travel authorized will follow the guidelines set forth in para. 2. *Authorized Rates* and follow team policies for reimbursements or advances.
6. Exclusion: These travel provisions apply to routine travel or mileage to and from practice sites. Travel and mileage are not covered for volunteers unless the volunteer has been appointed by the Board to serve as the Club's designated coach for a particular meet or meet session or the volunteer is attending to official Club business outside the greater Columbus, GA area.

7. Reimbursement Procedure: Reimbursement requests must be submitted within two weeks of the final travel day to the Treasurer on the current Travel Request Form.
 - a. Receipts for hotels are required. No receipts are required for fuel or meals and incidentals up to the established rates.
 - b. Requests for reimbursements in excess of those published rates must include receipts and are subject to Board approval.
 - c. The Treasurer will serve as the approving authority for authorized travel at standard reimbursement rates and shall issue reimbursement within seven days.
 - d. For travel expenses that require additional approval from the Board, the treasurer must submit the request and supporting documentation to the Board for approval within seven days. The Board must review and communicate their decision as soon as possible, but no later than fourteen days after the end of the travel period.
 - e. Travel requests that are not submitted within the established time frame or with appropriate documentation will not be approved, unless significant extenuating circumstances are present.
8. Travel Advance: Employees may request a travel advance rather than utilize the above Reimbursement Procedure.
 - a. Up to two weeks before the travel, the Employee may submit the Travel Advance Request with a copy of the hotel reservation. Projected expenses for lodging, mileage and meals will be calculated and paid according to the Authorized Rates above within seven days.
 - b. Receipts for hotels must be submitted within two weeks of the last day of travel. No receipts are required for fuel or meals and incidentals up to the established rates.
 - c. In the event that the travel costs are less than the Advance, the balance must be returned to the Club within two weeks of the last day of travel. Meals are not reduced unless the number of travel days is less than originally planned. If this payment is not returned, it will be deducted from the next paycheck.