

Purpose: To identify and clarify PMRB attendance and reimbursement policy on Board and staff travel associated with business and educational functions.

Authority: Act 15 of 1974, “The Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement Law” Section 104 General Powers of the Board, Paragraph (10).

Specific

Cites: Commonwealth Management Directive 230.10 (Most recent update: February 9, 1995; copy attached).

Policy: The Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement Board (Board) recognizes the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (System) is an independent state agency and as such takes policy direction on administrative matters from the Commonwealth’s Executive Board established under the Administrative Code. The Board further recognizes that the Commonwealth has spoken on a number of these issues through the adoption of Management Directive 230.10. It is the Board’s intent to set forth in this Policy Statement certain clarifications, modifications and unique policies that shall be applicable to all Board members and staff of the System. Individual exceptions to this policy shall be made only by the vote of the Board.

The Board has identified three distinct reasons for System travels: client servicing, professional education, and contract monitoring. This policy, unless stated to the contrary, shall be applicable to individuals traveling or participating in functions associated with any one of these three categories.

*Client Servicing.* Board members and staff that travel for client servicing purposes shall be restricted to mileage reimbursement limitations found in the Management Directive. They shall not be restricted to the maximum per diem allowance for meals, but instead they shall be reimbursed actual expenses upon providing receipts for reimbursement purposes. Where receipts are not provided, individuals shall certify what actual expenses were incurred and shall assume legal responsibility for said certification.

When the System’s Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Chief of the Membership & Municipal Services Division or a Membership & Municipal Services Division representative travels for client servicing reasons, these individuals may incur reasonable expenses on behalf of other individuals. When such expenses are incurred the name of the individual(s) involved, the reason for the expense, and the amount of the expense shall be reviewed and approved by the System’s Secretary before reimbursement shall occur.

Travel for client servicing purposes by the System's staff shall be directed by the Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and/or the Chief of the Membership & Municipal Services Division. Prior approval for travel within the Commonwealth shall not be necessary and shall be deemed routine unless a pattern of extraordinary and/or unusual expenditures develops in which case the Secretary may place a staff member on restricted travel. Board member travel for client servicing purposes shall be with the prior approval of the Chairman of the Board.

*Professional Education.* Board members seeking to participate in professional educational functions shall be authorized to attend three (3) functions per calendar year. The professional education activities of board members shall be scheduled by written request of the member to the Chairman of the Board or the Secretary indicating the particular function the member seeks to attend. Provided that sufficient unencumbered monies exist in the System's administrative budget, the member shall be given approval to participate.

Participation of the System's staff in professional education functions shall be with the advanced written approval of the Secretary or the Assistant Secretary. Approval will be contingent upon the cost benefit of said attendance as determined by the Secretary or the Assistant Secretary.

The Board directs that no more than a total of three (3) Board members and staff may attend any one educational function. When more than three individuals indicate a desire to attend a single educational function, priority shall be given to board members over staff. When more than three Board members seek to attend the same function, approval shall be given based on the number of educational functions the Board members have previously attended. Board members with the least functions attended shall receive the highest priority for approval as well as those members who are participating in a previously approved continuing education program that runs through a multiple year period.

*Contract Monitoring:* All travel associated with contract monitoring shall be made based upon the approval of the Secretary or Assistant Secretary and shall be restricted to the System's staff unless the Board directs a Board member's specific involvement in an issue or concern. Travel shall be constrained by the System's administrative budget and the regular and ordinary policies of Management Directive 230.10. Travel for contract monitoring may take place anywhere in the continental United States. Travel outside of the continental United States for contract monitoring shall be subject to the approval of the Board Chairman.

*General Conduct:* In addition to the Code of Conduct rules issued pursuant to Executive Order 1980-18 and the Public Officials and Employee Ethics Law (Act 1978-170), the Board specifically prohibits Board members and staff from accepting gratis meals, travel expenses, and/or gifts from any potential third party provider of services to the System. Board members and/or staff who do participate in existing third party provider's educational or contract monitoring meetings may accept gratis meals but in no event travel cost. Said acceptances are deemed reportable under the Code of Conduct and the Public Officials and Employee Ethics Law.

Board members and staff shall be exempted from the monetary limits of Management Directive 230.10 or its successor as long as actual receipts of approved reimbursable expenses are provided.

Effective

Date: This rule is to be effective immediately.

Adoption

Date: Adopted at the January 21, 1999 meeting of the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement Board.

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James B. Allen, Secretary