ORIENTATION MANUAL

FOR NATIONAL BOARD

DENTAL AND DENTAL HYGIENE TEST CONSTRUCTORS

A publication of the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations
American Dental Association, 211 East Chicago Avenue, Suite 600
Chicago, Illinois 60611–2637
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PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

The purpose of this orientation manual is to orient new test constructors to their role and responsibilities in the development of the National Board Dental Examinations. To this end, this manual is intended as a general reference. The Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (referred in this manual as the Joint Commission) encourages you to contact a staff member of the Department of Testing Services with individual questions.

ROLE OF A TEST CONSTRUCTOR

The role of a test constructor is based on the purpose of the National Board Dental Examinations. The purpose of the examinations is to assist state boards of dentistry in determining the qualifications of dentists and dental hygienists seeking a license to practice dentistry or dental hygiene. These examinations presume that candidates have successfully completed appropriate dental or dental hygiene education in accredited dental schools or dental hygiene programs or their equivalent. They also serve as complements to the state or regional clinical or practical examinations in the dental licensure process. Specific dental hygiene licensure requirements vary among jurisdictions. However, most jurisdictions accept graduates from accredited dental hygiene programs.

The examinations determine qualifications by assessing the candidate’s knowledge of the basic biomedical sciences (Part I and Dental Hygiene) and the dental/dental hygiene clinical sciences (Part II and Dental Hygiene) and their ability to use this knowledge in the provision of dental care. The examinations, therefore, require candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities across a sampling of multiple-choice test items. Through this demonstration, the measurement process discriminates between those who have the required knowledge level to begin practice and those who do not.

Both validity and reliability are essential measurement concepts. Examinations are deemed valid when the candidates are accurately judged to have, or not have, the requisite knowledge to enter the practice of dentistry. The scores resulting from the administration of the examinations are considered reliable when they provide this accurate measurement on a consistent basis.
The role of the test constructors is fundamental to both the validity and reliability of the examinations. Test constructors are responsible for recommending test specification changes based on current knowledge and practices within the field of dentistry and implementing these specifications in their item selection for each examination. This is one method toward ensuring test validity. In addition, test constructors are responsible for constructing a clear, precise, and cohesive group of test items for each examination, which directly influences score reliability. Therefore, it is essential to the quality of the examinations that the test constructors use their subject-matter expertise, their familiarity with the curriculum in accredited dental schools, and their awareness of what is important to the practice of general dentistry in the construction of each examination. Most of this work is accomplished through committee activities.

NATURE OF TEST CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEES

Sixteen test construction committees, consisting of consultants of the Joint Commission, develop the National Board Dental Examinations. Following is a listing of the committees and their respective member composition:

**PART I - Basic Biomedical Sciences Committees**

**Anatomic Sciences**
- 2 gross anatomists
- 2 histologists (1 embryology expert & 1 neuroanatomy expert)
- 1 full-time practitioner

**Biochemistry - Physiology**
- 2 biochemists
- 2 physiologists
- 1 full-time practitioner

**Microbiology - Pathology**
- 2 microbiologists (1 immunology expert)
- 2 general pathologists
- 1 full-time practitioner

**Dental Anatomy and Occlusion**
- 3 dental anatomists
- 1 full-time practitioner

**Testlet Development – Interdisciplinary biomedical sciences with clinical focus**
- 4 dental practitioners
- 5 dental educators representing the basic biomedical sciences
PART II - Component A Committees

Endodontics
- 3 endodontists
- 1 full-time practitioner

Operative Dentistry
- 4 dentists (1 dental materials expert)
- 1 full-time practitioner

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery - Pain Control
- 3 oral and maxillofacial surgeons (1 pain control expert)
- 1 full-time practitioner

Oral Diagnosis
- 2 oral pathologists
- 2 oral and maxillofacial radiologists
- 1 dentist with advanced education in oral diagnosis
- 1 full-time practitioner

Orthodontics - Pediatric Dentistry
- 3 orthodontists
- 2 pediatric dentists
- 1 full-time practitioner

Patient Management
- 3 behavioral scientists (1 dentist)
- 2 dental public health specialists
- 1 dentist with advanced training in Special Needs
- 2 full-time practitioners

Periodontics
- 3 periodontists
- 1 full-time practitioner

Pharmacology
- 3 pharmacologists (1 dentist)
- 1 full-time practitioner

Prosthodontics
- 4 prosthodontists (2 fixed prosthodontics experts; 2 removable partial/complete prosthodontics experts)
- 1 dental materials expert
- 1 full-time practitioner
PART II - Component B Committees

Component B – Case Composition Committee
This 13-member committee, composed of dental discipline experts and practitioners, develops the case-based items for the National Board Part II Dental Examination.

Case Selection Committee
As an adjunct to Component B, this 4-member committee does the preliminary screening of new patient cases and identifying appropriate cases for the examinations. In addition, it prepares and reviews the patient histories, dental charts, and treatment plans associated with the cases.

Consultant Review Committee
To ensure test coherence and cohesion, this 2-member committee reviews the discipline-based and case-based components of the Part II examinations.

DENTAL HYGIENE – Test Construction Committees

Component A Committees

Dental Hygiene I
- 3 basic science experts
- 1 dental hygiene curriculum expert

Dental Hygiene II
- 3 periodontists, one of which is a dentist
- 1 dental hygiene curriculum expert
- 2 clinical dental hygiene experts
- 1 oral and maxillofacial radiologist or dental hygienist with formal education in oral radiology

Dental Hygiene III
- 1 dental hygiene curriculum expert
- 1 clinical dental hygiene expert
- 2 community dental health experts
Component B Committees

Component B – Case Composition Committee
This 8-member committee develops the 150 case-based items for the National Board Dental Hygiene Examination. These members represent subject-matter expertise in the basic sciences, clinical dental hygiene, community dental health, dental hygiene curriculum, oral medicine/oral diagnosis, periodontics, oral radiology, and special needs.

Case Selection Committee
This 4-member committee reviews new patient cases and identifies suitable cases for the examinations. In addition, it prepares and reviews the patient histories, dental charts, and treatment plans associated with the cases.

Consultant Review Committee
To ensure test coherence and cohesion, this 4-member committee reviews the discipline-based and case-based components of the Dental Hygiene examinations.

SELECTION OF TEST CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS
On an annual basis, the Joint Commission announces vacancies on test construction committees. Test construction vacancy information is sent via e-mail to dental deans, dental hygiene program directors, state boards of dentistry, constituent dental societies, and other institutions, professional organizations, and individuals in advance of the annual meeting of the Joint Commission. Application materials consist of a letter describing the vacancies and application process, selection criteria, and a personal data form (application). Application materials are available or upon request from the Department of Testing Services. All applications are processed by staff and forwarded to either the Committee on Examination Development or the Committee on Dental Hygiene (standing committees of the Joint Commission) responsible for recommending individuals for appointment by the Joint Commission.

Test construction committee members are appointed primarily on the basis of subject matter expertise. Additional factors considered by the Joint Commission are representation in geographic location, ethnicity, gender, and dental school/practice. Committee membership terms are one year, and a member may be reappointed for a maximum of five consecutive one-year terms. A test construction committee member who has served the five consecutive one-year terms is not eligible for reappointment to the same committee. Membership in the American Dental Association is preferred for eligible dentist members of committees in the clinical sciences.
Dental applicants for test construction committees on Anatomic Sciences, Biochemistry-Physiology, Microbiology-Pathology, Testlet Development, Dental Materials, Pharmacology, and Patient Management are required to meet the following criteria:

1. Dentist with a Master’s degree in that biomedical science OR a professional with a doctoral degree in that biomedical science
2. Three years of experience within the last five years, teaching or in research in that biomedical science

Applicants for test construction committees on Dental Anatomy and Occlusion, Operative Dentistry, Prosthodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery - Pain Control, Orthodontics-Pediatric Dentistry, Endodontics, Periodontics, and Oral Diagnosis must meet the following criteria:

1. Dentist
2. In the case of specialty areas of dentistry, graduation from an accredited advanced program in that specialty
3. Three years of experience, within the last five years, teaching or in research in the pertinent subject

Dental hygiene applicants for test construction committees in the specialty areas of Clinical Dental Hygiene, Community Dental Health, Dental Hygiene Curriculum, Oral Medicine/Oral Diagnosis, Periodontics, Oral Radiology, and Special Needs are required to meet the following criteria:

1. Dentist or dental hygienist (depending on specialty or subject-matter area)
2. Graduation from an accredited advanced education program in that specialty
3. At least three years of experience, within the last five years, teaching or in research in the pertinent subject

Dental hygiene applicants in the Basic Sciences areas of anatomy, histology, biochemistry and nutrition, physiology, microbiology and immunology, pathology, pharmacology, and oral biology are required to meet the following criteria:

1. Doctoral degree in a biomedical science, or a dentist, or dental hygienist with an advanced degree in a biomedical or dental science
2. At least three years of experience, within the last five years, teaching a biomedical or dental science to dental hygiene students
RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEST CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Each test construction committee member is expected to fulfill the following roles and responsibilities:

- Submit 50 new test items for the National Board item banks, according to Joint Commission guidelines, specifications, and content outlines by the designated time. This requirement applies to members upon completion of their first year of committee service.
- Attend each test construction meeting for the duration of the session.
- Construct National Board Dental and Dental Hygiene Examinations according to Joint Commission guidelines, specifications, and content outlines within the designated time frame.
- Develop additional test items for the item banks.
- Assign ownership of all test materials to the American Dental Association/Joint Commission on National Board Dental Examinations by agreeing to the terms of the Copyright Assignment (Appendix A).
- Inform the Joint Commission of changes in the standard curricula and suggest modifications in test specifications and content outlines.
- Consider special issues and make recommendations at the request of the Joint Commission.
- Safeguard the security and confidentiality of the National Board Examinations by declining any arrangement to assist with review courses or reviewing books pertaining to the examinations while serving as a test constructor and for at least one year following the final term of appointment (Appendix B).
- Comply with the American Dental Association’s policy on professional conduct. The policy includes prohibitions against sexual harassment, as well as other forms of unlawful conduct (Appendix C).

DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL BOARD EXAMINATIONS

The NBDE - Part I consists of 400 items of which approximately 20% are interdisciplinary, clinically-focused testlets. The NBDE - Part II contains 500 test items—400 discipline-based items and 100 case-based items. NBDHE is comprised of 350 test items – 200 discipline-based items and 150 case-based items.
The Joint Commission uses multiple-choice items, which are considered by most testing experts to be the most versatile and useful of objective test questions. They are effective in measuring candidate knowledge and understanding of general concepts, as well as more complex cognitive processes involving the application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information. There are three basic elements to every multiple-choice item. The *stem* is the question or partial statement that the examinee must answer or complete. Each stem is followed by three to five *alternatives*, marked by the letters A, B, C, D, and E. One of the alternatives is the correct, or best, *response* to the stem. The incorrect or inferior alternatives are known as *distractors*, or *foils*.

For extensive information on writing quality multiple-choice items, the *Test Item Development Guide*, published by the Joint Commission, is available at www.ada.org.

**TEST CONSTRUCTION MEETING DATES**

Current test construction committee members typically decide meeting dates one year in advance. By February of the following year, committee members are notified of meeting dates, times, and locations via e-mail. In the interim, new members are notified to allow them to arrange their schedules.

Dental and Dental Hygiene (discipline-based) committees meet once per year, usually for three days. The Dental and Dental Hygiene Component B Committees and the Testlet Development Committee meet at least twice per year for three days. Each committee is charged with constructing and reviewing a specific examination or segment of an examination.

The Dental and Dental Hygiene Case Selection Committees meet once per year, usually for two days. The Dental and Dental Hygiene Review Committees meet twice per year, usually for two days.

**TEST CONSTRUCTION MEETING PROCESS**

Test construction meetings typically begin with a review of the statistical characteristics of examinations administered since the last meeting. These characteristics include reliability, standard deviation, and mean performance of individual items. Individual item statistics are also reviewed. These statistics include the difficulty of the item, the proportion of candidates choosing each distractor, and the point biserial correlation coefficient for each response. Items that produce statistics below the standards set by the Joint Commission are reviewed and either retained, revised, or retired.
Test constructors review the content specification to ensure that discipline areas continue to reflect current teachings in the majority of U.S. dental schools and dental hygiene programs. All revisions to the *Dental and Dental Hygiene Examination Specifications* are based on practice analyses and are considered and approved by the Joint Commission. The initial step of the meeting process is the initial drafting of new examinations. Next, test constructors review and finalize the drafted examinations according to the test specifications and test item guidelines. During the final review process, committee members judge the quality and accuracy of their discipline items for general dentistry.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Continuing education credit is awarded to test construction committee members for their participation in the development of the National Board Dental Examinations. CE credit is given for committee member present for the entire meeting period. For two-day meetings test constructors receive 9.5 CE credits for each meeting. For three-day meetings test constructors receive 15 CE credits for each meeting. A letter of CE verification is given to each committee member, who participates in the meeting, as required, after completing a brief evaluation form.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The American Dental Association (ADA) requires all volunteers traveling on ADA business to make their airline reservations through the ADA travel agency. Tickets are automatically charged to the ADA, alleviating the need for ticket-price reimbursement. A ticket confirmation (itinerary) is e-mailed by the travel agency to the volunteer. Any airfares exceeding $1,000 must be approved by the ADA prior to ticket issuance. Any volunteer, who drives more than 100 miles to a meeting, may receive reimbursement based on the round-trip airfare. Staff in the Department of Testing Services makes volunteers’ hotel reservations and the hotel sends a confirmation letter to the volunteer.

The attached sample reimbursement form (*Appendix D*) is used to itemize surface transportation at $0.55/mile), a per-diem allowance of $75 per meeting day to cover meal expenses (meeting days only), and hotel room rate and tax. The following original receipts must be secured to the reimbursement form:
- a copy of the airfare itinerary e-mail with ticket price and any baggage fee receipts,

- original hotel bill, and

- original receipts for expenses (i.e., taxi fare to/from airport, airport parking, etc.).

Car rentals, limousine services, and any personal and incidental hotel expenses, other than the room rate and tax, are not reimbursable. Any missing receipts will delay the process of reimbursement. A check will be issued from the ADA Accounting Department approximately 3-4 weeks after the reimbursement form is received. The ADA Travel Policy (Appendix D) is presented to assist you in your travel arrangements.
Appendix A

AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION
COPYRIGHT ASSIGNMENT

The undersigned, ________________________, a member of the Joint Commission National Board Dental Examinations (name of TCC) Test Construction Committee, is involved in a special project for the American Dental Association that involves copyrighted or copyrightable materials. S/he acknowledges and agrees, individually and collectively, that all such materials belong solely to the American Dental Association, and that the Association holds any and all rights to obtain and retain ownership of copyrights for such materials in its own name. The undersigned represents that any and all contributions s/he makes to such materials will be original works, not copies in whole or in part of works of third parties. The undersigned hereby acknowledges and agrees that the American Dental Association is the sole owner of such materials, s/he has no ownership rights whatsoever in such materials, the Association has all rights to obtain copyrights for such materials, and such materials constitute —work made for hire— under copyright laws. The undersigned hereby assigns any and all ownership rights s/he may have to the American Dental Association, and s/he agrees that s/he will execute any additional documents necessary to effect this assignment to the Association upon request.

Signature ____________________________ Date __________________________

Witness ____________________________
TEST CONSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEST SECURITY

Participation in the development of examinations carries with it serious responsibilities relative to test security. This is especially true regarding high-stakes national examinations. The Department of Testing Services, American Dental Association, emphasizes its expectations of each test constructor in safeguarding the security and confidentiality of the examinations.

Test constructors are given few directives governing examination security, primarily because the test construction process takes place in the ADA headquarters building. There are, however, instances in which test constructors must be careful not to breach the security of test content through other activities. For example, a test constructor should not present a student review course in preparation for taking an examination he or she has helped to develop. A test constructor also should not contribute to a publisher’s test review book regarding a test he or she helped to develop.

Test constructors must decline any arrangement to assist with review courses or review books pertaining to the examinations while serving as a test constructor and for one year following their last term of appointment on a test construction committee. Further, test constructors may not share information about test content with dental or dental hygiene faculty, colleagues, students, or other individuals.

Signature  
Date

Witness
CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

In accordance with the Bylaws and the Standing Rules for Councils and Commissions of the American Dental Association in regard to conflict of interest, I, ____________________________, declare that I have no proprietary, financial or other personal interest of any nature or kind in any product, service and/or company that will be considered during my term as a member of a National Board Dental/Dental Hygiene Test Construction Committee, except the following:

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

I declare that I have no proprietary, financial or other personal or professional interest or obligation of any nature or kind in any firm or organization beneficially associated with any product and/or service that will be considered during my term as a member of a National Board Dental/Dental Hygiene Test Construction Committee, except the following:

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

I declare that I have no past or present financial interest, consulting position or other involvement of any nature or kind related to the National Board Dental and Dental Hygiene Examinations that could give rise to even a suspicion of a conflict of interest, except the following:

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Furthermore, I understand and agree that as a condition for serving as a member of the Joint Commission, I will exercise particular care that no detriment to this agency will result from conflicts between my interests and those of the National Board Dental and Dental Hygiene Examinations.

_____________________________________________  ____________________________
Signature                                      Date
Appendix C

Professional Conduct Policy & Prohibition Against Harassment

The American Dental Association (—ADA—) is proud of its professional and congenial work environment, and it will take all necessary steps to ensure that the work environment remains pleasant for all that work here. All employees must treat each other with courtesy, consideration and professionalism. It is ADA policy that all employees are responsible for assuring that the work place is free from improper harassment. The ADA absolutely prohibits sexual harassment and harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, status with respect to public assistance, or marital status. Certain discriminatory harassment is prohibited by state and federal laws, which may subject the ADA and/or the individual harasser to liability for any such unlawful conduct. With this policy, the ADA prohibits not only unlawful harassment, but also other unprofessional and discourteous actions. Derogatory racial, ethnic, religious, age, sexual orientation, sexual or other inappropriate remarks, slurs, or jokes will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances and requests for sexual favors, and all other verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a condition of the individual's employment;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual's employment; or
- such conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of employment and to create a hostile or abusive working environment.

Sexual harassment may take many forms, including, but not limited to:

- verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature;
- subtle pressure or abuse of a sexual nature;
- unnecessary touching of an individual, for example, patting, pinching, hugging, repeated brushing against another employee's body;
- offensive sexual flirtation, advances or propositioning;
- graphic verbal commentaries or jokes;
- sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; or
- the offensive display in the workplace of sexual objects, pictures or writings.
Each employee must exercise his or her own good judgment to avoid engaging in conduct that may be perceived by others as harassment. Forms of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- **Verbal**: repeated sexual innuendoes, racial or sexual epithets, derogatory slurs, off-color jokes, negative stereotyping, personally abusive remarks, propositions, threats or suggestive or insulting sounds;

- **Visual/Non-verbal**: derogatory posters, cartoons, or drawings; suggestive objects or pictures; graphic commentaries; leering; or obscene gestures;

- **Physical**: unwanted physical contact including touching, interference with an individual’s normal work movement or assault; and

- **Other**: making or threatening reprisals as a result of a negative response to harassment.

No employee in this organization is exempt from this policy. This policy applies to the immediate work place as well as to ADA related activity outside the ordinary work place, such as travel on ADA business, meetings outside the ADA building, and ADA-sponsored social or recreational events.

In response to every complaint, the ADA will take prompt investigatory actions, and corrective and preventative actions where necessary. An employee who brings such a complaint to the ADA in good faith will not be adversely affected as a result of reporting the harassment or objectionable conduct. All employees should be aware that the privacy of the charging party and the person accused of the harassment will be protected to the extent consistent with effective enforcement of this policy. The ADA will retain confidential documentation of all allegations and investigations. Any employee found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any memoranda regarding violation of the Professional Conduct Policy and Prohibition against Harassment shall be placed in an employee’s personnel file.
Expense Reimbursement Request  
Council Members, Consultants and Advisors

### SAMPLE

**NAME:** Dr. John Doe  
**COST CENTER:** 160-0100-000  
**PURPOSE/ITINERARY:** Dental Component B TCC Meeting  
**Vendor #:** 77755  
**January 27 – 29, 20**

**Instructions:**  
The original submitted copy of this report must be accompanied by original documentation, including receipts for any single expense in excess of $25.00. Exception: Must have receipts for luggage surcharge.  
Unless specifically requested, reimbursements will be mailed to the address shown on this form. In accordance with established policy, “All officers, members of the board of Trustees or councils, staff, consultants or advisors are requested to travel coach rather than first class whenever feasible.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRANSPORTATION</th>
<th>Paid with ADA credit card</th>
<th>Reimbursable expenses</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Account Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air/Rail/Bus Fare</td>
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<td>$</td>
<td>$450.50</td>
<td>515101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Rentals or Limousine</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Expense (no miles: 30 x .55) rate/mile</td>
<td>16.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface Transportation (to and from Airport)</td>
<td><em>Attach tax/airport parking receipts</em> 90.00 ($45 each way)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$131.50</td>
<td>515201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolls/Parking/Other – Airport parking</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>$131.50</td>
<td>515201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luggage Surcharge * Receipts required.*</td>
<td>15.00 x 2 30.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>515151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PER DIEM</strong> * meeting days only*</td>
<td>225.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>$225.00</td>
<td>515301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LODGING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel (attach hotel bill - room + tax reimbursed)</td>
<td>$713.10</td>
<td></td>
<td>$713.10</td>
<td>515401</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTALS:**  
$450.50 $1,099.60 $1,550.10

### Summary of Expenses

- **Total Expenses (as Above)** $1,550.10
- **Total Paid By Volunteer** $1,099.60
- **Less Advance (Volunteer)** $450.50
- **Total Due ADA/Volunteer** $1,099.60

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**Volunteer Signature**  
**Date**
ADA VOLUNTEER TRAVEL AND EXPENSE POLICY

PURPOSE

- Helping travelers to accomplish their missions by putting in place structures to save time and effort.
- Providing people who travel for the Association with an acceptable level of safety, security, and comfort.
- Enhancing overall travel process productivity from planning through submitting an expense reimbursement form.
- Controlling travel and travel-related costs and expenditures for the Association.

EXPENSE GUIDELINES

This policy covers items normally encountered as a business or travel expense. Basic expense guidelines of the Association are:

- Volunteers are reimbursed for expenses that have a valid business purpose and are allowable per the details of the policies below.
- The Association expects volunteer travelers to use good judgment. The Association recognizes there will be times when a traveler must exceed —normal‖ expenses. Such occasions should be the exception and not the rule and should be adequately explained on the expense report.
- Volunteer travelers are expected to maintain a reasonable standard of living while traveling for the Association.
- Volunteer travelers while traveling on Association-funded business will receive a $75 per day per diem. This rate is intended to defray the out-of-pocket expenses for meals, gratuities, and other incidental expenses. Volunteers should pay for their own expenses (excluding airfare) and subsequently request reimbursement per this policy.
- Required receipts for volunteer travelers include, but are not limited to: airline tickets, itemized hotel folios, and auto rental contracts. Receipts for the $75 per diem are not required.
- This policy is meant to address various expenses that may be encountered but is likely not all-inclusive. Volunteers should use reasonable business judgment for matters not specifically covered herein and are encouraged to get guidance from the Division of Conference and Meeting Services (DCMS) or the Accounting Department. Reimbursement decisions are ultimately the responsibility of the Accounting Department and the Chief Financial Officer.

AIR TRAVEL

1. All Association-funded travel (air, car, hotel, and rail) is to be booked by the Association’s official travel agency following the established volunteer travel procedures. The ADA’s official travel agency, Best Travel, will produce all travel documents.

The ADA is aware that periodically lower rates may be obtained via travel websites on the Internet and from other sources. The official agency helps the Association to maximize Best Travel buying power, to realize overall cost savings, to maximize earned tickets and other benefits from the airlines and other suppliers and helps travelers accomplish their missions by putting in place structures and procedures to save time and effort while providing them with an acceptable level of safety, service and comfort. In addition, the official agency provides the Association with cost control mechanisms and integrated management reports that are used in negotiating volume-based air, car, and hotel discounts with suppliers.
The ADA staff person(s) responsible for the organization and budgetary implications of a meeting is also responsible for advising each volunteer of the Volunteer Travel and Expense Policy, the Volunteer On-Line Booking Procedures and for ensuring compliance.

The official travel agency will book travel in accordance with policy and search for best prices within the given parameters. Travelers should advise the agency when they are flexible about departure times so agents can search more broadly for lower fares.

2. All Association-funded travel requires pre-approval:
   - A Volunteer Transportation Form for all Association-funded volunteer travel must be completed and signed by the Department Director and sent to the travel department before volunteers can call or use the on-line booking services of the official travel agency. This form can also be e-mailed to the Department Director, who then will approve and e-mail to the travel department.
   - It is important that the correct cost center and line number be used when travel reservations are first made and at the time that an expense reimbursement forms is submitted.

3. All domestic travel (for policy purposes defined as the 50 United States and Canada) will be booked in economy/coach class.

4. All domestic travel as defined above will be booked at the lowest available airfare at the time of ticketing. In most cases these airfares will be non-refundable.

   The chance that a trip will be cancelled or changed to a different date must be balanced against achievable savings from using non-refundable fares. If a trip is cancelled, most airlines require that the original travel reservation be cancelled before midnight on the date when travel was first to occur. Failure to cancel a travel reservation will result in the complete loss of the value of the original ticket.

5. All international travel (for policy purposes defined as any travel outside the 50 United States and Canada) will be booked in economy/coach class.

6. All international travel requires the approval of the Executive Director with a supporting memo of purpose, costs involved and direct benefit to the Association clearly outlined.

   Advisory travel warnings from the U.S. State Department should be taken into consideration.

   Visa and passport fees, and required immunizations or any other special items required for authorized international business travel are reimbursable.

   Through the ADA’s group insurance company worldwide emergency medical assistance, emergency personal services, and pre-trip information is available at no charge. International travelers will be given the necessary travel and contact information for this service with their final travel documents.

7. Travelers can upgrade themselves at their own expense for domestic or international travel be it monetary or with frequent flyer miles. Should an airline require that a higher airfare be charged in order to upgrade with frequent flyer miles, the traveler is responsible for the fare difference.

8. Reservations should be scheduled a minimum of 21-days prior to a business trip. If travel is during peak travel periods such as President’s Day week, Spring Break, popular sporting events, general holidays or to warm destinations such as Florida and Arizona during the winter months, reservations should be made at least 60-days prior to travel if possible.
9. Travelers are not required to take connecting flights over non-stop flights. If the airfare is significantly less ($200 or more), taking a connection will be offered to the traveler by the travel department.

10. Time specific flights often are less expensive and will be offered to travelers by the official travel agency.

11. The official travel agency will offer alternate airports. Combined air/ground costs are to be less than if flying into the primary city.

12. Travelers are not required to extend business trips to include a Saturday night stay in order to obtain lower airfares. However, if a traveler chooses to extend their stay to include a Saturday night to reduce the cost of the airfare, the traveler will be reimbursed for weekend hotel expenses and per diem if they are less than what is saved on airfare. Savings must be documented on the travel invoice for the traveler by the official travel agency. Weekly travel reports are issued by Best Travel and sent to the Accounting department that reflects the airfare amount had the volunteer traveler not stayed over a Saturday night.

   Travelers should be aware that staying over a Saturday night is not always required for the lowest airfare. From many cities to Chicago, for example, the airfare is the same regardless of a Saturday night stay. If a Saturday night stay does not reduce the airfare, additional hotel nights and per diem are at the traveler’s expense.

13. If a traveler adds personal travel plans to an ADA paid-for travel itinerary, Best Travel will require a personal credit card at the time of ticketing to cover any additional airfare amount.

14. All airline tickets will be issued electronically whenever possible. Most airlines charge a fee for paper tickets. If a traveler wants a paper ticket, they are personally responsible for paying this fee.

15. The ADA will not reimburse airline-accessed fees for upgrading to premium seating. For example, first class, Economy Plus seating on United Airlines, etc. Typically these fees are accessed by airlines at the airport on the day of departure.

16. The ADA will reimburse funded travelers who elect to use private planes to attend ADA-sponsored meetings. Airfare will be reimbursed at the lowest applicable fare in the market flown for the meeting dates.

17. The Association currently supports American Airlines as the official airline for meeting travel to Chicago and other U.S. cities. Travelers attending ADA-sponsored meetings are encouraged to fly American whenever possible to enable the Association to receive discounted airfares and to earn complimentary travel that offsets higher airfares.

   The ADA also supports the use of more low cost airlines such as AirTran, Jet Blue, and Southwest. Typically these airlines do not have the same rigid rules and restrictions as the other major U.S. air carriers.

18. All airfares over the ADA’s established fare ceiling will be sent to the ADA’s travel manager for review. The travel manager will make recommendations as to alternate schedules and/or the use of Association earned complimentary tickets. Frequent flyer miles are not accrued on free tickets.
19. Frequent flyer miles earned during the course of ADA-funded business are the property of the traveler. A traveler’s frequent flyer preference, however, should not take precedence over the traveler’s flexibility in accepting significantly lower airfares on alternate airlines. It is suggested that the traveler sign up for each airline’s frequent flyer program.

If a traveler chooses to upgrade using frequent flyer miles and the airline chosen requires that a higher airfare be paid, the traveler is responsible for paying the airfare difference.

Travelers cannot use personal frequent flyer award tickets for ADA-funded travel and then submit for airfare reimbursement on their expense reimbursement forms.

20. Denied boarding compensation vouchers and other airline issued transportation credits are the property of the traveler and do not need to be reported to the Association. Travelers are permitted to volunteer for compensation if their trip mission will not be compromised in any way.

21. Alternatives to air travel such as Amtrak along the East Coast, or using personal or rental cars for trips of 3 hours one-way or less are acceptable provided the cost of the train or automobile does not exceed the cost of an airline ticket booked at the lowest available airfare. If the airfare would have been more economical, depending on the differential, the traveler may only be reimbursed an amount equal to the airfare.

22. In the event that an ADA-funded meeting trip ends early, travelers are encouraged to travel stand-by on earlier flights at no expense to the Association. For the airlines that charge a fee for stand-by travel, the ADA will pay the fee with an official airline or travel agency receipt submitted at the time of the expense reimbursement form.

23. All airline tickets will be charged to the ADA’s corporate credit card.

24. A maximum of 10 volunteer travelers will be allowed on the same flight.

25. Spouse travel will not be ADA-funded unless the Executive Director approves such travel. Per I.R.S. regulations, spouse travel costs will be added to W-2 or 1099 forms.

26. Any spouse or family airline tickets issued on a complimentary basis will be added to the traveler’s W-2 or 1099 forms at the lowest economy class fair market value of the ticket.

27. The purchase of travel insurance to provide life and accident coverage while traveling is not reimbursable since each traveler is covered by Association-provided insurance.

**ACCOUNTING FOR AIRFARE**

Once airfare is incurred, it will immediately be charged to the identified cost center in account 515199 (Airfare Open Expense Report). Upon receipt of the expense reports, the costs will be transferred out of account 515199 and into the appropriate account (e.g., 515101 Volunteer Airfare, 515102 Volunteer Site Travel Airfare, etc.). This process will allow department managers more timely information on airfare costs charged to their budgets since it is not dependent on the timing of submitting expense reimbursement requests. Expenses paid directly by the traveler can only be recorded after receipt of the approved expense form. In order for this process to work most efficiently, it is critical that the proper cost center is used both at the time of booking the travel via the volunteer travel forms and at the time the expense report is submitted. If the same cost center is not used, charges will not be properly reflected.
AUTO RENTAL

1. Travelers should use rental cars when they represent the most practical and economical means of out of town transportation. Rental cars should not be used if transportation is needed only between the airport and the hotel, and a shuttle service is available or a taxi or driving a personal automobile is less expensive.

2. Volunteer travelers requesting a car rental must receive prior authorization from their ADA meeting sponsor.

3. Hertz is the ADA’s official car rental company and will be used for all business rentals whenever possible. The ADA has negotiated special rates with Hertz.

4. The authorized car type is a mid-size (1 or 2 persons) vehicle or smaller. If more than 2 persons are in the same vehicle, a full-size car is authorized.

If a larger vehicle is rented over and above the standard car type, the traveler will be charged the difference between a mid-size and the vehicle size rented.

5. Car rentals are for business travel only and are not intended to cover business travel extended to a personal trip. The traveler is responsible for the personal portion of the trip.

6. The ADA insurance package covers traveler rental cars for business purposes. Therefore, decline the optional insurance coverage. Travelers may purchase the additional insurance options available at their own expense.

7. If a traveler is involved in an accident or vehicle theft while traveling on ADA-funded business, the following steps should be taken:
   - Notify authorities
   - Notify the car rental company
   - Notify the ADA staff person responsible for the volunteer’s meeting
   - Notify the travel department

8. Travelers should inspect rental car vehicles at the time of rental for damages and make a record of their observations, to protect against the supplier making unwarranted claims for damages.

9. Rental cars should be returned to the rental location with a full tank of gas. Rental car companies charge a premium to refill a rental vehicle.

10. Travelers should avoid dropping off rental cars at a location other than the one where it was picked up to avoid costly one-way drop charges.

11. The travel department will reserve all ADA business travel car rentals.

12. All car rentals will be charged to the traveler’s personal credit card. Travelers must obtain a rental receipt and attach to their expense reimbursement form.

13. To facilitate the rental car process all travelers are encouraged to sign up for the Hertz #1 Gold program. The annual fee has been waived for the ADA. Gold applications can be obtained from the travel department.

14. Frequent renter perks such as vehicle upgrades, etc. earned during the course of ADA-funded business travel are the property of the traveler.
15. Travelers are personally responsible for all parking and traffic fines incurred when traveling on ADA-funded business.

16. Reimbursable items include the actual cost of the rental, parking, tolls, and gasoline purchases.

PERSONAL AUTO USAGE

1. When a private auto represents the most practical means of travel, travelers will be reimbursed based on I.R.S. guidelines (currently 55 cents per mile). Tolls and parking will also be reimbursed with an original receipt for all amounts of $25 or more.

2. If a private auto is used for personal reasons when flying would have been more economical, Department Director approval is required. The Association will reimburse the cost of the lowest available economy/coach airfare unless there are extenuating circumstances.

3. Travelers are only authorized to use personal automobiles if they have both a current valid driver's license and comprehensive auto insurance, including liability.

4. Travelers are personally responsible for all parking and traffic fines incurred while traveling on ADA-funded business.

5. Reimbursable items include the standard mileage rate, parking, and tolls. Other car-related expenses such as gasoline or repairs will not be separately reimbursed since they are considered covered by the standard mileage rate.

TAXIS, AIRPORT LIMOUSINES AND OTHER GROUND TRANSPORTATION

1. Travelers will be reimbursed for taxis, airport shuttles, buses, etc., used for local transportation necessary for Association business activities. Original receipts are required for all amounts of $25 or more.

2. It is expected that each traveler use the best means of travel to and from airports, taking into consideration cost, time, and availability. For travel to and from airport(s) actual costs will be reimbursed.

3. Limousine service is only authorized when it is less than or equal to taxi transportation. If a traveler elects to use limousine service, they will be billed the difference between taxi service and the limousine rate.

4. The Association supports the use of rail service, especially via Amtrak on the East Coast. Coach class of service is approved. If traveling overnight, a sleeperette is authorized. The cost of using rail service must not exceed the cost of the lowest available economy/coach airfare unless there are extenuating circumstances. In the event that the cost of a rail ticket exceeds the cost of an airline ticket, the traveler will only be reimbursed an amount equal to the airfare.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

1. Travelers are encouraged to adjust travel schedules to minimize hotel costs. Arrange day trips when feasible and practical for ADA-funded business.

2. All hotel reservations for volunteers attending ADA-sponsored meetings in Chicago will be made through the ADA’s housing coordinator following the established housing procedures.
3. Frequent guest points earned during the course of ADA-funded business are the property of the traveler. A traveler’s frequent hotel guest preference, however, should not take precedence over the traveler’s flexibility in accepting significantly lower hotel rates at alternate hotels. It is suggested that the traveler sign up for each hotel chain’s frequent guest program.

4. When the ADA makes a hotel reservation it is guaranteed for late arrival with a corporate credit card. This card is not to be used as payment for traveler hotel charges. Each traveler should present a personal credit card at check-in and retain a bill of charges that should be submitted with the expense reimbursement form.

5. Some hotels require that a deposit of the first night’s room and tax be charged to a credit card when the reservation is made. This will be noted on the traveler’s travel invoice and should be noted on the expense reimbursement form in the —Paid with ADA Credit Card— column.

6. If a hotel reservation needs to be cancelled, it is the traveler’s responsibility to contact the travel department before the date and time that is noted on the travel invoice. In the event that this date and time falls on a weekend or holiday, the traveler should call the hotel directly to cancel the reservation. Be sure to get a cancellation number and agent’s name. The travel department should be advised of this information on the next business day. If a hotel reservation is not cancelled in time, the no-show fee will be charged to the traveler.

7. It is the traveler’s responsibility to confirm that the rate being charged at check-in is the same or less than the rate on the travel invoice. It is often a good idea to ask at check-in if a lower rate has become available since the original reservation was made.

8. A single room rate (plus tax) is the standard rate approved by the ADA. If a hotel rate is higher because of extra guest(s) in the room, the traveler is responsible for the rate difference.

9. Charges for personal items such as in-room movies are not reimbursable by the Association. Early checks out fees, if charged by the hotel, are not reimbursable unless prior approval is obtained as per instances of meetings ending early and savings occur from the early hotel departure.

10. If business travel is combined with personal travel, the traveler is responsible for the personal hotel nights.

11. Tips to hotel bell staff and housekeeping services will come out of the volunteer’s daily per diem.

12. A hotel or motel folio (statement) is required for all overnight stays and must show a zero ($0) dollar balance. The hotel statement should be attached to the expense reimbursement form.

INDIVIDUAL MEALS

Volunteer travelers will receive a per diem of $75 for every day of official ADA-funded business. This rate is intended to defray the out-of-pocket expenses for meals, gratuities, and other incidental expenses. Documentation for volunteer traveler meals is not required as their $75 per diem covers such expenses.

CHECKED BAGGAGE FEES

If traveling on ADA-funded business, the ADA will reimburse the fee charged to check a single piece of luggage. A receipt is required. If traveling on ADA-funded business for five days or more, the ADA will reimburse the fee assessed for checking a second piece of baggage, if charged by the airline. A receipt is required for reimbursement. These baggage fees will not be deducted from a volunteer’s per diem allowance. These fees cannot be charged to the ADA credit card that was used to purchase the traveler’s airline ticket.
VALET AND LAUNDRY SERVICES

A minimum length of six nights is required for expense reimbursement. In such cases reasonable personal valet and laundry services will be reimbursed while a traveler is away from home on Association business. Any emergency situation outside this policy should be explained for consideration of reimbursement.

TELEPHONE EXPENSES

1. Business and personal phone call expenses for volunteer travelers will come out of their $75 daily per diem during ADA-funded business trips.

2. Internet access from hotel rooms can also be very expensive. The Association expects the traveler to exercise good business judgment in incurring such expenses.

3. The ADA will not reimburse for the purchase or installation of a cellular telephone or fax machine for volunteer travelers.

NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Personal entertainment expenses such as in-room movies.
- Personal services such as barber, hairstylist, shoeshine, health club, and spa.
- Personal expenses for family, child, pet, home, and property care while traveling on ADA-funded business.
- Personal items including clothing, luggage, and reading materials.
- Lost items (extenuating circumstances must be approved by the Executive Director).
- Hotel room charges for on-line computer access for personal use.
- Airline tickets not obtained through the ADA’s official travel agency
- Airline club memberships, rental car memberships, etc.
- Airline-accessed upgrade fees for premium seating.
- Airline-accessed excess baggage fees.
- Annual personal credit card fees.
- Cost of gifts or souvenirs.
- Normal transportation (commuting) from home to work.

EXPENSE REPORTING

1. Expense reimbursement forms for volunteer travelers must be completed within 30 days of the completion of the trip or by year-end (contact Accounting for specific date in January) whichever date is earlier. Forms submitted after 30 days will require senior management approval. Failure to file timely expense reports may result in the ADA’s refusal to reimburse a volunteer for business expenses. Alternatively, expense forms not accounted for within this specific time period may be added to the traveler’s W-2 or 1099 as required by the I.R.S.

2. Expense reimbursement forms for international travel must be submitted in U.S. dollars whenever possible according to the guidelines above.
3. All expenses of $25 or more require an original receipt. Original receipts for lesser amounts should also be provided if available. Required receipts include, but are not limited to, credit card or cash register receipts, airline tickets, hotel folio plus proof of payment (i.e., a $0 balance), car rental receipt plus proof of payment, gasoline, cab fares, and parking fees. Original receipts rather than copies or credit card statements are required. Receipts for a volunteer's $75 per diem are not required.

4. Volunteer traveler expense reimbursement forms should be sent to their meeting contact at the ADA with proper receipts within 30 days of travel. The meeting contact will review and the staff person with budget responsibility will approve and forward to Accounting for payment.

5. Only original signatures will be accepted as valid authorization on the expense reimbursement form. Signature stamps and —delegated signersll are not acceptable.

6. If under exceptional circumstances, a volunteer is unable to furnish a receipt, an explanation should be attached to the expense reimbursement form. The Accounting Department will have the responsibility of deciding the adequacy of the documentation.

7. All properly approved and documented reimbursement requests should be submitted to Accounts Payable. Reimbursement will be made via direct deposit if so directed by the volunteer; otherwise a check will be issued.

8. Narrative explanations of activities, expenses, etc. are necessary to assist those reviewing and processing the expense reimbursement form to understand the nature of items that may not otherwise be readily apparent. If there is insufficient room on the form, please attach another sheet of paper.

Volunteer Travel and Expense Policy Last Update: March 30, 2009