



# State of Arizona Accounting Manual

Topic 50 Travel  
Section 30 Hotels, Motels and Lodging

Issued 07/29/19  
Page 1 of 6

## INTRODUCTION

The cost of lodging incurred while traveling on State business may, up the limits approved by the JLBC, be reimbursed. The reimbursement rates are designed to provide suitable and safe, but not luxurious, accommodations for State travelers.

## POLICIES

1. Reimbursement rates for lodging are proposed by the ADOA Director, reviewed and approved by the JLBC, and published by the ADOA.
2. Lodging, the total cost of which is less than or equal to the published limits applicable to the destination, may be reimbursed or paid by the State when purchased in conjunction with official State business.
3. To be eligible for reimbursement, the lodging must be for a traveler in travel status.
4. To be in travel status, a traveler must be more than fifty (50) miles from both the traveler's residence and his regular duty post.
5. Except in the case of conference lodging (See SAAM 5040.), reimbursement or payment for lodging may not exceed the lesser of the actual amount paid for the lodging or maximum applicable lodging reimbursement rate contained in the Travel Reimbursement Tables. (See SAAM 5095.)
6. The published lodging reimbursement rates are the room rates before taxes and other charges.
7. The following may always be added to the published reimbursement rates to determine the total amount of a lodging reimbursement:
  - 7.1. Taxes imposed by any authority with jurisdiction, such as state and local sales taxes, hospitality taxes, etc.
  - 7.2. Non-discretionary, non-elective unavoidable charges or surcharges a governmental entity may impose for utilities, linens, etc.

### **Example:**

Rack Rate	\$ 95	Limit as shown in SAAM 5095
Actual Room Charge	\$ 90	Hotel Imposed
Tax	\$ 10	Governmentally Imposed
Utility Fee	\$ 5	Governmentally Imposed
Total Hotel Charge	\$105	<b>Total Reimbursable Amount</b>

# State of Arizona Accounting Manual

Topic 50 Travel  
Section 30 Hotels, Motels and Lodging

Issued 07/29/19  
Page 2 of 6

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8. The following may never be reimbursed:
- 8.1. Mini-bar charges for alcoholic beverages.
  - 8.2. Movies.
9. The following may sometimes be reimbursed, subject to the provisions and limitations outlined below:
- 9.1. Health club charges, if approved in advance by the State Comptroller. The request for approval must be accompanied by a letter, signed by the traveler's physician and on the physician's letterhead, that identifies the specific medical condition that necessitates the use of a such a facility, the regimen to be followed by the traveler, the frequency with which the regimen must be followed, and any alternatives to the regimen that might be substituted. The traveler may, at his discretion, elect not to provide such a letter, but then cannot be reimbursed for health club charges. Approval will not be given for reasons of maintaining general health or fitness.
  - 9.2. Hotel Internet, Wi-Fi or hot spot connections, if it can be demonstrated and documented that the Internet needed to be used and was indeed used for State business.
  - 9.3. Hotel telephone charges, if it can be demonstrated and documented that the hotel telephone needed to be used and was used for State business and that the charges for which reimbursement is sought were for State business. (For example, a phone call back to the office would be reimbursable, but a phone call home would not.)
  - 9.4. Hotel parking:
    - 9.4.1. If the trip involves the authorized use of an automobile to conduct State business, hotel parking charges may be reimbursed. In such cases, the parking charges are not added to the rack rate to determine whether the lodging falls within the State's reimbursement limit. Hotel parking may not be reimbursed when a traveler has, in response to his own request, been allowed to use his POV rather than common carrier (e.g., airline) travel to an out-of-state location.

**Example when trip involves the authorized use of automobile to conduct State business:**

Rack Rate	\$100	Limit as shown in SAAM 5095
Actual Room Charge	\$ 95	Hotel Imposed
Tax	\$ 10	Governmentally Imposed
Parking	<u>\$ 15</u>	Hotel Imposed
Total Hotel Charges	\$120	<b>Total Reimbursable Amount</b>

- 9.4.2. If the trip does not involve the authorized use of an automobile to conduct State business, but the hotel charges for parking as a part of all stays, the amount of

# State of Arizona Accounting Manual

Topic 50 Travel  
Section 30 Hotels, Motels and Lodging

Issued 07/29/19  
Page 3 of 6

the parking charges is added to the rack rate to determine whether the lodging falls with the State's reimbursement limit.

## Example when trip does not involve authorized use of automobile to conduct State business:

Rack Rate	\$100	Limit as shown in SAAM 5095
Actual Room Charge	\$ 95	Hotel Imposed
Tax	\$ 10	Governmentally Imposed
Parking	<u>\$ 15</u>	Hotel Imposed
Total Hotel Charges	\$120	<b>EXCEEDS Reimbursement Limit!</b>

In this case, the parking of \$15 is added to the room charge of \$95 for an adjusted room charge of \$110, which exceeds the reimbursement limit.

- 9.5. Health club charges, if hotel health club charges are non-discretionary and always charged by the establishment. However, such charges, when added to the rack rate, may increase the daily hotel charge above the reimbursement rate.
- 9.6. Resort fees, booking fees, cleaning fees, if such fees are non-discretionary and always charged by the establishment. However, such charges, when added to the rack rate, may increase the daily hotel charge above the reimbursement rate

## Example 1:

Rack Rate	\$100	Reimbursement Limit shown in SAAM 5095
Actual Room Charge	\$ 95	Hotel Imposed
Tax	\$ 10	Governmentally Imposed
Resort Fee	<u>\$ 20</u>	Hotel Imposed
Total Hotel Charge	\$ 125	<b>EXCEEDS Reimbursement Limit!</b>

In this case, the resort fee of \$20 is added to the room charge of \$95 for an adjusted room charge of \$115, which exceeds the reimbursement limit.

## Example2:

Rack Rate	\$100	Reimbursement Limit shown in SAAM 5095
Actual Room Charge	\$ 80	Hotel Imposed
Tax	\$ 10	Governmentally Imposed
Online booking Fee	<u>\$ 30</u>	Online Booking Service Imposed
Total Hotel Charge	\$ 120	<b>EXCEEDS Reimbursement Limit!</b>

In this case, the online booking fee of \$30 is added to the room charge of \$80 for an adjusted room charge of \$110, which exceeds the reimbursement limit.

- 9.7. Charges relating to a hotel mini-bar for non-alcoholic beverages, snacks and other foodstuffs, when these constitute a traveler's meal. These purchases, however, are subject to the limitations for meals and incidentals. (Since these purchases are generally fairly expensive, not much nutrition is available to the traveler for the price paid and the traveler might be well advised to seek other alternatives.)

# State of Arizona Accounting Manual

Topic 50 Travel  
Section 30 Hotels, Motels and Lodging

Issued 07/29/19  
Page 4 of 6

---

- 9.8. Room service charges for non-alcoholic beverages and other foodstuffs, when these constitute a traveler's meal. These purchases, however, are subject to the limitations for meals and incidentals. (Since these purchases are generally fairly expensive, not much nutrition is available to the traveler for the price paid and the traveler might be well advised to seek other alternatives.)
10. To be reimbursed for lodging:
- 10.1. Lodging must be at a commercial establishment, and
- 10.2. An itemized bill/invoice/statement/receipt from a commercial lodging establishment must be provided.
- 10.3. The term "commercial establishment" includes any enterprise that offers its services to the public and charges an advertised rate and, thus, includes accommodations offered by online rental services (such as, but not limited to, Airbnb.
- 10.3.1. In the case of all lodging arrangements, additional fees that may be charged for booking, cleaning, parking, resort and health club facilities, etc., should be reviewed to determine their effect on whether the reservation can be made or, if made, whether the full amount of the accommodations can be reimbursed.
11. When lodging is arranged at a commercial establishment, the lowest available rate (governmental, commercial, corporate, group, event, etc.) should be sought.
12. Lodging may be shared:
- 12.1. *At the option of State travelers.* Agency management, however, may include the cost of lodging in deciding which employees are to travel on State business.
- 12.2. *At the option of agency management.* This is true only when the travelers involved are of the same sex.
13. When lodging is shared, reimbursement per person should not exceed the amount that would have been allowed had the lodgers not shared accommodations, i.e., the single room rate (subject to the local reimbursement limit) times the number of travelers. Below are the three accepted methods for requesting reimbursement when lodging is shared by State travelers:
- 13.1. Each traveler should obtain a separate original lodging receipt for his portion of the lodging cost. The total of the separate lodging receipts cannot exceed the total lodging cost. When a room is to be shared, the travelers should request separate receipts in advance (when they register or check in) from the lodging establishment.

# State of Arizona Accounting Manual

Topic 50 Travel  
Section 30 Hotels, Motels and Lodging

Issued 07/29/19  
Page 5 of 6

---

- 13.2. At the discretion of the travelers or if the lodging establishment cannot or will not provide separate original lodging receipts, one traveler submits the original lodging receipt and the other traveler(s) must submit photocopies. However, each receipt (both the original and the photocopies) must be marked “Shared Lodging” and must include the names of all travelers sharing the room. Photocopies must be signed by the traveler submitting them, his supervisor and an authorized agency signer. No photocopies will be accepted without these original signatures.
14. When State-reimbursed lodging is shared with a family member, unless the family member is also on State business, the amount of reimbursement shall not exceed the amount that would have been allowed had the traveler been lodging alone, i.e., the total single room rate.
15. To determine the correct rate for lodging, follow the instructions set forth below.
  - 15.1. For travel within the continental U.S.:
    - 15.1.1. Locate the topic of SAAM entitled “Travel Reimbursement Tables.”
    - 15.1.2. Locate the “Lodging” column.
    - 15.1.3. If the specific city is listed in the table, use the rate applicable to the city in which lodging occurs.
    - 15.1.4. If the city is not listed but the county is which the city is located is, use the rate applicable to the county in which the lodging occurs.
    - 15.1.5. If neither the city nor the county is listed, use the default rate listed at the beginning of the table.
  - 15.2. For travel outside the continental U.S.:
    - 15.2.1. Go to the GAO Website (<https://gao.az.gov/>) and click on the Travel Info link.
    - 15.2.2. Click on the link to “Out-of-Country/Alaska, Hawaii—Lodging and Meal Index,” this will take one to a Department of Defense website.
    - 15.2.3. Under Outside CONUS, Non-foreign Overseas, and Foreign, select the appropriate Country/State from the drop-down menu. The rate that applies to (i.e., limits the amount of reimbursement for) both meals and incidentals for Arizona travelers is the amount shown in the Maximum Lodging column.
16. For lodging relating to travel periods of more than thirty (30) days, refer to SAAM 5035.
17. For conferences, conventions and meetings, refer to SAAM 5040.
18. For travel matters relating to non-State employees, refer to SAAM 5065.

# State of Arizona Accounting Manual

Topic 50 Travel  
Section 30 **Hotels, Motels and Lodging**

Issued 07/29/19  
Page 6 of 6

---

19. For matters relating to travel advances, refer to SAAM 5052.
20. Responsibility for payment of cancellation charges with respect to hotel charges depends upon circumstances. If the cancellation results from:
  - 20.1. The agency's decision to postpone or cancel a hotel reservation, the cost of the cancellation is to be borne by the agency.
  - 20.2. The traveler's decision to postpone or cancel a hotel reservation because of:
    - 20.2.1. Serious unpredictable and unavoidable personal reasons (e.g., death in the family, sudden serious illness, significant fire or storm damage to one's home), the cost of the cancellation may, if determined appropriate by the agency head, be borne by the agency.
    - 20.2.2. The traveler's error, mere convenience, or personal reasons that are not serious, unpredictable and unavoidable, the cost is to be borne by the traveler.
21. While such things as room cleaning service tips and baggage storage at hotels are reimbursable, they are incidentals and, as such, are paid from the daily meals and incidentals reimbursement limits (thus reducing the amount available for meals). (See SAAM 5026.)