

Volunteer Meeting and Reimbursement

Policy and Guidelines



CLINICAL AND
LABORATORY
STANDARDS
INSTITUTE®



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1 Introduction

Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI), as a US Internal Revenue Service (IRS) 501(c)[3] not-for-profit organization, has a fiduciary responsibility to promote the public welfare and use its resources prudently, while ensuring that volunteers do not incur inappropriate or excessive expenses. Given that volunteers must travel on behalf of CLSI, the following policy and guidelines for travel expenditures have been established. Any deviation from this policy or these guidelines must be approved by a CLSI staff member at a director level or higher, in advance of the expenditure, whenever possible. Volunteers are encouraged to use their best judgment in the particular situation, and maintain prudent and reasonable use of CLSI’s financial resources, while operating in a safe manner.

2 Policy Statement

Travel expenses incurred by CLSI volunteers shall be in accordance with the guidelines set forth in this document.

3 Scope

The Volunteer Meeting and Reimbursement Policy is applicable for CLSI volunteers, and is intended to assist CLSI volunteers with the proper guidelines pertaining to CLSI-related travel while managing costs and maintaining efficient business processes. Volunteers may contact their staff project managers with any questions.

4 Objectives

The objectives of the Volunteer Meeting and Reimbursement Policy are to:

- ▶ Ensure clear and consistent understanding of policies and guidelines for CLSI-related travel.
- ▶ Ensure that travel and other expenditures are reasonable and necessary.
- ▶ Provide guidance to volunteers on acceptable travel expenses.
- ▶ Ensure that adequate cost controls are in place.
- ▶ Provide a uniform and consistent approach for the timely reimbursement of authorized expenses incurred by volunteers.

5 Meetings

5.1 Committee Meetings

All CLSI committee meetings are authorized, scheduled, and arranged through the staff office. The Chairholder and CLSI are expected to maintain appropriate budgetary control, as well as coordinate the arrangements efficiently and ensure communications with all members, advisors, reviewers, and contributors who may have an interest in the committee’s activities and discussions. Committees are encouraged to meet at CLSI Committee Weeks (see Section 5.2) or at professional association trade shows or meetings where most committee members are already in attendance.

In some instances, to recoup the cost of the meals and expenses for meeting attendees, there may be a daily fee to attend meetings. The amount of the fee depends on the actual costs that CLSI incurs for the meeting and will be announced in the meeting registration notices.

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5.2 Committee Weeks

CLSI's Committee Weeks are approximately quarterly meetings composed of multiple committee meetings, and may include sessions with various topics of interest to members of the health care field. Meeting attendees include CLSI working groups, subcommittees, and document development committees; the Board of Directors; members of CLSI; and other attendees, depending on the topics presented. The meeting is held at a convenient location (usually a hotel in a major city) for CLSI volunteers and members to maximize participation. CLSI may invoke a fee for non-CLSI members to attend any scientific or general topic sessions, or partake in meals. Such fees will be announced in the meeting registration notices.

6 Reimbursement

6.1 General Reimbursement

In general, CLSI expects member organizations to reimburse the expenses of their representatives serving on CLSI committees. In other cases, CLSI reimburses the expenses of committee voting members from the government and professional constituencies participating in scheduled meetings of the committee within the guidelines described here and in the CLSI Standards Development Policies and Processes. Advisors, reviewers, and contributors are not reimbursed. CLSI provides group travel accident insurance in the amount of \$50,000 US dollars (USD) for each volunteer member of CLSI committees.

CLSI does not reimburse expenses for attendance at meetings scheduled in conjunction with a professional or scientific meeting.

CLSI limits reimbursement for meetings, as described below, for voting members. Volunteers who wish to extend their stay to attend another meeting during the same Committee Week, but who are not voting members on the other committee, will not be reimbursed for the extra day(s).

When travel expenses are to be reimbursed, the meeting announcement issued by CLSI includes authorization for reimbursement and a copy of the Volunteer Meeting and Reimbursement Policy and electronic Travel Expense Form for reporting travel expenses. Travelers are asked to pay for expenses up front and request reimbursement by submitting the electronic Travel Expense Form and receipts. Travel Expense Forms must be submitted within 30 days of the meeting to be reimbursed per the US IRS.

All expenses denominated in foreign currency must be converted to USD on the expense report. The translation rate used to convert each currency must be noted on the receipt. The translation rate used must be from the date of the transaction or the date funds were converted.

CLSI ordinarily issues reimbursement checks within seven business days of receipt of the Travel Expense Form. Arrangements can be made to remit funds via international wire transfer. Please include wire transfer information in the *Special Instructions* box on the Travel Expense Form.

6.2 Travel Expense Form

Expenses should be reported on CLSI's electronic Travel Expense Form. The electronic form is an Excel spreadsheet that includes formulas to tabulate all expenses when entered. Using this form eliminates the possibility of misreading handwritten numbers and introducing mathematical errors on paper forms. The form should be completed in full, signed, and accompanied by the passenger copy of, as applicable, the travel invoice, a copy of the hotel invoice, copies

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of original foreign currency exchange receipts, and copies of original receipts for other authorized expenses of more than \$25 USD. Travel-related expenses greater than \$25 USD submitted without a receipt will not be reimbursed. Meal receipts are not required (see Section 6.3.3).

6.3 Reimbursable Expenses

Expenses generally reimbursed include transportation, lodging, and meals, as outlined in the following sections.

NOTE: Expenses incurred in a currency other than USD shall be reimbursed in full based on the actual currency outlay on the date of the transaction.

6.3.1 Transportation

6.3.1.1 Airline Travel

The following guidelines apply to volunteers for airline travel.

- ▶ Reservations for international travel may be made using a bona fide travel agency. In general, volunteers are encouraged to use CLSI’s preferred travel agency for the most economical and efficient routing. Reservations for domestic travel must be made via the most economical means possible (eg, Kayak, Orbitz, or airline website) or by contacting the CLSI staff.
- ▶ CLSI reimburses only for the lowest economy/coach class fares; travelers should take advantage of “super-saver” or other promotional fares when available. Nonrefundable tickets are required.
- ▶ Lost or delayed luggage: If the airline loses the volunteer’s luggage while the volunteer is traveling to his or her destination, the volunteer should go to the customer service counter for the airline carrier to report the incident and inquire about the airline’s lost luggage policy. The airlines will reimburse for personal, essential, and reasonable items while the bag is being located. Dated receipts are needed in order to file a claim and receive reimbursement from the airline.
- ▶ Alternative airports should be considered when the one-way savings is \$500 USD or greater.
- ▶ When travel to a CLSI meeting is combined with personal travel, reimbursement is limited to the roundtrip cost of the ticket as if no personal travel was added. Any additional fare incurred with personal travel is the responsibility of the traveler.
- ▶ When an airline travel trip is canceled after the ticket has been issued, the individual should use the same ticket for future CLSI travel.
- ▶ Upgrades are not reimbursable.

6.3.1.2 Ground Transportation

Airport shuttle service, public transportation, or other convenient transportation services should be used for ground transportation. Use of a taxi, limousine, or private car service should be avoided. CLSI limits reimbursement for taxi, limousine, or private car service to an amount equal to the airport shuttle service. Taxis to and from airports normally should not be used except when alternative transportation service is not available.

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6.3.1.3 Mileage

When a private automobile is used, reimbursement is made at the IRS rate currently in effect at the time for CLSI business-related deductions (as indicated on the Travel Expense Form). Automobile travel is not reimbursed for round trips of more than 500 miles without prior approval from a CLSI staff member at a director level or higher.

6.3.1.4 Vehicle Rental

CLSI does not reimburse for vehicle rental when alternative forms of transportation are available. Prior approval for vehicle rental is required by a CLSI staff member at a director level or higher. When authorized, the following guidelines apply:

- ▶ Rentals should be returned to the same location to avoid surcharges.
- ▶ Rentals should be returned with a full tank of gas, whenever possible.
- ▶ Car rentals should be compact or mid-size vehicles; for multiple passengers, a full-size car may be rented.
- ▶ Volunteers should only purchase the collision damage waiver car rental insurance, when not otherwise covered.

6.3.1.5 Parking

CLSI will reimburse up to the economy parking lot rate for trips longer than two days.

6.3.2 Lodging

6.3.2.1 Hotel Reservations and Room Blocks

Reimbursement of room charges is normally limited to the special CLSI rate, when available. Volunteers are expected to reserve rooms within the CLSI room block before the cutoff date.

6.3.3 Meals

6.3.3.1 Reimbursement for Meals

CLSI pays a per diem meal expense at the following rates for travel within the United States, regardless of the expense amount, and only when the meal is not provided at the meeting. Per diem rates for international travel will be used for travel outside the United States. If a volunteer is paying for more than one person (eg, another reimbursable volunteer), the same limits apply. Names of the additional reimbursable volunteers should be listed when submitting for payment of per diems.

- ▶ Breakfast – up to \$12 USD
- ▶ Lunch – up to \$20 USD
- ▶ Dinner – up to \$40 USD

Per diem will be paid for the full length of travel including time in transit and in attendance of CLSI events. For US travel, specific meal per diems while in transit will be paid if not otherwise provided (eg, if arriving the night before a morning event, CLSI will pay for dinner on the in-transit day). For international travel, 75% of the departure city's and 75% of the arrival city's daily per diems will be paid while in transit.

NOTE 1: The rates listed above are based upon the highest allowable US government rates, rounded up, at the time of publication of this document.

NOTE 2: With the use of per diems, volunteers are not required to submit any receipts for expenses related to meals.

6.4 Nonreimbursable Expenses

The following list includes examples of nonreimbursable expenses unless preapproved by CLSI. Volunteers should contact their staff project manager for clarification.

- ▶ Hotel room movies
- ▶ Traffic/parking violations
- ▶ Companion travel expenses
- ▶ Cleaning and laundry
- ▶ Tips for hotel housekeeping service
- ▶ Insurance
- ▶ Fees for upgrades of air, hotel, or automobile
- ▶ Personal travel portion during business trip
- ▶ Cost of additional group travel insurance
- ▶ Airline or train ticket changes
- ▶ Car/limousine service when shuttle or other transportation is available
- ▶ Minibar charges
- ▶ Internet upgrades when basic Internet access is included in the room cost
- ▶ In-flight services on the aircraft (eg, Internet access)
- ▶ Excess baggage (eg, extra or overweight baggage) charges for personal luggage
- ▶ Rental car (see Section 6.3.1.4)

6.5 Approval

Travel expense forms are to be submitted electronically (via e-mail) to the appropriate staff member.



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