



TRUSTEE TRAVEL POLICY

LACERA Board of Retirement & Board of Investments

Adopted May 11, 2022

TRUSTEE TRAVEL POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to align travel by Trustees in connection with educational conferences and administrative meetings on LACERA's behalf with the Mission, Vision, Values, and work culture of the organization. The Board of Retirement and Board of Investments recognize that travel associated with education and administrative meetings on LACERA's behalf is a component of building the knowledge base and operational understanding of Trustees given their fiduciary responsibilities and will equip them to discharge their fiduciary duties for the sole benefit of active members, retirees, and their beneficiaries. To ensure incurring and paying travel expenses are allowed for only those expenses deemed reasonable and necessary for the proper administration of the system, the policy will be administered in a manner that can be overseen by the Boards and understood by LACERA members and other stakeholders as reasonable, cost effective, value-driven, and necessary to fulfill LACERA's Mission to Produce, Protect, and Provide the Promised Benefits.

This policy applies to travel in connection with Educational Conferences and Administrative Meetings. "Educational Conferences" are those conferences, seminars, and meetings that have an educational purpose. "Administrative Meetings" are meetings attended by Trustees in their LACERA capacity and further LACERA's interests, including legislative advocacy, speaking engagements, including a domestic and international Educational Conference at which a Trustee gives a speech, positions in the administration of pension related organizations, and similar events. This policy applies to LACERA Trustees only.

II. PRINCIPLES

The following principles shall govern Trustee travel in connection with Educational Conferences and Administrative Meetings on LACERA's behalf and the interpretation of this policy.

A. *Performance of Fiduciary Duty.* Travel for educational conferences and administrative meetings in furtherance of LACERA's interests is necessary and should be encouraged and undertaken in order that Trustees may obtain and share knowledge relevant to the proper performance of their fiduciary duty under the California Constitution, the County Employees Retirement Law of 1937 (CERL), and other applicable laws by a reasonable method and at reasonable cost for the value received. Specifically:

1. Duty of Loyalty. Education and travel must assist the Trustees to perform their fiduciary duty of loyalty to "discharge their duties with respect to the system solely in the interest of, and for the exclusive purposes of providing benefits to, participants and their beneficiaries, minimizing employer contributions thereto, and defraying reasonable expenses of administering the system. A retirement board's duty to its participants and their beneficiaries shall take precedence over any other duty." Cal. Const., art. XVI, § 17(b); see Cal. Gov't Code § 31595(a).

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2. Duty of Prudence. Education and travel must assist the Trustees to perform their fiduciary duty of prudence to “discharge their duties with respect to the system with the care, skill, prudence, and diligence under the circumstances then prevailing that a prudent person acting in a like capacity and familiar with these matters would use in the conduct of an enterprise with a like character and like aims.” Const., art. XVI, § 17(c); see Cal. Gov’t Code § 31595(b).

B. Focus on Mission. Trustees have a fiduciary duty to make policy decisions consistent with applicable law, including constraints imposed by the Fund’s budget. At the same time, travel may be necessary to support and enhance LACERA’s Mission to Produce, Protect and Provide the Promised Benefits on behalf of LACERA members.

Trustees are expected to be and believed to be mindful and financially prudent in all travel and trip-related expenditures that consume resources funded by LACERA members.

- i. All monies held in the Fund by LACERA are ultimately due and payable in the form of pension benefits to active and retired members. Therefore, all administrative, operational and travel expenditures should be able to withstand the scrutiny of our members, stakeholders, plan sponsors and the public at large, thereby minimizing any reputational risk to LACERA.
- ii. Trustees are accountable for their actions and responsible for appropriate use of organizational resources and establishing policy creating limits and constraining expenditures. Travel policies for staff can be more restrictive depending on circumstances and financial constraints.

C. Transparency. Travel administrative procedures and guidelines are established and carried out in a manner that is easy for members and all other stakeholders to identify actions taken by Trustees.

- i. Expenses incurred for travel and trips are clearly identifiable as business-related expenses only, not for personal expenses of the Trustee or any traveling companions.
- ii. Travel expenses and trip information are reported to LACERA members and stakeholders via a public forum.
- iii. Trustees recognize and accept their accountability and responsibility to LACERA members for travel and trip expenditures which are charged to LACERA.
- iv. All Trustees electronically acknowledge and sign a travel attestation document (Appendix B) provided by staff annually on a calendar year basis, confirming their commitment to act responsibly and prudently and in the best interest of LACERA members.

D. Simplicity, Uniformity and Consistency. Travel administrative procedures and guidelines for claiming and reimbursing expenses are designed to be simple, uniform, and consistent, and should not be overly onerous so as to negatively affect Trustees.

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- i. Travel procedures should be a guide with simple, unambiguous rules for making and approving travel arrangements, and for the timely processing and accounting of trip related expenditures and reimbursements.
- ii. Travel expenditures are documented on expense claims that are clear and concise.
- iii. Travel expense reimbursement processes should be clear, consistent, transparent, convenient, efficient, and compliant with the Trustee Travel Policy.
- iv. Travel expense methods are simple and universally applied so the reimbursement claim process is streamlined (e.g., all meals are claimed under the Per Diem Method).
- v. Travel procedures, including administrative expense guidelines and reimbursement process, are maintained under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or their designee.

E. Ease of Execution. Travel administrative procedures and guidelines are established with administrative ease and designed to reduce the manual processes and the considerable effort required of staff. Processes related to travel reimbursements and processing expense claims should not be cumbersome and complicated for staff and Trustees.

- i. Travel accommodations and Trustee conveniences are streamlined and provide a group of appropriate choices instead a vast menu of options.
- ii. The process itself of conducting travel bookings and expense processing are considered a priority.
- iii. Expense categories, reimbursement process, and claim forms are periodically reviewed and updated by staff.
- iv. Trustees, not proxies, are responsible for obtaining, gathering, and submitting the appropriate documentation justifying expenditures in a timely manner.
- v. External providers including travel agents and other travel-related industry services are to be considered and integrated into the process for Trustees and administrative ease.
- vi. Technological tools for capturing and recording trip documentation are employed where reasonable and necessary considering cost implications.
- vii. Practices will periodically be reviewed to ensure best practices and industry norms are included within the Trustee Travel Policy.

III. TRUSTEE TRAVEL

A. Approval. All travel requires approval of that Trustee's Board, except that Educational Conferences and Administrative Meetings in California where the total cost of attendance is no more than \$3,000 are pre-approved for attendance and reimbursement, provided that a Trustee may not incur over \$15,000 for all expenses of attending all such Educational Conferences and Administrative Meetings in a fiscal year without Board approval.

B. Cease Travel and Other Expenses. Trustees may consider whether and when to cease arranging future travel and expenses for Educational

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Conferences and Administrative Meetings once they become aware their term of service will end. In considering this issue, Trustees may consider the following factors: For appointed Trustees, awareness may occur in the final year of their appointment and after the Board of Supervisors votes on the next appointment, or when an appointed Trustee has been told they will not be reappointed. For elected Trustees, awareness may occur when an elected Trustee decides not to run for reelection or when, as a candidate, is replaced once election results are certified by the Board of Supervisors. For the Ex-Officio Trustee, this occurs once a retirement is announced.

C. *Authorized Expenses.* Authorized travel expenses shall be determined by the Boards as set forth in Appendix A. LACERA shall use reasonable efforts to promptly reimburse trustees in accordance with this policy and Appendix A.

D. *Costs of Administration.* Travel expenses for Trustees shall be administrative costs of the Fund and may not be paid through third party contracts. It is LACERA's policy that Trustees shall not accept gifts of travel. Gifts of travel, including transportation, lodging, and meals, may be reportable as gifts to individual Trustees if not paid by LACERA.

E. *Claims for Reimbursement.*

- i. Submission. A travel expense reimbursement shall be claimed by completing an expense voucher form available from the Executive Board Assistants and submitting it to the appropriate authorizing person. Trustees may submit their expense reimbursements to their respective Executive Board Assistant. All expense reimbursement requests shall be accompanied by receipts and/or other reasonable documentation. Expense reimbursement records are subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act, with redaction of confidential information, such as personal addresses, telephone numbers, and credit card information. The deadline for submitting an education and travel reimbursement claim is 90 days after completing the education, or 30 days after the fiscal year-end, whichever comes first. Extensions to this deadline may be granted by the Board Chair.
- ii. Approval. The Executive Board Assistants will receive and review, for compliance with this policy, all expense reimbursement requests prior to submission. The Financial and Accounting Services Division (FASD) will review expense reimbursement requests for compliance with this policy and shall only process and use reasonable efforts to promptly pay those that are in compliance and approved by the CEO or their designee. FASD will notify the CEO or their designee of all deficiencies in a submission by a Trustee, and the CEO or their designee will in turn notify the respective Trustee. LACERA will not reimburse a Trustee for expenses that are not authorized under this policy unless specifically exempted and approved by that Trustee's Board, except that, without Board approval, each Board Chair or the Chief Executive Officer may authorize deviations of less than \$1,000

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per trip from the expense limits in this policy and subject to subsequent review of all expenses for compliance with this policy.

F. Cancellation of Travel Arrangements.

- i. Responsibility for Timely Cancellation. Trustees are responsible for timely canceling travel arrangements made on behalf of the Trustee which will not be used so that no costs will be incurred by LACERA.
- ii. Responsibility for Costs Resulting from Untimely Cancellation. Trustees are responsible for all costs LACERA incurs as a result of the Trustee's failure to cancel travel arrangements before cancellation charges accrue, unless the failure to cancel was due to facts or circumstances beyond the Trustee's control. The Trustee must reimburse LACERA within 30 days after notification of the amount due. Notice will be provided by the Chief Executive Officer. If reimbursement is not made within such 30-day period, and payment is still due, the amount shall be deducted from any payment due the Trustee from LACERA. If a Trustee is enrolled for an Educational Conference or Administrative Meeting but fails to attend or timely cancel and LACERA incurs an expense as a result (e.g., conference registration, travel and lodging cancellation fees), that conference or meeting counts toward the limit under Section IV.C.2. of the Trustee Education Policy until the Trustee reimburses LACERA for all expenses incurred or cancellation is excused under Section III. F. iii. of this Trustee Travel Policy.
- iii. Approval of Cancellation Costs with Good Cause. If the Trustee believes the failure to cancel was due to facts or circumstances beyond their control, they must submit written justification to the Board Chair within 30 days after receiving notification of the cancellation expenses due. For Trustees, the Board Chair will approve or disapprove the excuse in writing to the Trustee, with a copy to the Executive Board Assistant. If the individual is a Board Chair, then the written excuse must be submitted to that Board's Vice Chair who will then approve or disapprove the excuse. If the individual is a Vice Chair simultaneously serving as the acting Chair, then the Vice Chair's written excuse must be submitted to that Board's Secretary who will then approve or disapprove the excuse. Should a Trustee disagree with the Board Officer's determination, the Trustee may request the Executive Board Assistant to agendize the matter for consideration by the full Board.

G. Cash Advances. Hotel and airfare shall be purchased in advance by the Executive Board Assistants, and no cash advances will be allowed for such expenses. Cash advances for permitted per diem expenses in accordance with this policy may be allowed by the Chief Executive Officer for good cause. Trustees will account for any per diem cash advance on their trip expense report upon completion of the travel.

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- H. Expenses for Traveling Companions.** Travel expenses for family members and/or traveling companions are not reimbursable by LACERA.
- I. Additional Travel Days to Minimize Overall Travel Cost.** Travel resulting in arrival one day prior to and/or one day after an Educational Conference or Administrative Meeting will be reimbursed if reasonably necessary because of time constraints. Travel resulting in arrival two days prior to and/or one day after international travel will be reimbursed as reasonably necessary based on the location of the Educational Conference or Administrative Meeting. In addition, lodging and per diem for extra days prior to or after an Educational Conference or Administrative Meeting will be reimbursed if such extension results in lower overall trip costs. If a Trustee adds personal travel before or after a trip, the extra personal days outside of the above restrictions shall not be reimbursed. Written justification for travel expenses incurred prior to or after an Educational Conference or Administrative Meeting shall be submitted with the claim for reimbursement.
- J. Ground Transportation.** Trustees will be expected to use taxis or ride sharing services to and from domestic destinations. Limousine or executive car services shall not be used in domestic locations unless the cost for such services is comparable to that of taxi services and/or airport parking; they may be used without restriction in international locations. Reimbursement of rental vehicles require justification and prior approval from the Chief Executive Officer. When renting a vehicle, purchase of optional insurance is not necessary as LACERA's insurance will cover the same risks.
- K. International Travel Insurance.** LACERA will purchase travel insurance covering Trustees while traveling internationally on LACERA business. The insurance will include accident, medical, security assistance and evacuation, travel assistance, trip cancelation, interruption or delay, and baggage loss or delay coverage.
- L. Travel Reports.**
- i. Monthly. A monthly Travel Report shall be submitted to both Boards listing the current fiscal year's completed, anticipated, and canceled Education Conferences and Administrative Meetings (including whether excused under Section III. F. iii) for all Trustees on both Boards.
 - ii. Quarterly. A quarterly Travel Report shall be submitted to both Boards listing education and administrative travel expenses paid/reimbursed by LACERA for all Trustee on both Boards. Such report shall identify whether each item of travel was for an Educational Conference or Administrative Meeting, the purpose, location, cost by expense category, and whether excused under Section III. F. iii.

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- iii. Availability. The monthly and quarterly reports shall be agendized as reports for the Boards in the first month after they are available (and for privacy and personal security reasons, after travel has been completed) and shall be posted on lacera.com.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS

The relevant Board will be informed of a Trustee's need to attend Administrative Meetings and provide advance approval of the cost on such terms as deemed appropriate.

V. BROWN ACT COMPLIANCE

Attendance at external Education Conferences and Administrative Meetings by more than four Trustees of a Board is not a violation of this provision, provided that the Trustees may not discuss any item of LACERA business.

VI. GIFTS AND CONFLICTS

The Boards desire to avoid even the appearance of impropriety in connection with education, and related expenses. The Boards acknowledge that acceptance of gifts of education and related expenses, such as registration, transportation, meals, and lodging by a public agency, though permitted under certain circumstances by applicable law, can create the appearance that LACERA encourages "pay to play" and may, unwittingly, create opportunities for undue influence on Trustees. This policy therefore does not permit LACERA as an entity to accept gifts of education, and related expenses. This policy does not prohibit certain payments for education and/or related expenses as part of the negotiated consideration under agreements with vendors, consultants, and managers, although all such payments should be reviewed in advance with the Legal Division to ensure compliance with applicable law, regulations, and reporting.

Items provided during Educational Conferences and Administrative Meetings may constitute reportable gifts.

Trustees should be familiar with the provisions of LACERA's Code of Ethical Conduct as it may apply to certain education and administrative meeting interaction with and items received from the sponsors or other attendees.

The Boards acknowledge that international travel, though expensive, is increasingly necessary in light of today's global economy and LACERA's ongoing prudent investment of a substantial portion of its assets outside the United States.

VII. EDUCATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy is subject to and will be read and interpreted in conjunction with the Trustee Education Policy.

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VIII. POLICY PROVISIONS AND APPLICABLE LAW

- A. Waiver of Policy Provisions.** For good cause presented in writing, and in the exercise of its sound discretion, the Board of Retirement or the Board of Investments may waive compliance with specific requirements of this policy when in the best interest of LACERA.
- B. Applicable Law.** This policy is to be implemented in compliance with the relevant provisions of the California Government Code and other applicable law, and in harmony with existing philosophy, objectives, policies and guidelines previously approved by the Board of Retirement and the Board of Investments.

IX. SUSTAINABILITY

Trustees are encouraged to consider sustainability in making education and travel choices, including whether and how to travel, the viability and efficacy of alternative forms of participation (such as geographically closer or virtual meetings), the impact of business class vs. coach, the number of trips taken, and the number of Trustees participating in a single event, avoidance of car transportation when possible, and obtaining an estimate of the carbon footprint of travel and lodging options through available online tools and inclusion of estimates in board recommendation memos.

X. REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed by the Joint Organizational Governance Committee, the Board of Retirement, and the Board of Investments every three years or as needed and may be amended by both Boards at such time.

Policy History: Restated and Approved by the Board of Retirement and Board of Investments on December 16, 2020 and updated and approved by the Board of Retirement and Board of Investments on May 5, 2022 and May 11, 2022, respectively. Prior versions are superseded and of no effect as of the stated approval date.

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APPENDIX A REIMBURSEMENT SCHEDULE

Amounts which can be reimbursed for transportation, lodging, meals, and other covered items are indicated as follows:

I. TRANSPORTATION:

A. Airline Travel

1. Trustees will travel in coach/economy class except that they may travel in business class or its equivalent for:
 - a. Flights having (i) a scheduled non-stop flight time or total connecting travel time from original departing airport to the final destination airport of five hours or more, or (ii) a scheduled non-stop roundtrip flight time or total connecting roundtrip travel time of ten hours or more.
 - b. Red-eye flights. "Red-eye flights" are defined as flights in which a majority of the flight time occurs between 10:00 PM and 6:00 AM.
 - c. Flights arriving or departing at an international location, including Canada and Mexico.
2. LACERA will reimburse the additional cost of coach/economy class seats advertised as having additional leg room regardless of flight time.
3. Air travel will only be reimbursed at the lowest available non-refundable fare at the time of purchase (for class travel authorized under this Policy). Trustee may elect to fly on United, American, Delta, JetBlue, or Southwest Airlines for the dates and times of travel. Other carriers are authorized, but reimbursement shall not exceed the lowest non-refundable fare offered either amongst the five major airlines carriers mentioned above or three other major carriers who fly to selected destination.
4. Recognizing air carriers have begun charging for incidental items historically included in the ticket price (for example, checking luggage, providing pillows, blankets, and non-alcoholic beverages during flights, etc.), LACERA also will reimburse carrier charges for such incidental items upon submission of an itemized receipt. Alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed.
5. Substantiation of airline travel shall include a copy of the ticket or E-mail confirmation showing the cost of the air travel.
6. Trustees traveling by air to conduct LACERA business may use only regularly scheduled airline services operating by an air carrier certified by the Federal

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Aviation Administration or comparable foreign authority. Trustees are prohibited from traveling on LACERA business via private aircraft, including but not limited to aircraft owned, leased, or rented by the individual Trustee. Persons traveling on LACERA business via private aircraft will be deemed to be acting outside the scope of their responsibilities and employment. They will not be covered by LACERA's liability insurance. Trustees may not use travel points to pay for LACERA travel. Any points earned on LACERA's credit card will be used at the Chief Executive Officer's discretion.

B. Other Common Carrier Travel

1. Travel permitted under this policy should be accomplished in the most cost-effective and efficient manner practicable, considering the costs of the mode of transportation, travel time, accommodations, and per diem.
2. Generally, air travel is the most cost-effective and efficient means for long distance travel, with "long distance travel" defined as a travel to a site more than 300 miles from LACERA's headquarters.
3. Where a traveler has special travel needs or concerns such that travel by air for long distance travel is not practicable, then the traveler may use an alternate common carrier (e.g., train or bus) and incur such reasonable expenses associated with that mode of travel (e.g., sleeper car, additional days of per diem).
4. Substantiation of other common carrier travel shall include a copy of the ticket or E-mail confirmation showing the cost of the travel.

II. LODGING:

A. Room Cost

Reimbursement is limited to a standard class single room rate, including mandatory taxes and hotel fees. Actual expenses for lodging will be reimbursed upon submittal of receipts. For example, room upgrades, and bed and breakfast additions will be at the expense of the Trustee, unless for good cause such as the unavailability of standard rooms and/or international destinations.

B. Government Rates

Trustees traveling on LACERA business should always request government rates when making reservations and/or checking in. LACERA recognizes that the governmental rate offered for local governmental entities like LACERA may be higher

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than the federal government rate, or may not be available at all, especially in connection with international travel.

C. Attendance at Educational Conferences and Administrative Meetings.

LACERA acknowledges that the cost of a standard room at an event hotel may exceed the standard lodging reimbursement rate. Nevertheless, Trustees attending events may stay at the designated hotel to promote convenient access, networking, and safety. Reimbursement for lodging at an event is limited to the standard room rate charged by the event hotel unless for good cause such as the unavailability of standard rooms and/or international destinations. When lodging at the event hotel is unavailable, reimbursement is limited to the best available rate for a standard room at a nearby hotel of comparable quality. The Trustee will be responsible for any excess cost.

D. Travel Not Connected with An Established Hotel Venue

The maximum lodging amounts are intended to cover the cost of lodging at adequate, suitable and moderately-priced facilities located near the destination city's airport or the specific area in the destination city where LACERA's business will be conducted without association with an established hotel venue. Reimbursement for lodging connected with such travel is limited to:

1. Domestic: Not more than three times the regular per diem rate for the location as established from time to time by the U.S. General Services Administration, found at www.gsa.gov (click on "per diem rates").
2. International: Not more than three times the rate for the location as established from time to time by the United States Department of State, found at: www.state.gov/m/a/als/prdm.

III. MEALS:

It is the policy's intent for the Trustee to be reimbursed for meals not pre-paid for by LACERA. As such, LACERA will not reimburse the Trustee for a meal which has been pre-paid for by LACERA (e.g., when conference registration includes meals), whether or not the Trustee consumed the meal, except where the Trustee could not consume the pre-paid meal because:

1. The Trustee has special dietary or medical concerns, or
2. It was reasonably necessary for the Trustee to conduct LACERA business while the pre-paid meal was being served.

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APPENDIX A REIMBURSEMENT SCHEDULE

Written justification as to which of the above two exceptions applies will be provided with the reimbursement request. However, written justification for any dietary restrictions or medical concerns need only be provided once annually by the Trustee.

Likewise, LACERA will not reimburse the Trustee for a meal paid for by a third party unless approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

Meal Reimbursement

Reimbursement for meals shall be based on the "Per Diem Method" only as defined below.

A. The Per Diem Method

1. Under the Per Diem Method, the Trustee agrees to accept a flat rate for meals. Trustees are not required to submit receipts.
2. The per diem allowance will be computed using the Meals & Incidental Expenses rate (the "M&IE Rate") published by the Internal Revenue Service and in effect on the date of travel for the locality of travel.
3. The per diem allowance shall be claimed in accordance with the Meals & Incidental Expenses Breakdown ("M&IE Breakdown") per the IRS, based on the M&IE Rate. The portion of the per diem the Trustee receives depends upon when the travel occurs. For example, if the travel occurs during normal breakfast and lunch times, the Trustee receives the per diem for breakfast and lunch; if the travel occurs during normal lunch and dinner times, the Trustee receives the per diem for lunch and dinner, etc.

IV. PORTERAGE:

Porterage may not be claimed using the Per Diem Method, as the Per Diem Method's IRS tables already factor in porterage reimbursement.

V. PARKING:

Parking, including airport parking, will be reimbursed at actual rate (receipt required).

VI. MILEAGE:

Use of a personal vehicle will be reimbursed on a per mile basis at the rate approved by the Internal Revenue Service as of the date of travel.

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VII. OTHER BUSINESS EXPENSES:

Other covered business expenses reasonably incurred in connection with LACERA business, such as registration fees, business and personal telephone, fax, internet access, gym access (including the standard gym fee charged by the Trustee's hotel or, if hotel gym access is not available, the reasonable cost of daily access to a local gym or health facility), dry cleaning, and similar business expenses, shall be reimbursed upon submittal of receipts. Required vaccinations and required tests (such as PCR rapid tests for COVID-19) to enter or exit the origin or destination of travel or to comply with other requirements necessary to travel to or attend approved educational and administrative conferences, seminars, or meetings shall be reimbursed upon submittal of receipts. The cost of membership in TSA Pre, Global Entry, NEXUS, SENTRI, or other expedited security and border processing programs shall be reimbursed upon submittal of receipts. Technology needs, for both international and domestic travel, may be discussed with the LACERA Systems Division in advance to develop appropriate solutions for the Trustee's needs and to manage cost.

Reimbursement for lost or damaged property is subject to a separate policy to be developed.



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**APPENDIX B
TRAVEL ATTESTATION**

As a LACERA Board Trustee, I acknowledge:

- a. I have received, read, and understand all of the provisions within the Trustee Travel Policy; and
- b. I attest my commitment to act responsibly and prudently in the best interest of LACERA members, in all travel-related matters.

LACERA Board

Name

Signature

Date