

EATONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT PER DIEM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1: What is per diem?

A1: Per diem is a method of providing reimbursement for meals consumed by a person who is in travel status. It provides a flat rate for meals based on the destination of travel.

Q2: What is the advantage of per diem?

A2: Using per diem rates that have been established simplifies the employee travel claim process. You no longer need to keep receipts for meals that you consume while in travel status. You simply receive the flat rate based on your destination. This means fewer things to keep track of – a lost receipt for a meal is no longer an issue.

Q3: Who sets the per diem rates?

A3: The United States General Services Administration, GSA, sets the rates for the continental United States using their own established methodologies. We have chosen to utilize these rates as they are readily available and are used as a standard for providing these rates.

Q4: How will I know what the per diem rate is for where I'm going?

A4: Prior to travel, preferably when submitting a travel request, you would go to www.gsa.gov and search for "Per Diem Rates" on the menu on the main screen. The link is <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>.

This screen pops up:

Zooming in,

Per Diem Rates

www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877

Apps | eatonville.wednet.edu bookmarks | WESPaC - Logon | Skyward Login | Revised Code of Wa... | Washington

Download

SEARCH BY CITY, STATE OR ZIP CODE (current fiscal year)

Enter your City OR Enter your ZIP Code **FIND PER DIEM RATES**

Select a State

SEARCH BY STATE

Find Rates for: Fiscal Year 2015 (Current Year) ▼

The Department of Defense sets for rates for Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. Territories, and Possessions (OCONUS rates.) [Visit DoD Site >](#)

The State Department sets Foreign rates. [Visit State Dept Site >](#)

If you type in, for example, Seattle, the following screen pops up:

Per Diem Rates Look-Up

www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120

Apps | eatonville.wednet.edu bookmarks | WESPaC - Logon | Skyward Login | Revised Code of Wa... | Washington Admini... | EDS Login | CRISC | eCFR

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Home > Policy & Regulations > Travel and Relocation Policy > Per Diem > Per Diem Rates >

FY 2015 Per Diem Rates for Seattle, Washington

(October 2014 - September 2015)

SEARCH BY CITY, STATE OR ZIP CODE

Enter your City Enter your ZIP Code **FIND PER DIEM RATES**

Washington [Per Diem Map >](#)

Cities not appearing below may be located within a county for which rates are listed.
To determine what county a city is located in, visit the [National Association of Counties \(NACo\) website \(a non-federal website\)](#).

The following rates apply for Seattle, Washington

Primary Destination* (1)	County (2, 3)	Max lodging by Month (excluding taxes)												Meals & Inc. Exp.**
		2014			2015									
		Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	
Seattle	King	156	156	156	156	156	156	156	156	190	190	190	156	71

* NOTE: Traveler reimbursement is based on the location of the work activities and not the accommodations, unless lodging is not available at the work activity, then the agency may authorize the rate where lodging is obtained.
** Meals and Incidental Expenses, see [Breakdown of M&IE Expenses](#) for important information on first and last days of travel.

The rate for “Meals & Incidental Expenses” (the far right number, in this case 71) is the per diem rate for a full day based on your destination. There is a “Breakdown of M&IE Expenses” link (see the bottom of the screenshot, above), that takes you to the following page:

Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) Breakdown

The separate amounts for breakfast, lunch and dinner listed in the chart are provided should you need to deduct any of those meals from your trip voucher. For example, if your trip includes meals that are already paid for by the government (such as through a registration fee for a conference), you will need to deduct those meals from your voucher. Refer to [Section 301-11.18 of the Federal Travel Regulation](#) for specific guidance on deducting these amounts from your per diem reimbursement claims for meals furnished to you by the government. Other organizations may have different rules that apply for their employees; please check with your organization for more assistance.

The table lists the six M&IE tiers in the lower 48 continental United States (currently ranging from \$46 to \$71). If you need to deduct a meal amount, first determine the location where you will be working while on official travel. You can look up the location-specific information at www.gsa.gov/perdiem. The M&IE rate for your location will be one of the six tiers listed on this table. Find the corresponding amount on the first line of the table (M&IE Total) and then look below for each specific meal deduction amount.

The table also lists the portion of the M&IE rate that is provided for incidental expenses (currently \$5 for all tiers).

Total	Continental Breakfast/ Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	IE
\$46	\$7	\$11	\$23	\$5
\$51	\$8	\$12	\$26	\$5
\$56	\$9	\$13	\$29	\$5
\$61	\$10	\$15	\$31	\$5
\$66	\$11	\$16	\$34	\$5
\$71	\$12	\$18	\$36	\$5

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- FedRooms®
- Travel E-mail Notification
- POV Mileage Reimbursement Rates

GOVERNMENT LINKS

- Fire Safety Information

This chart is very important for reference because it shows the effective per diem rate for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, plus the \$5 that is allowable for incidental expenses. Continuing our Seattle example, the breakdown (on the bottom line) is \$12 for Breakfast, \$18 for Lunch, and \$36 for Dinner, with \$5 for Incidentals.

Q5: I am attending a conference where some of my meals will be provided. Am I eligible to receive per diem for these meals? What if I choose not to eat at the conference?

A5: If you are attending a conference and meals are included in the registration fees, you will need to deduct those meals from the maximum per diem rate that you can receive. This is true *regardless of whether you eat at the conference or not*. As long as the meal is provided in registration fees, you must deduct the meal amount from the per diem rate. Continuing with our Seattle example, if the conference provides dinner, you would deduct the \$36 from your per diem rate, meaning your maximum reimbursement is now \$35. Special rules apply to the first and last day of travel; see question #7.

Q6: Am I required to spend the full amount? What if I spend over the amount?

A6: You are not required to spend the full per diem amount on meals. There is no reduction by not spending the full amount, except in the cases of the first/last day of travel (see question #6). Similarly, if you spend over the listed per diem amount (for example, \$20 for breakfast, \$30 for lunch and a dinner that runs \$60), you only receive the total amount listed for per diem. Any excess is non-reimbursable.

Q7: What is special about the first and last day of travel?

A7: Per GSA guidelines, the first and last day of travel are limited to a maximum of 75% of the eligible per diem rate. Any days in-between those dates are eligible for the full rate, but the first and last are limited to 75%.

Continuing our Seattle example, the first and last day of travel are limited to 75% of \$71, which is \$53.25. Any meals are deducted at the full rate. For example, a conference in Seattle provides for dinner on the first day (but not lunch or breakfast). The maximum per diem amount would be \$71 (Seattle rate) times 75% (first day) minus \$36 (for dinner), for a final total of \$17.25. If the conference also provided lunch, an additional \$18 would need to be deducted, which reduces the per diem amount to \$0.

Q8: How do I submit travel claims and get the per diem rate?

A8: New travel claim forms are being developed that will have the per diem rates built in and the 75% rules already included. You will need to look up the rate on the GSA website for where you are going and enter that into the form. Instructions are being written to go alongside the travel claim forms.

Q9: Will I know in advance of traveling what my estimated per diem reimbursement will be?

A9: In addition to a travel claim form, we are developing a travel authorization form. This form will have the per diem amounts factored in as well, meaning you will have an advance idea of what your per diem reimbursement amount will be.

Q10: Can I get an advance on my per diem allowance?

A10: The board has authorized us to set up a travel advance account. When you fill out the travel authorization form, you can indicate that you want to receive an advance on your per diem amount. The amount will be advanced at the effective rate and will be based on the rate in effect for the travel destination. Requests for travel advances for conferences should include a conference registration brochure that will outline what meals the conference is providing, so that the appropriate reductions can take place (see question 5).

Travel advances are subject to board policy. If you do not travel, or if the actual final per diem amount is less than the amount that you were advanced, you will be required to repay the district for the difference. For example, if you receive an advance for a full day of travel and it is later determined that the conference included lunch in the registration, you would need to repay the district the lunch rate for the destination (\$18 in our continuing Seattle example).

Q11: I used my personal credit card to pay for meals while attending a conference. Because of the timing of my travel, I missed this month's cutoff for reimbursement as a part of the normal payable cycle. Since my credit card will come due before the end of the next month, is it possible to get reimbursed earlier?

A11: The advance travel account can also be used in these situations. If you used a personal credit card while traveling, you may submit a reimbursement claim **for per diem only** and we can pay for it out of the advance travel account. You may still submit a claim and have it paid for out of the regular payable cycle at the end of the month. As there is only a limited amount in the travel advance account, we ask that if you can submit through the normal reimbursement process (end of month payables) that you please do so.