Hardin County
Emergency Services District #2
Travel Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish and communicate fair standard and effective procedures for reducing travel expenditures, and to ensure consistent and fair treatment of all members whose travel will be paid for or reimbursed by Hardin County ESD #2 (HCESD2).

Travel expenditures incurred for official HCESD2 business will be paid if the expenditures are properly approved, reasonable and documented. Travelers should incur expenditures prudently to aid in controlling their department's travel budget.

This policy covers advanced payments and payment reimbursements for auto mileage, meals, lodging, rental vehicles, airfare, and miscellaneous expenses.

When members are authorized to use their personal vehicle for HCESD2 business, they will be reimbursed for actual mileage at the current approved rate according to the US General Services Administration (GSA) reimbursement rate. Expense reports shall be accompanied by documentation that includes the travel dates, destination, business purpose, and total miles traveled to and from the destination. Mileage is to be calculated from the District's Fire Station located at 228 Country Lane Drive, Lumberton, Texas 77657, to the destination and back, via Google Maps. Reimbursement for mileage more than the distance to and from the destination is at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

An HCESD2 vehicle may be used by members of the department to drive for local HCESD2 business and for out-of-district conferences, meetings or training.

All traffic laws must be obeyed.

HCESD2 members must schedule the use of an HCESD2 vehicle with the Fire Chief. This can be done via email, phone, or in person.

The vehicle must be returned to the Fire Station with a full tank of fuel via WEX card or HCESD2's fuel tanks.

If there is an issue with HCESD2's WEX fuel card, the member may refill the vehicle at their own expense, then submit their receipt for reimbursement.

Reimbursable expenses for use of an HCESD2 vehicle include fuel, oil, and/or emergency expenses (i.e., flat repair) which may arise in connection with the vehicle. This is subject to the following provisions:

1. Receipts for these allowable expenses must be submitted with the members claiming reimbursement.
2. Receipts for any charges made on any HCESD2 credit card must be submitted.
3. Beginning and ending odometer mileage on all HCESD2 vehicles must be submitted.

Miscellaneous auto expenses or other travel expenses by HCESD2 and personal vehicle, which can include road tolls, parking fees, where unpaid parking facilities are unavailable. Members are responsible for the full cost of any parking tickets, moving and non-moving citations, or any such traffic offenses, fees or expenses.

Members must ensure that the returned vehicle is clean when it is returned. Please be courteous and remove all your belongings, including any trash.

All tobacco products, including cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, and vaping devices, are strictly prohibited in all HCESD #2 vehicles.

Overnight travel is defined as any travel while on HCESD2 business requiring a member to stay away from home and out of the District overnight. When members are required to travel out of the District to conduct necessary HCESD2 business, they will be reimbursed for expenditures utilizing the amount set forth by the US General Services Administration (GSA) for lodging, meals and incidentals, POV mileage when the use of a privately owned vehicle is authorized or an HCESD2 vehicle is not available.

Go to https://www.gsa.gov.travel-resources for current travel rates.

Lodging expenses must be supported by receipts. Members are required to take advantage of any reduced rates available (governmental, group, etc.)

Other expenses must be supported by receipts, such as taxis, Ubers, or rental vehicles after reaching the desired destination, registration fees (if not paid in advance), and parking.

Any advance travel compensation, excluding registration fees, cannot be requested sooner than 2 weeks prior to the beginning of the conference and should only be requested by members who are unable to pay travel expenses, then request compensation upon their return.

The *Travel Expense Form* must be submitted to the Fire Chief within 10 working days after the member returns.

There will be no reimbursement for meals for any travel that is not overnight.

For rental cars, automobile rentals should be limited to situations where other means of transportation are not practical, economical or available. Anytime a member must rent a vehicle, please contact the Fire Chief for approval. If you rent a vehicle without approval, you will not be reimbursed for those expenses. This does not apply to an emergency situation (vehicle breakdown, etc.). If an emergency should arise, please use the least expensive rental agency available.

For air travel, please use the most efficient air travel. Reimbursement will be limited to coach fare. When planning your airline itinerary, consider making reservations in advance, being flexible in airline choice and travel times. Mileage reimbursement will be for one round trip to and from the airport. Air travel must be approved by the Fire Chief.

HCESD2 will not reimburse personal, spouse, companion travel, and/or other related travel expenditures. Members are responsible for allocating only his/her portion of expenditure on the *Travel Expense Form* and for identifying them in the hotel and other receipts. HCESD2 will only pay a single room rate unless two or more members share a room.

Hardin County Emergency Services District #2

Travel Advance/Reimbursement Request Form

DATE: ______________________________ DIVISION _______________________________

MEMBER NAME ____

PURPOSE OF TRAVEL ____

DESTINATION ____

TRAVEL DATES: FROM ____________________________ TO ___________________________

ESTIMATED TRAVEL-RELATED EXPENSES:

AIR FAIR	$_______________
MILEAGE MILES_________ $ PER MILE _________	$_______________
REGISTRATION FEES	$_______________
MEALS	$_______________
LODGING	$_______________
MISCELLANEOUS	$_______________
ESTIMATED TOTAL	$_______________
ADVANCE AMOUNT REQUESTED	$_______________
REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNT REQUESTED	$_______________

Authorization for advance travel allowance in the amount of $__________ is granted to the HCESD2 member named above for the purpose of travel stated herein. The member understands that proper documentation of actual travel expenses incurred must be reported to the Head of the Department within 10 business days after the return of the trip. If the actual expenses are less than the advance, the difference must be refunded immediately upon return of the member.

______________________________ ______________________________

Member Signature Fire Chief Signature

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Date

Members acknowledge that advanced payments for HCESD2 (approved) travel must be used for HCESD2 travel purposes only. Any other use of these monies will be considered a misappropriation of HCESD2 funds.

This revised Travel Policy is hereby effective as of the 23 **day of** April **2026.**

Commissioner President Jim Philp

Commissioner Vice President Mike Minton

Commissioner Treasurer Max Turner

Commissioner Secretary/Asst Treasurer Brady Dickerson

Commissioner Tommy Evans

THE STATE OF TEXAS
HARDIN COUNTY ESD 2