**Public Health and Healthcare Preparedness Academy 2017**

**Field Epidemiology Seminar**

***Frequently Asked Travel Questions***

1. ***What resources will be provided to fund attendance at the Academy?***
2. Federal Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) funds will be used to reimburse travel costs for up to THREE VEHICLES per district(one round trip each) and sufficient OVERNIGHT STAYS to accommodate the intended audience (UP TO SEVEN ROOMS per night).

The targeted district attendees include Health Directors, Emergency Coordinators, Epidemiologists, Volunteer Coordinators, a MRC volunteer, a communicable disease nurse, and a district designated Public Information Officer. Also the the regional epidemiologists, emergency coordinators and PIOs. It is the responsibility of the health district to coordinate travel and attendance for participants to take advantage of the funding being made available.

1. ***Do standard travel policies apply for the academy?***
2. Yes. You must follow all standard travel policies regarding use of state vehicles, rental cars, Travel Authorization Request Forms (and supporting documents) and reimbursement rates for personal vehicles.

***Q. When and where do travel reimbursement requests need to be submitted?***

**A.** **All** travel reimbursement requests need to be keyed by COB June 19th – **no exceptions**. Any travel reimbursements keyed after this deadline will be the responsibility of the District/Office. We recognize and apologize for short turn-around time. To expedite the reimbursement process, project code VDH96394 has been established for Districts/Offices to process their own travel.

1. ***Can hotel accommodations be direct billed to the Office of Risk Communication and Education or the Office of Emergency Preparedness?***
2. No. All hotel and vehicle arrangements are the responsibility of the attendee. VDH attendees will be provided with the applicable accounting codes to include on their Travel Reimbursement forms.
3. ***Will VDH reimburse for lodging if stay is not at the designated hotel?***
4. Yes, VDH will reimburse at any hotel up to the GSA lodging rate of $91/night. Anything above the per diem rate is the employee’s responsibility.

***Q. If I make my reservation late and the rate is higher will I still be reimbursed?***

1. Yes, VDH will reimburse at any hotel up to the GSA lodging rate of $91. Anything above the GSA lodging rate for Fredericksburg is the responsibility of the attendee.

***Q. If we use a state or rental vehicle, does that count as one of the three vehicles?***

1. Yes. If you use a state vehicle, we will cover the fuel. If you rent a car, we will cover the rental and the fuel costs. If you use your personal vehicle, we will reimburse at the applicable rate.
2. ***Who can spend the night (and which night can they spend)?***
3. The Academy begins at 11:00 a.m. on May 31st so morning travel to Fredericksburg is feasible for many. However, lodging and per diem for May 30th will be covered for those travelers whose base office is more than 150 miles from the Fredericksburg Expo Center - or more than 100 miles for people registered to attend one of the pre-preconference sessions. Lodging can be at the designated Fredericksburg hotels or another hotel on the way as long as it is at the per diem rate for that area.

Lodging and per diem will be covered for May 31st for travelers whose base office is more than 50 miles away from the Fredericksburg Expo Center. Travelers whose base office is 50 miles or less from the Fredericksburg Expo Center will be reimbursed for miles traveled above normal commute mileage.

Lodging and per diem is approved for the evening of June 1st for staff attending the Field Epidemiology Seminar on June 2nd.

Lodging and per diem for June 2nd will be covered for those travelers that are over 100 miles between their base office and Fredericksburg Expo Center. Lodging can be at a Fredericksburg hotel or another hotel on the way home as long as it is at or below the lodging rate for that area.

* 1. ***My district has an Epidemiologist/ communicable disease nurse and PIO that is not funded by Preparedness grant funds. Can this person attend the Academy or the Field Epi Seminar?***
1. Yes. Funding will be provided for one communicable disease nurse in addition to the grant funded epidemiologist, AND one district designated PIO. Funding is also approved for the MRC Coordinator and a volunteer from each MRC unit. Any appropriate staff member may attend and benefit from the grant-sponsored training if it is appropriate for their job duties, approved by district leadership and funded by the district. Again, the health district should plan and determine who is most appropriate to attend each day’s events.
2. ***Can only Preparedness funded staff attend the Field Epi Seminar?***
3. No. The Field Epi Seminar is open to any staff the health district deems appropriate. Health district staff must have prior approval from their supervisor. The Field Epi Seminar is scheduled from 9:00 to 4:15 to allow travel that morning. If your district has a van and wants to send your entire epi response team for the day, that is okay. There is no limit in attendance to the Field Epi Seminar (up to our maximum room capacity of 450). You may be reimbursed the travel expense for use of this van, but it will count as one of the THREE vehicles eligible for reimbursement.

**Note:** You may extend an invitation to your partners outside VDH to ride with you in a state or rental vehicle if it would help them attend the seminar. Please make sure all attendees register for the event. VDH WILL NOT reimburse for any travel costs for those outside the Agency.

***Q. Are meals provided?***

1. Lunch will be provided on May 31st and June 1st and employees will NOT be reimbursed for lunch expenses on that day. Employees approved for overnight travel will be reimbursed for other travel-related expenses in accordance with the Commonwealth Accounting Policies and Procedures (CAPP) Manual. Employees staying in hotels that provide breakfast will not be reimbursed for breakfast expenses.
2. ***Are employees traveling to and from the meeting each day eligible for meal per diem reimbursement?***

**A.** No. Travel-related expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with the Commonwealth Accounting Policies and Procedures (CAPP) Manual.

1. ***Are employees traveling to and from the meeting each day eligible for mileage reimbursement?***
2. Yes. Employees are eligible for travel reimbursement for mileage greater than their standard commute mileage. All applicable policies and procedures apply.

***Q. How many cars will be funded per regional office?***

1. Carpooling is expected of regional team members attending the same portions of the meeting.

***Q. If I forget to register for the meeting will I still be able to attend?***

1. Yes, if space is available. If you do not register and we do not have any seats, you will be responsible for your own lodging and travel expenses.

***Q. If I forget to register for a pre-conference session, will I still be able to attend?***

1. No. Seating is limited and you must pre-register to attend one of these sessions.

***Q. Which Central Office and regional staff will be reimbursed for travel?***

1. All preparedness grant funded positions will be reimbursed for travel.