



Montana Operations Manual

Policy

Category

Travel

Effective Date

01/01/2012

Last Revised

01/16/2020

Issuing Authority

Department of Administration
Director's Office

Mileage Reimbursement Rates

I. Purpose

This policy provides the current mileage reimbursement rates for official state travel allowed under [2-18-503](#), MCA.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all state agencies and institutions, excluding community colleges.

III. Reimbursement Rates for Private Vehicle Travel

Allowable mileage rates are based on the annual standard mileage rate published by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The standard IRS mileage rate is updated every January 1st and Montana's mileage rates for the coming calendar year are updated at the same time. Specific mileage reimbursement rates are dependent on:

- The traveler's employment status with the State of Montana;
- The availability of a government vehicle; and
- Total mileage driven in a calendar month.

A. Traveler is a State Employee

If a state employee, with their supervisor's prior approval, chooses to use a private vehicle when a government vehicle is available, the employee is reimbursed at 48.15% of the current standard IRS mileage rate. The reduced standard IRS mileage rate is referred to as the "Standard Rate."

For calendar year 2020, the Montana standard rate is 27.7 cents per mile, based on the IRS standard mileage rate of 57.5 cents per mile.

To be eligible to receive mileage reimbursement for use of a private vehicle for official state business, the [Personal Vehicle Use Authorization Form](#) must be completed and approved prior to travel. The form is available on the [Employee Travel](#) webpage and must accompany a travel claim.

B. Travel with Special Approvals

When a private vehicle is used because a government vehicle is not available, or it is in the best interest of the state not to use a government vehicle, AND either a Notice of Vehicle Unavailability from the State Motor Pool or a specific exemption is attached to the travel claim, the standard IRS mileage rate of 57.5 cents per mile is paid for the first 1,000 miles driven in a calendar month. This is referred to as the "High Rate."

A Notice of Vehicle Unavailability is provided by the State Motor Pool if they are unable to fill a reservation request. The employee must have contacted the State Motor Pool and reserved a Motor Pool vehicle for their travel to obtain this notice.

Specific exemptions are allowed for:

1. employees who serve on a state board, commission, committee, or advisory council unrelated to their state employment;
2. cases where the agency director, or designated approving authority, has provided written notice that use of a private vehicle is in the best interest of the state; or
3. cases where an employee travels 25 miles or less in any calendar day while conducting state business. Mileage claims where specific reimbursement exemptions exist still require completion and approval of the [Personal Vehicle Use Authorization Form](#) prior to using a private vehicle for official business, and must accompany a travel claim.

An employee may claim mileage expense at the appropriate rate if they use their personal vehicle for transport between different daily work sites. Mileage claims are not allowed for commuting between home and headquarters at the beginning or end of a workday, or for a non-compensated break in the employee's work day.

For each mile driven over 1,000 miles in a calendar month, the standard IRS rate is reduced to 54.5 cents per mile. This is referred to as the "Low Rate."

C. Traveler is Not a State Employee

A traveler who is a member of the legislature, juror, witness, county agent, or any person except a state employee, is entitled to collect mileage at the standard IRS rate of 57.5 cents per mile for the first 1,000 miles traveled in a calendar month (High Rate). For each mile driven over 1,000 miles in a calendar month they are entitled to 54.5 cents per mile (Low Rate).

IV. Reimbursement Rate for Private Airplane Travel

Section [2-18-503](#)(4), MCA, establishes the mileage rate to be used for reimbursing legislators, state officers and employees, jurors, witnesses, county agents, and all other persons for use of their own airplane when performing official duties. For actual nautical air miles traveled, the rate is twice the "High Rate" allowed for personal vehicle use.

Effective January 1, 2020, the reimbursement rate for private airplane use is \$1.15 per nautical mile. Prior authorization for reimbursement must be made by a responsible agency manager and must accompany a mileage reimbursement claim.