

ORDINANCE NO. 2192

**ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF THE NORTHPORT MUNICIPAL CODE
PERTAINING TO A TRAVEL POLICY FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS**

WHEREAS, the Northport City Council wishes to establish certain guidelines pertaining to travel for the Mayor and City Council; and

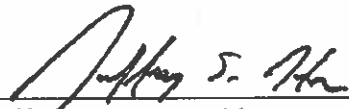
WHEREAS, after review of the proposed policy, the Administrative Committee recommends adoption of the attached Travel Policy for Elected Officials.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF NORTHPORT, ALABAMA AS FOLLOWS:**


1. The City amends Chapter 2 by adding *Sec 2-44 Travel Policy for Elected Officials* to the Northport Municipal Code, as set forth in Exhibit "A" which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference as if fully set out verbatim.
2. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon passage and publication.

ORDAINED this the 7th day of August, 2023.

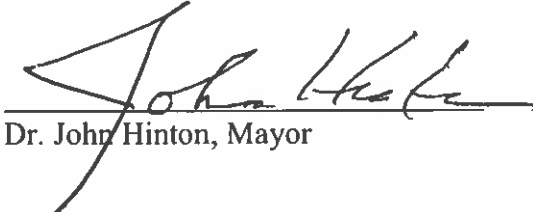
**CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF NORTHPORT**

BY: 
Jeff Hogg, Its President

ATTEST:



Glenda D. Webb, City Administrator

APPROVED this the 7th day of August, 2023.



Dr. John Hinton, Mayor

I hereby certify that the above and foregoing Ordinance was published on August 16, 2023, in the Northport Gazette, a newspaper of general circulation published in the City of Northport.



Glenda D. Webb, City Administrator

1st Reading: July 24, 2023
Motion By: Hogg
2nd Reading: August 7, 2023
Motion By: Hogg
Second By: Bobo
Publication: August 16, 2023

EXHIBIT “A”

Sec. 2-44 Travel Policy for Elected Officials

The City of Northport will reimburse elected officials for reasonable business travel expenses incurred while on Council Administrative Committee approved assignments more than 50 miles away from the normal work location. All business travel must be submitted on an approved form outlining projected travel costs and stating justification and relevance to council or committee duties and approved in advance by the City Council Administrative Committee. If the request is within the elected official's travel budget and broad scope of duties, this would require no further action. If the request exceeds the travel budget or falls outside the broad scope of duties, the request should be forwarded to the full council to vote. Any emergency travel requests that cannot be presented to Administrative Committee, must still be submitted on an approved form and approved in writing by the Administrative Committee Chair.

Elected officials whose travel plans have been approved are responsible for making their own travel arrangements; however, the City Administrator may assist with travel plans for expediency.

When approved, the actual costs of travel, meals, lodging, and other expenses directly related to accomplishing business travel objectives will be reimbursed by The City of Northport, in accordance with the General Services Administrative Website. Elected officials are expected to limit expenses to reasonable amounts in accordance with the G.S.A. website guidelines.

Expenses that generally will be reimbursed include the following:

- Airfare or train fare for travel in coach or economy class or the lowest safe available fare. Airfare cancellations that remain on any personal charge account must be reimbursed to the city.
- Car rental fees, only for compact or mid-sized cars. Exception can be granted when several council members travel together to maximize savings.
- Fares for shuttle or airport bus service, where available; costs of public transportation for other ground travel.
- Taxi fares, only when there is no less expensive alternative.
- Cost of standard accommodations in low to mid-priced hotels, motels, or similar lodgings.
- Cost of meals, no more lavish than would be eaten at the employee's own expense.
- Tips not exceeding 20% of the total cost of a meal or 10% of a taxi fare.
- Charges for telephone calls, fax, and similar services required for business purposes.

Elected officials are advised that alcoholic beverages shall not be an approved expense, and no City of Northport funds shall be used or expended to purchase alcoholic beverages.

Elected officials who are involved in an accident while traveling on business must promptly report the incident to the City Administrator. Vehicles owned, leased, or rented by The City of Northport may not be used for personal use without prior approval.

With prior approval, elected officials on business travel may be accompanied by a family member or friend at their sole expense, when the presence of a companion will not interfere with successful completion of business objectives. The elected officials shall not submit travel expenses to The City of Northport for a companion nor seek reimbursement for any expense incurred by such companion. Generally, elected officials are also permitted to combine personal travel with business travel, so long as no City of Northport funds subsidize such personal travel expenses. Additional expenses arising from such nonbusiness travel are the responsibility of the council member or Mayor.

When travel is completed, elected officials should submit completed travel expense reports within 15 days. Reports should be accompanied by receipts for all individual expenses.

Elected officials should contact the City Administrator for guidance and assistance on procedures related to travel arrangements, travel advances, expense reports, reimbursement for specific expenses, or any other business travel issues.

Abuse of the business travel expenses policy, including falsifying expense reports to reflect costs not incurred by the elected official, can be grounds for denial of future business travel opportunities.

Items that will result in all future travel being cut, and additional action taken, including reporting of any ethics violations:

- Charging for items used for personal reasons (gas, groceries, hotels, etc).
- Billing for travel and expenses that never materialized (cancelled airline tickets or conference registration fees, training fees for courses that were cancelled or never attended, etc).
- Seeking reimbursement for items that were never purchased (office supplies, gifts for clients, etc).
- Collusion among Council members or Mayor who travelled together, but bill separately for mileage, etc.
- Outright falsifying or manipulating receipts.
- Claiming meals and entertainment reimbursement that may be in excess of the allowed maximum cap, or for items not reimbursable under the City's policy (alcohol, leisure activities, sports tickets, etc). – See State Per Diem for reasonable guidelines for meals and mileage.
- Adding tips to reimbursement claims that were greater than what was actually left.
- Using inflated mileage totals when seeking reimbursement for motor vehicle travel.

Council members should prepare a report to the Administrative Committee within a reasonable amount of time following a trip that can be shared with the council. This report should include the actual cost of the trip and any findings that are relevant, unless the travel is for items that are subject to a binding non-disclosure agreement.

Secs. 245-2-65 Reserved.