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Reference Number:	200-13-DD
Title of Document:	Administrative Travel Regulations for Disabilities and Special Needs Boards and Contracted Service Providers
Date of Issue:	March 15, 2013
Effective Date:	March 15, 2013
Last Review Date:	June 18, 2013
Date of Last Revision:	June 18, 2013 **(NEW)**
Applicability:	All DSN Boards and Contracted Service Providers

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I. PURPOSE

This departmental directive provides a uniform travel policy designed to achieve maximum economy while traveling on administrative related business. A traveler on administrative business should exercise the same care in incurring expenses and accomplishing an assignment that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business. Excessive costs, indirect routes, delays or luxury accommodations that are unnecessary and unjustified in the performance of an assignment are not considered prudent. Transportation to and from points of arrival and departure should be accomplished by the most economical method.

Expenditures for travel shall not exceed those allowable under State of South Carolina travel regulations, which are the standard for South Carolina Medicaid cost reporting. Any deviations must receive prior written approval of provider management documenting the reasons and justification thereof.

II. APPLICABILITY

The policy for administrative travel outlined in this directive should be followed by all providers of service for the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN), otherwise referred to as

"providers." Providers include contracted entities providing agreed upon services to individuals on behalf of DDSN.

III. POLICY

Travel expenses may be reimbursed for allowable items up to the amounts permitted according to the following referenced regulations, unless a more restrictive limit has been established by provider management. The regulations governing state travel are specified in the South Carolina Appropriations Act, General Provisions Section 89 - X90, the State Plan under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, and the Comptroller General's Office Policies and Procedures Manual (Subsistence: Section 3). A summary of those regulations follows:

Mileage

The South Carolina Appropriations Act allows for reimbursement of business use of a privately owned vehicle when agency vehicles are not reasonably available at a standard business mileage rate equivalent to the rate established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Notification of the current mileage rate is distributed to providers in January each year by the DDSN Finance Office.

Lodging

Overnight travel requests require prior approval by the provider's Executive Director, or his/her designee. If approved, employees on official agency business more than 50 miles from the employee's headquarters or residence will be allowed reimbursement for expenses incurred for lodging not to exceed the current allowable rate for the destination city or county per the U.S. General Services Administration's website (www.gsa.gov).

Meals

Reimbursement for employee meal expenses will be allowed only when there is overnight travel. Exceptions may be approved by the provider's Executive Director. If an employee's travel is approved, the employee may be reimbursed for the actual expenses incurred in obtaining meals, not to exceed $25 per day, except in areas outside of South Carolina. In this event, the maximum daily reimbursement for meals shall not exceed $32.

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