



# American Guild of Organists

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS AND THE AMERICAN ORGANIST MAGAZINE  
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## MEMORANDUM

TO: AGO Volunteer Leadership

FROM: James E. Thomashower, Executive Director

RE: Policies and procedures regarding reimbursement of expenses for travel, lodging, and meals

DATE: November 7, 2017

### Reimbursement Policies

The annual budgets for volunteer leadership (National Council, Board of Regional Councillors, and Committees) allow for the reimbursement of reasonable expenses for travel, lodging, meals and certain other incidentals incurred by volunteers while on Guild business away from home. Always request reimbursements using the forms provided by AGO Headquarters, and please include receipts for expenses over \$10. Checks for reimbursement will be issued within 30 days. You may request reimbursement in advance of travel if you have paid the expense or charged it to a credit card.

If you prefer to donate your expenses to the Guild, your gift is tax deductible as an out-of-pocket expense for volunteer activities for a charitable organization. Simply submit a reimbursement request and accept reimbursement, and then return all or part of the amount to the Annual Fund or the Endowment Fund by personal check or credit card charge.

1. Air Travel: Airline travel will be reimbursed at the lowest attainable fare. Fares should be reported to the committee director responsible for the meeting before tickets are purchased. Travel arrangements are made by each individual. By unanimous vote of AGO National Council, the following policies apply to travel expense reimbursements as they relate to air travel:

- The AGO shall not reimburse members or staff for their purchase of seat or class upgrades in connection with AGO business travel.
- The AGO shall not reimburse members or staff for their purchase of insurance in connection with AGO business travel except in cases of intercontinental travel.

Committee Directors: It is important to estimate the total of members' fares for any one meeting before tickets are purchased. If any planned meeting's expenses will exceed a committee's annual budget, the meeting may be cancelled.

2. Auto Travel: Use of your car will be reimbursed at the standard federal government rate (currently 14 cents per mile) up to the amount of the lowest possible air fare for your itinerary, plus tolls and parking.

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3. Other Travel: The actual expenses of getting to and from airports by car, bus, shuttle, van, taxi, or mass transit will be reimbursed, as will the cost of parking at an airport while you are away.

4. Lodging: In most cases, the Guild will cover a maximum of one night's lodging expense per meeting day. Committee directors are asked to schedule meetings so that as many members as possible may return home on the same day as the meeting. Any stay beyond one night per meeting day at Guild expense must be approved in advance.

In all cities, arrangements are made in advance. Due to skyrocketing hotel rates in New York City, meetings here are discouraged unless absolutely necessary. Moderately priced lodging is provided at various hotels with basic accommodations. Reservations may be made through AGO Headquarters, e-mail [agohq@agohq.org](mailto:agohq@agohq.org) or phone 212-870-2310. In some facilities, room charges are billed directly to the Guild, but individuals are always responsible for incidentals upon check-out. Alternatively, individuals may make their own reservations. Under such circumstances, reimbursement will not exceed the cost of a room reserved through AGO Headquarters.

5. Meals: Expenses for meals will be reimbursed up to a limit based on 80% of the current guidelines from the General Services Administration of the USA federal government (provide receipts) for the location of the meeting. The maximum amount reimbursed per day will be reduced if any meals are provided by the Guild.

6. Substitute Organists: Reimbursement for substitute organists will only be made for documented out-of-pocket payments to substitutes required by your attendance at official AGO meetings.

The better you control your personal expenses, the more funds your board or committee will have for its programs. Please be thrifty!