

APPENDIX D: Rules Governing Council Expenses and Reimbursements

ARTICLE I: Purpose and Scope

Section 1: The Rio Grande Valley Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO (“the Council”), and its officers, delegates, employees, and authorized representatives share a fiduciary responsibility to expend Council funds prudently, lawfully, and solely in furtherance of the objectives of the Council and the AFL-CIO.

Section 2: This Appendix is adopted pursuant to Article XII of the Council Constitution and shall serve as the Council’s official written rules governing expenses and reimbursement, as required by the AFL-CIO Rules Governing Area Labor Councils and Central Labor Councils.

Section 3: Compliance with this appendix is mandatory for all officers, delegates, employees, committees, and any individual authorized to incur expenses or seek reimbursement from the Council.

Section 4: This appendix supersedes all prior expense and reimbursement policies, resolutions, practices, or interpretations except where a prior policy has been expressly incorporated herein.

ARTICLE II: Budget and Spending Authority

Section 1: The Council shall adopt an annual budget identifying anticipated income and expenditures. The approved budget shall constitute standing authorization for routine expenditures consistent with this Appendix.

Section 2: Any expenditure that exceeds or falls outside the approved budget requires specific authorization by the Executive Board or the delegate body prior to being incurred.

ARTICLE III: Authorization of Expenses

Section 1: All expenses must be authorized prior to being incurred. Expenses incurred without prior authorization may be denied reimbursement.

Section 2: Authorization may be provided through:

- A. The adopted annual budget
- B. Action of the Executive Board
- C. Action of the Delegate Body

Section 3: Travel undertaken by an elected officer while conducting official Council business shall be considered authorized, provided such travel is reasonable,

necessary, and within the approved budget. All such travel remains subject to documentation, review, and compliance with this Appendix.

Section 4: Authorization shall not be granted retroactively except in extraordinary circumstances and only with the approval of the Executive Board.

Section 5: In urgent circumstances where prior authorization is not practicable, including but not limited to emergencies arising from severe weather, transportation disruptions, or safety concerns, the President and Secretary-Treasurer jointly may authorize necessary expenditures, subject to ratification by the Executive Board at its next meeting.

ARTICLE IV: Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Section 1: To be eligible for payment or reimbursement, expenses must be:

- A. Incurred for legitimate Council business
- B. Reasonable and necessary
- C. Consistent with the approved budget and authorization

Section 2: Expenses that are personal, excessive, convenience-based, inadequately documented, or otherwise inconsistent with this Appendix are not reimbursable.

Section 3: Incurring an expense does not create an entitlement to reimbursement. All reimbursements are discretionary and subject to review and approval in accordance with this Appendix.

Section 4: Any officer, delegate, employee, or authorized representative may voluntarily decline to request reimbursement for an otherwise eligible expense.

- A. No individual shall be required to seek reimbursement for expenses incurred on behalf of the Council, and such voluntary waiver shall not create precedent or expectation for future expenses or for other individuals.

ARTICLE V: Reimbursement Procedures and Documentation

Section 1: All reimbursements shall be made through a voucher system. Each voucher shall include:

- A. The name of the person or organization to be paid
- B. The amount requested
- C. A description of the expense and its Council purpose
- D. The date or dates that the expense was incurred

Section 2: Original, itemized receipts and supporting documentation must accompany all reimbursement requests. Credit card slips alone are not sufficient documentation.

- A. If original receipts cannot be provided, a written explanation must accompany the request. Submission of an explanation does not guarantee reimbursement.

Section 3: Reimbursement requests should be submitted within thirty (30) days of the expense being incurred. Requests submitted after that period may be denied unless good cause is shown.

ARTICLE VI: Meals and Incidental Expenses

Section 1: Meals and incidental expenses shall be reimbursed only when incurred in connection with authorized Council business and supported by original, itemized receipts.

Section 2: Reimbursement for business meals must include:

- A. Original itemized receipts
- B. The names and organizations of individuals covered
- C. The business purpose of the meal

Section 3: Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable

Section 4: For Texas AFL-CIO Executive Board meetings, state conferences, conventions, and leadership academies, meal reimbursement may be provided on a per diem basis at the applicable IRS rate for the location, in lieu of receipt-based reimbursement, where such per diem reimbursement has been authorized by Council policy.

- A. Except as expressly authorized, per diem reimbursement shall not apply.

ARTICLE VII: Travel and Lodging

Section 1: Travel and lodging expenses must be reasonable, necessary, and incurred in connection with authorized Council business. Reimbursement shall be limited to the most economical reasonable rate available.

Section 2: Lodging reimbursement is limited to the cost of a standard single-occupancy room at the official conference hotel or a comparably priced accommodation, not to exceed the applicable conference or negotiated rate, unless specifically authorized in advance by the Executive Board.

- A. Voluntary room sharing is encouraged as a cost-saving measure. When two authorized attendees voluntarily share a room, the Council may reimburse the full room cost up to the applicable conference or negotiated rate, and allocate the expense between reimbursement requests.

- B. Room upgrades, suites, premium views, early arrival, late departure, or other non-standard accommodations are not reimbursable unless specifically authorized in advance.
- C. Fees or charges resulting from cancellations, no-shows, or failure to timely cancel reservations are not reimbursable unless the cancellation resulted from circumstances beyond the individual's control and was promptly reported.

Section 3: Air travel shall be economy class. Ground transportation shall be reimbursed at the most economical reasonable rate.

- A. Use of a personal vehicle shall be reimbursed at the standard mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service and in effect on the date of travel. Mileage reimbursement covers fuel or electric charging, maintenance, insurance, and vehicle wear and tear; no separate reimbursement shall be provided.
- B. When mileage reimbursement exceeds the cost of available airfare or other reasonable transportation, reimbursement may be limited to the lesser amount unless otherwise authorized.

Section 4: When travel includes both Council business and personal activity, only the portion directly attributable to authorized Council business shall be reimbursable. The burden of documentation rests with the individual seeking reimbursement.

ARTICLE VIII: Credit and Debit Cards

Section 1: The Council may issue credit cards for authorized Council business. Credit cards shall not be used for personal expenditures. All charges must comply with this Appendix and be supported by original, itemized receipts.

- A. Unauthorized or improper use may result in denial of reimbursement and further review by the Executive Board or Trustees.

Section 2: The Council shall not use debit cards.

ARTICLE IX: Financial Reporting, Audits, and Bonding

Section 1: The Council shall file all required AFL-CIO reports, file IRS Form 990 and other required filings by applicable deadlines, and provide written financial reports at each Executive Board and delegate meeting.

Section 2: The Trustees shall review the Council's financial records on a quarterly basis and report their findings to the Executive Board and delegate body.

- A. If the Council has annual receipts of \$200,000 or more, agreed-upon procedures shall be performed by an independent certified public accountant as required by the AFL-CIO.

Section 3: All officers, agents, and employees with financial responsibility shall be bonded in accordance with AFL-CIO requirements.

ARTICLE X: Administration, Enforcement, and Appeals

Section 1: The Secretary-Treasurer shall have primary responsibility for reviewing reimbursement requests for compliance with this Appendix. The Trustees shall provide oversight through periodic review.

Section 2: Reimbursement requests that do not comply with this Appendix may be denied. Repeated or intentional violations may be referred to the Executive Board or Trustees for appropriate action.

Section 3: Any denial of reimbursement may be appealed to the Executive Board, whose decision shall be final.

Section 4: Actions taken in good faith by the Secretary-Treasurer and Trustees in administering this Appendix shall be presumed valid unless clearly shown to violate higher governing authority.

ARTICLE XI: Effect

Section 1: This Appendix shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

Section 2: If any provision of this Appendix is held invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.