

VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

4433 SOUTH PARK AVENUE
CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20815

Phone: 301-656-2797

Fax: 301-907-3922

Email: info@friendshipheightsmd.gov

Website: www.friendshipheightsmd.gov



VILLAGE COUNCIL

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MARTHA SOLT, *Chairman*

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JULIAN P. MANSFIELD, *Village Manager*

Village of Friendship Heights Travel Policy

It is in the interest of the Village of Friendship Heights to establish guidelines and procedures for official employee and Councilmember travel to ensure consistency, accountability, and responsible use of public funds. The policy helps prevent misuse of taxpayer dollars while ensuring employees and Councilmembers can effectively perform their duties. This policy applies to Village staff and Councilmembers.

1. **Permissible travel and authorization.** Both day and overnight travel is limited to events that serve the interest of the Village, such as conferences and training. Individual staff members may attend no more than one overnight conference or meeting per fiscal year in addition to the Maryland Municipal League summer conference. Any exceptions must be approved by the mayor. Councilmembers may attend the Maryland Municipal League summer conference. The Village will comply with any Montgomery County policy limiting overnight business travel, such as Montgomery County's current policy that restricts travel to "states that demonstrate a hostility to reproductive freedom, individual autonomy, and access to safe reproductive health treatments."¹ Waivers to the Montgomery County policy, in rare instances, may be issued by the Village Manager for employees and by the Mayor for the Village Manager. Employees, with permission from the Village Manager, may use annual leave for any training or events that are outside the scope of this policy or for extra days before or after any official event. Employee expenses will not be reimbursed for training taken on annual leave or for extra days before or after an official event.

Prior to incurring expenses for training (in person or virtual), travel, or conferences, all employees must submit a written request and receive approval, except the Village Manager. The request must include location, purpose, dates, and estimated reimbursable costs and expenses. Councilmembers do not need approval to attend the Maryland Municipal League Conference. The Village Manager and Councilmembers do not need prior approval to engage in overnight travel that supports the work of the Village (consistent with all other parts of this policy). Village travelers are expected to submit an expense report to the Village Financial Assistant within five business days of completion of travel. The Village Manager

¹ Memorandum from Richard S. Madaleno, Chief Administrative Officer to Executive Branch Department and Office Directors, June 24, 2022, Freeze on Official County Business Travel to Certain States – Supreme Court Decision Dobbs v. Jackson.

and Assistant Village Manager shall send to all Councilmembers a summary of the travel, along with comments and recommendations for ways the Village can improve. It is expected that all Village travel expenses will be in accordance with the approved Village budget.

2. Reimbursable expenses. The Village will pay for lodging, travel, and meals, and incidentals for all approved travel.

For lodging, reasonable conference-rate hotels will be paid on the Village credit card for approved travel that complies with this policy.

For travel by train or air, the Village will pay these expenses on the Village credit card.

For travel by privately-owned vehicle, Village travelers' mileage will be reimbursed at the rate found at: <https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>.

For meals and incidentals, Village travelers will be reimbursed up to the GSA rate (see <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>). For in-transit travel days, employees will be reimbursed up to 75% of the daily local meals and incidentals rate. In the event that the Village traveler chooses to accept an event-provided meal, they will reduce their reimbursement request by the commensurate rate as specified on the GSA website. Notwithstanding other language, it is expected that a conference hotel rate will be approved.

3. Individuals traveling for Village business shall use their best efforts to minimize travel expenses paid by the Village.
4. Career development. Efforts will be made to fairly allocate the Village's approved travel and training budget among professional staff members.
5. Exclusions. Virtual meetings are excluded from this policy.
6. Effective Date. This policy is effective immediately.

Approved by the Village Council on January 12, 2026.