



**TEXAS BOARD  
OF  
PARDONS AND PAROLES**

**Number: BPP-DIR. 141.305**

**Date: December 21, 2020**

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**Supersedes: February 19, 2019**

## **BOARD DIRECTIVE**

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**SUBJECT: TRAVEL**

**PURPOSE:** To ensure statewide uniformity and to assist in budgetary control for travel expenses for Board Members and employees of the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles.

**AUTHORITY:** Texas Government Code Section 508.035(d)  
Board Directive BPP-DIR. 141.318  
Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles Board Designee Hearing Manual  
Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts State Travel Management Program  
Texas Department of Criminal Justice Travel Guide

**DISCUSSION:** A Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles (Board) Board Member or employee shall consider conducting state business by teleconference or videoconference. If the Board Member or employee determines that state business can only be conducted in person, the Board Member or employee traveling on state business shall exercise the same expense judgment that he would exercise if traveling on a personal budget. Only expenses actually incurred and are essential to conduct state business should be submitted for reimbursement.

Falsification of information provided on travel documents can result in a felony criminal charge (falsification of a government document) being filed by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts against the Board Member or employee, as well as disciplinary action being taken.

**DEFINITIONS:** Designated Headquarters – the town or city where an employee’s primary office is located.

Duty Point – the destination other than a place of employment to which an employee travels to conduct official business.

Meal Expense – includes a tax that is based on the cost of the meal. The term does not include a tip, gratuity, or mandatory service charge paid or imposed in conjunction with a meal.

Place of Employment – the office or other location of employment to which an employee travels to conduct official state business.

Voting Member – Board Member or Parole Commissioner.

**PROCEDURE:**

- I. Authorized Travel – Any travel associated with the duties of a Board Member or employee to include but not limited to: Board meetings, committee meetings, conferences/workshops, work group meetings, travel to units, or travel to conduct Board business whether at the request of the Presiding Officer or by invitation. The Presiding Officer shall authorize a Board Member’s travel. For all other employees, the immediate supervisor shall authorize the travel.
- II. General Guidelines for Travel – Board Members and employees shall adhere to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) travel policies and procedures.
  - A. Reimbursement – Board Members and employees will not be reimbursed for travel to and/or from a residence to headquarters or place of employment.
    1. Mileage incurred between a residence and a duty point is reimbursable provided that the mileage is less than or equal to the mileage had the employee traveled from the designated headquarters to the duty point.
    2. The voucher must state that the mileage between residence and duty point is less than or equal to the mileage between headquarters and duty point.
  - B. Indirect Route – When a Board Member or employee takes an indirect route for his convenience, that Board Member or employee shall bear the extra expense.
  - C. Method of Transportation – When selecting a method of transportation to be used while conducting state business, cost and other factors should be considered. When available, Board Members and employees should attempt to utilize a state vehicle.
    1. Travel should be by the most expeditious and cost effective means of transportation and shall be commensurate with the nature and purpose of the duties of the Board Member or employee requiring travel.
    2. A Board Member or employee may utilize their personal vehicle for Board business when there are no state vehicles available.
  - D. Meal Expense – Board Members and employees should submit the cost of meals, not the maximum amount allowed, when traveling on state business. Receipts may be submitted to ensure accuracy, but will not be submitted with the voucher. Alcohol is not a reimbursable expense.

- III. Conferences – All travel fees, including registration fees, for conferences/workshops must be approved in advance by the Presiding Officer. For a request to utilize agency time only to attend a conference/workshop, the immediate supervisor may approve the request.
  
- IV. Unit Visit – When a voting member determines it is appropriate to conduct an offender interview on the offender’s unit of assignment (unit), the voting member or their designee is responsible for scheduling the interview. The voting member should conduct the maximum number of offender interviews when traveling throughout the designated regions. The number of offender interviews conducted at each unit should be noted in Section 52 of the travel voucher.
  - A. Travel should be limited to TDCJ units assigned to respective Board offices or Institutional Parole offices. If an offender is transferred during the voting process, the TDCJ Parole Division case file should be transferred to the appropriate panel’s Board office or Institutional Parole office based on the new unit of assignment. When the supervisor determines there is an agency need, an Institutional Parole Officer may be assigned to conduct offender interviews in another region.
  
  - B. Board Members or employees should travel a reasonable distance before securing overnight lodging at the state’s expense. If lodging is necessary, it should be documented in the travel voucher that the state’s business could not be completed in an 8-hour day and overnight lodging was required. Receipts for lodging must accompany a travel voucher.
  
- V. Jail or Parole Office Visits
  - A. A Hearing Officer is assigned to conduct hearings in a designated region and area. When the supervisor determines there is an agency need, a Hearing Officer may conduct a hearing in another region or area.
  
  - B. The maximum number of hearings should be conducted when traveling throughout the region. The number of hearings conducted at each hearing location should be noted in Section 52 of the travel voucher.

**SIGNED THIS, THE 21<sup>ST</sup> DAY OF DECEMBER, 2020.**

**DAVID GUTIÉRREZ, PRESIDING OFFICER (CHAIR)**

*\*Signature on file.*