

2013-2016 - GCFA Episcopal Fund Travel Expense Reimbursement Policies

“There shall be a Council of Bishops composed of all the bishops of The United Methodist Church. The council shall meet at least once a year and plan for the general oversight and promotion of the temporal and spiritual interests of the entire Church and for carrying into effect the rules, regulations, and responsibilities prescribed and enjoined by the General Conference and in accord with the provisions set for in this Plan of Union.” ¶ 45. *Article III*. “A retired bishop is a bishop of the Church in every respect and continues to function as a member of the Council of Bishops in accordance with the Constitution and other provisions of *The Discipline*” (¶409).

1. The Episcopal Fund shall pay the travel expenses of all members of the Council of Bishops to meetings of the Council of Bishops, the College of Bishops, authorized committee meetings, and special assignments as a representative of the Council of Bishops. Expenses of the COB President related to the office of the presidency will be paid and accounted for separately.
2. To assist episcopal offices and annual conferences who carry expenses for the bishop until reimbursements are received, each jurisdictional episcopal area office, beginning January 1, 2009, can request a one-time \$1000 advance. The advance will be held by the episcopal office as a separate fund that can be used to pay expenses that subsequently will be reimbursed from the Episcopal Fund by GCFA upon the receipt of monthly expense statements with adequate documentation. This \$1000 advance will be repaid by December 31 in the last year of the quadrennium.
3. The cost of each effective bishop's or COB staff (including the COB Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships (OCUIR), COB Executive Secretary, and COB Ecumenical Officer) official travel, in accordance with policies determined by the council, shall be paid upon the presentation of an itemized monthly expense statement provided to the council by the 30th of the following month. Expenses must be submitted within 60 days (jurisdiction) or 90 days (central) to be considered for reimbursement.
4. The supporting data required by the GCFA are the customer's copies of airline tickets, itemized receipted hotel/motel and meal bills. Receipts or daily logs including date, location, business purpose, means, and cost are acceptable documentation for meals and minor miscellaneous expenses under \$75. Bishops may request an advance for international travel to be liquidated by submission of monthly travel expense vouchers before any new advance is made available.
5. Air travel is normally by the most economical coach fare available. For international travel involving a one-way trip in excess of 3,000 miles, an additional day's lodging and meals expense each way shall be reimbursed.
6. Travel expense to annual, semiannual, or executive committee meetings of United Methodist general agencies to which the bishop or COB staff are assigned by the Council of Bishops or the General Conference shall be charged to the Episcopal Fund. Expenses of travel to committee, task force, or programmatic function meetings of a general agency or for other agency-related purposes shall be charged to that agency. Expenses for bishops assigned to task groups or special committees legislated by General Conference to represent the Council of Bishops

- shall have their expenses paid from the budget allocated for the program or project.
7. Travel expenses for international travel or global visitation, as authorized by the Council of Bishops, are paid from the Episcopal Fund on the submission of an expense report accompanied by required supporting documents. After it has determined the travel schedule of its members on international travel or global visitation, the Council of Bishops shall certify such authorized travel to the GCFA to qualify incurred expenses for payment from the Episcopal Fund.
 8. If, in connection with travel paid from the Episcopal Fund, a bishop or COB staff wishes to travel elsewhere for work for which expenses are not chargeable to the Episcopal Fund under provisions of this report, arrangements for reimbursements for expenses related to the extended stay or additional travel should be made with the agencies involved.
 9. Authorized travel of bishops or COB staff to meetings of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, the World Council of Churches, the Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council, and the Consultation on Church Union shall be charged to the travel fund of the Interdenominational Cooperation Fund.
 10. Bishops' expenses to attend Consultations of Pan-Methodist Bishops for the continent in which they reside shall be paid from the Episcopal Fund.
 11. Ebony Bishops expenses to attend the National Black Methodist Church Renewal Conference once every two years.
 12. Bishops who are assigned to groups formed by General Conference of a church-wide nature, such as the Hispanic Plan, shall be charged to the Episcopal Fund.
 13. Travel incurred by bishops or COB staff in the discharge of responsibilities relating to the General Conference.
 14. For bishops elected by jurisdictional conferences, travel expenses to jurisdictional meetings of committees, commissions, or task forces to which the bishop is assigned by the College of Bishops may be charged to the Episcopal Fund. For bishops elected by central conferences, travel expenses to central conference meetings of committees, commissions, or task forces to which the bishop is assigned by the central conference may be charged to the Episcopal Fund. When provisions of *The Book of Discipline 2012* mandate involvement of the bishop, expenses shall be paid from the Episcopal Fund.
 15. Expenses of travel to seminaries within continental boundaries to counsel with students from within the area or for recruitment purposes shall be charged to the Episcopal Fund as area travel.
 16. Travel to boards of trustees or directors' meetings of United Methodist-related colleges, seminaries, or institutions may be charged to the Episcopal Fund only when membership in such bodies is affected by action of the General Conference, jurisdictional conference, Council of Bishops, College of Bishops, or an annual conference or conferences of the episcopal area. Expenses of travel to meetings of

such boards of trustees or directors in which membership is by virtue of election by the board of trustees or directors are not to be charged to the Episcopal Fund.

17. Mileage rates or other reimbursement for the costs of travel by car shall be determined by the GCFA. When the round trip distance outside the episcopal area exceeds 1,000 miles for any one round trip, the cost of transportation shall be paid either on the actual mileage or at the most economical airfare available, whichever is the lesser amount.
18. Central conference bishops' area travel by automobile shall be reimbursed for mileage/kilometers in accordance of the approved benchmarks set by GCFA per country. No fuel or repair expenses will be paid.

• Rotary International Scale

19. Central conference bishops' travel expenses related to hotels and car hires will be reimbursed in accordance of approved benchmarks set by GCFA per country.

GCFA Adopted- 11/19/2009

20. When a bishop or COB staff is issued an invitation from another annual conference to be a speaker, preacher, or provide any leadership experience, all related expenses are the responsibility of the inviting/hosting annual conference.
21. In the case of the death of a bishop, a bishop's spouse, or a surviving spouse of a bishop, the following persons shall be eligible to attend the memorial service at the expense of the Episcopal Fund:
 - a) All members of the College of Bishops, active or retired, to which the bishop belonged, and in central conferences, episcopal members of the central conference to which the bishop belonged.
 - b) The president of the Council of Bishops, or a representative designated by the president.
 - c) Bishops who are participants in the memorial service.
 - d) A bishop who is officially designated by a College of Bishops to represent it.
22. The surviving spouse or a family member of the bishop invited by the Council of Bishops shall be entitled to the payment of expenses to attend the bishop's memorial service held at the Council of Bishops' meeting.
23. The following expenses are not to be charged to the Episcopal Fund:

Commuting expenses between residence and office. These expenses, by IRS rules, are not reimbursable items from any entity.

Travel expenses for addresses and lectures for which an honorarium is received

Expenses of travel to meetings of learned and fraternal societies

Gifts

Spouse's expenses when accompanying the bishop on episcopal travel.
24. The travel expenses of a newly elected bishop and spouse to the assigned area for the purpose of visiting the episcopal residence and area office shall be reimbursed. The Episcopal Fund shall also pay expenses of the spouse of a newly elected bishop to attend one experience of the Council of Bishops' orientation for newly elected bishops.

25. No episcopal area travel expenses over \$30,000 annually will be paid from the Episcopal Fund, beginning January 1, 2009.

COB Finance Committee Adopted 12.2008

26. Connectional Table Episcopal Member Expense Policy

1. Chairperson: Travel expenses to Connectional Table regular and advisory team meetings only incurred by the chair of the Connectional Table shall be reimbursed by the Episcopal Fund, assuming that chairperson is a bishop. Other travel expenses related to the work of the Connectional Table shall be reimbursed by funds from the Connectional Table.
 2. Board/Agency Representatives: Travel expenses to Connectional Table Meetings incurred by the presidents and general secretaries of the boards and agencies (including bishops), General Board of Church and Society, General Board of Discipleship, General Board of Global Ministries, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, General Commission on Religion and Race, General Commission on Status and Role of Women, General Commission on United Methodist Men, General Commission on Communications, and General Commission on Archives and History, and the General Council on Finance and Administration, shall be reimbursed by their respective agencies.
 3. Racial-Ethnic Caucuses: Travel expenses to Connectional Table Meetings incurred by members from each of the racial ethnic caucuses (including bishops) as elected by the Connectional Table upon nomination from: Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Methodists Associated to Represent Hispanic Americans, Native American International Caucus, National Federation of Asian American United Methodists, and Pacific Islanders National Caucus United Methodist shall be reimbursed from funds of the Connectional Table.
 4. Ecumenical Officer: Travel expenses to Connectional Table Meetings incurred by the Ecumenical Officer shall be reimbursed by the Episcopal Fund.
27. Special Quadrennial Assignments for the COB Four Areas of Focus and the Imagine No Malaria Program

The Episcopal Fund will pay for the travel expenses for bishops assigned to do the extra work for any of the Four Areas of Focus and the Imagine No Malaria program when they attend inter-agency collaboration team meetings in that role. The travel expenses will be paid for two meetings per year for each of the bishops assigned to those meetings other than such meetings which occur along with meetings of the Council of Bishops or the Forum of Bishops.

COB Finance Committee Approved – 5/9/2013
GCFA Adopted 8/15/2013

28. “Continuing Education Funds”, with a maximum of \$2500 annually per bishop, will be paid by the Episcopal Fund for approved continuing education experiences that meet the guidelines as defined by the Council of Bishops Finance Committee and approved by the Council of Bishops.

COB Finance Committee Minutes – 11/2009

29. A maximum fee of \$100 will be paid by the Episcopal Fund for one business credit card annually.

COB Finance Committee Minutes – 11/2009
GCFA Adopted- 11/19/2009