

MAERB Guidelines for Travel for Site Surveyors

Air Travel: Tickets should be purchased at least a month, if not more, in advance in order to take advantage of discount fares. The travel agent will be working with you in order to find the lowest fare in economy class. First-class travel is not reimbursable. If you choose to combine trips, due to family issues or other obligations, you can book the travel through Foremost and pay for the extra ticket. If MAERB needs to cancel the site visit or if you are unable to attend due to an emergency, the unused ticket will be on file at Foremost travel for use on another site visit. Airfare above \$500 needs to be approved by the MAERB office, and Foremost will contact MAERB for that approval. MAERB will not pay for flight insurance or for flight changes due to a visit ending early or a change in plans.

Train, Bus or Shuttle: You may find that you can take public transportation or a shuttle from the airport to the hotel, and those costs are reimbursable. You will need to provide a receipt to submit with your travel expenses. On rare occasions, you may be able to take a train to the program site, and those expenses are reimbursable as well.

Automobile: You may determine that you would prefer to drive to the site visit using your own vehicle. In that instance, you would be reimbursed for mileage at the rate set by the IRS per mile or the least expensive air fare, whichever is the least expensive. Document mileage with a printout from a website such as MapQuest.com. Toll fees and parking charges are also reimbursable with receipts. Because MAERB pays by mileage, gas costs are not reimbursed as the mileage charge covers that. You will need to get documentation from Foremost about the least expensive air fare.

Lodging: Surveyors can book separate rooms, and, in order to limit costs, the room costs should be under \$125. Foremost will contact MAERB to authorize costs above \$125. **As the site visits are currently lasting for two days, MAERB will pay for the third night if it is not possible for the surveyor to return home on the last day of the survey. If, however, the surveyor is extending his/her stay for personal reasons, MAERB will not pay for that third night, as the surveyor is not conducting MAERB business on the next day.**

Rental Car: On rare occasions, the use of a rental car may be necessary. On no occasion, will there be more than one rental car for a team visit, as the team members are expected to coordinate arrangements. Foremost will contact MAERB to authorize the cost of the rental car. MAERB reimburses the rental car cost and the gas cost. MAERB does not reimburse mileage with rental cars. MAERB will also cover the insurance costs for the rental car.

Meals: Up to \$65 per day will be reimbursed for actual meal expenses (including tips) or will be advanced upon request. Itemized receipts (not credit card statements) must be included. All reimbursements in excess of actual payments must be returned to the MAERB. MAERB will not reimburse purchases of alcoholic beverages.

Cancelling Tickets: If a visit is cancelled after you have purchased tickets or if you are not able to attend an already scheduled trip, you will need to call Foremost in order to cancel the ticket. It is vitally important that you do so as the value of the ticket will be kept on file at Foremost and will be used when you scheduled your next visit.

MAERB Travel Expense Vouchers

Airfare will be paid for in advance by MAERB, but Surveyors will need to submit a Travel Expense Voucher for the expenses incurred during the visit. You were sent a Travel Expense Voucher when you received the program's Self-Study. The Travel Expense Voucher is also available at the MAERB web site under the Documents Tab.

At the end of the visit, you must submit the Travel Expense Voucher to Tasha Harris (tharris@maerb.org) in the MAERB office with the necessary receipts.

Below is a list of questions that I have received and the answers to those questions.

1. If MAERB is going to put the air travel on its credit card, why do I need to provide my credit card in the Foremost Travel Agency Profile

As is outlined on the policy, MAERB is only able to pay for the air travel in advance. The credit card information that you supply is in order to reserve the hotel room. Your credit card will not be charged until you arrive at the hotel. In other words, it is precisely the same as when you reserve a hotel room on your own. You will find on the travel sheet that Foremost sends you information about the cancellation policy.
2. Will I get my frequent flier miles?

Yes, you will still get your frequent flier miles, and you will note that there is a section in Foremost's travel profile for you to provide that information.
3. What if I have a TSA PreCheck number?

Foremost Travel can enter in your TSA pre-check number into your reservation.
4. What if I want to drive to the site using my own personal vehicle?

You can certainly drive to the site, and you will note that the Travel Policy outlines the reimbursement schedule for driving your own car. You do need to provide documentation when you submit your travel voucher that the costs of driving your own vehicle (reimbursement at IRS rate per mile) is less than the lowest air fare to the site. If you want to drive in order to have your own vacation after the site or because you want to enjoy the scenery and it costs more than the lowest air fare, MAERB will reimburse you the lowest air fare.
5. Do we still contact Tasha at the MAERB office if we want to rent a car?

No, you will be working with the travel agent in order to book a rental car, if necessary. As is true in the past, MAERB asks for the surveyors to find alternative ways to get to the hotel, such as airport shuttle, hotel shuttle, the program staff and so on. If a rental car is absolutely necessary, the travel agent will contact the MAERB office for authorization.
6. Do I need to contact the MAERB office for approval for travel prior to contacting the Travel agency?

No, if the ticket is over \$500 or if the use of a rental car is requested than the travel agency will contact the MAERB office for approval.