

### APPLICABILITY OF POLICY

This policy applies to Physician and Advanced Practice Provider (APP) Continuing Medical Education (CME) and specifically supersedes general policies found in the Valley Medical Center (VMC) Employee Travel Expense Policy and Procedures and Expenses for Travel and Educational Programs.

### GENERAL DEFINITION OF ACCEPTABLE CONTENT OF CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

Valley Medical Center adopts the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) definition of CME as “Continuing Medical Education (CME) consists of educational activities which serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills and professional performance and relationships that a physician or advanced practice provider uses to provide services for patients, the public, and the profession. The content of CME is that body of knowledge and skills generally recognized and accepted by the profession as within the basic medical sciences, the discipline of clinical medicine, and the provision of health care to the public.”

### VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER CME ALLOWANCE

The VMC fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends the following June 30. CME benefits are prorated based on FTE and Physician and APP start date. Benefits must be used, and events attended before the last day of the fiscal year.

CME allowance may be used for qualifying AMA PRA Category 1 credit and related to the Physician or APPs specialty or practice of medicine, such as:

- Conferences, seminars, and events
- Self-study activities
- Textbooks and reference material
- Medical software and audio digests
- Travel expenses directly related to in-person CME events, reimbursed in accordance with the VMC Travel policy.
- Reimbursement is at the sole discretion of VMC. Physicians and APPs are encouraged to obtain prior approval if there is a potential concern regarding appropriate usage of funds or relevance of activity to one’s specialty or practice of medicine.

### MEMBERSHIP ALLOWANCE

Membership dues for one year will be reimbursed based on the date paid, unless otherwise specified in the Employment Agreement. Membership reimbursements are not retroactive to a previous fiscal year. Physicians and APPs may not use funds from a future fiscal year for membership reimbursement. No exceptions to this policy are allowed.

Multiple year memberships are not eligible for reimbursement.

Physicians and APPs at **.60 FTE or greater** are allowed reimbursement for two professional memberships each fiscal year unless otherwise specified in the Employment Agreement.

Physicians and APPs at **.59 FTE or less** are allowed reimbursement for one professional membership each fiscal year unless otherwise specified in the Employment Agreement.

### MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION (MOC) REIMBURSEMENT

VMC required board certification exam, prep courses, and MOC fees are fully reimbursed only for the current fiscal year. MOC fees are not retroactive to a previous fiscal year. Multi-year certification payments are not eligible for reimbursement.

### OTHER BENEFITS

Physicians and APPs may use up to \$100.00 of their CME benefit each year for reimbursement of:

- Stethoscopes
- Surgical Loupes
- Lead glasses to use for fluoroscopy cases

This benefit does not apply to other medical equipment or clothing.

The Physician Concierge will assist Physicians and APPs with the following annual expenses:

- Washington State, Department of Health (DOH), licensing fee
- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) licensing fee
- VMC Medical Staff dues
- Malpractice insurance

Invoices and renewal forms should be sent to [patricia\\_kyle@valleymed.org](mailto:patricia_kyle@valleymed.org).

### REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

Reimbursement requests are reviewed and approved through hospital Administration. Physicians and APPs pay expenses upfront. Receipts and other required documentation are sent to [providercme@valleymed.org](mailto:providercme@valleymed.org) for reimbursement. Required documentation includes:

- Itemized receipt indicating:
  - Physician or APPs first and last name
  - Vendor / Supplier name
  - Purchase description
  - Date of payment
  - Amount paid
- Certificate of Attendance for CME classes, events, meetings, and seminars.

Screenshots of receipts, bank statements, renewal notices and unpaid invoices are **not** accepted as proof of payment.

In accordance with IRS regulations, reimbursement is based on the receipt payment date or the last day of a qualifying CME event.

Unused funds do not rollover from year to year.

**Receipts must be submitted within 60 days** of the purchase date or 60 days from the last day of a qualifying CME event to [providercme@valleymed.org](mailto:providercme@valleymed.org). Receipts **will not** be accepted after the 60-day deadline.

### LOCAL CME ACTIVITIES

Parking and other expenses incurred while attending local CME activities are reimbursed in accordance with the [VMC Employee Travel Expenses policy](#).

### VIRTUAL CME ACTIVITIES

CME activities and events attended virtually will be reimbursed the Conference Registration payment only, and not be eligible for travel reimbursement.

### CME TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCE MATERIALS

CME funds may be used towards purchase of medical textbooks/reference materials, relevant to a clinician's specialty area. Medical textbooks/reference materials will be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$200.00 per fiscal year. All purchases **require** proof of delivery receipts supporting textbook purchases.

### CME TIME OFF

Eligible Physicians and APPs are provided time-off for CME in accordance with VMC's current Benefit Plan, subject to change at VMC's discretion. Time off is managed by the Clinic Manager or Kronos timekeeper. Employees are required to supply a Certificate of Attendance, including CME credit hours equal to, or more than the time away from work.

### EXCLUSIONS

Excluded items include but are not limited to voluntary donations, gift cards, computer hardware, apparel, and all non-educational benefits. Any CME program, educational material, app/software associated with a gift card on purchase is excluded. This list is not comprehensive and is at the discretion of VMC.

Travel related expenses such as airfare, lodging, meals, and transportation for CME events that are attended virtually will not be reimbursed.

### REVOCATION OF BENEFITS

Upon giving notice to terminate employment with VMC, Physicians and APPs **immediately** forfeit the following benefits:

- Membership reimbursement
- Maintenance of Certification fees
- Board Renewals (when expiration date is after last day of employment)
- Washington State, Department of Health (DOH), licensing fee (when expiration date is after last day of employment)
- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) licensing fee (when expiration date is after last day of employment)
- All CME activities and events will be reimbursed when payment date is earlier than the date of resignation notice

All other CME benefits will remain active but will be prorated based on the number of full months the Physician or APP was employed at VMC for that fiscal year.

### PHYSICIAN AND ADVANCED PRACTICE PROVIDER TRAVEL POLICY ADDENDUMS

Valley Medical Center employees are responsible for understanding and following the Travel Policy and Procedures and Expenses for Travel & Educational Programs.

Charges contrary to the mission of Public Hospital District No 1 of King County – Valley Medical, will not be reimbursed, including, but not limited to:

- Alcohol
- Fines
- First class airfare
- Car rental upgrades

Travel related expenses (lodging, rental car, conference registration fee, etc.) must include an itemized receipt for the event and certificate of attendance. If receipt is lost, Physicians and APPs must submit a Lost Receipt form, bank or credit card statement and manager approval.

The following items specifically supersede points in the general policy:

### LODGING EXPENSES

Lodging expenses are reimbursed in accordance with the [VMC Employee Travel Expenses policy](#):

Physicians and APPs are encouraged to book lodging using a conference rate when available. Reimbursement of the conference rate is not limited to GSA per diem rate, only when the following documentation is provided:

- Documentation of group or discounted rate indicated on hotel folio
- Itemized hotel folio with room rate and applicable taxes

When a conference rate is not used, lodging is reimbursed in accordance with the per diem rate based on the accommodation zip code. Per diem rates are established by the US General Services Administration (GSA). <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>. Lodging expenses more than the per diem rate for the location will not be reimbursed.

Employees may receive lodging reimbursement for the published event dates. Additional nights may be added before and after the event, only when the official agenda reflects a full-day program on the first and final day.

### MEALS AND INCIDENTALS

Meals and Incidentals (M&IE) per diem rates are established by the US General Services Administration (GSA). <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

Physicians and APPs will be reimbursed for M&IE based on the zip code on the hotel folio. Receipts for meals are not required.

### GROUND TRANSPORTATION

Rental cars are allowable only when more advantageous to VMC than a taxi or ride-share. Economy and Compact classes are reimbursable. Luxury, sports, SUV, vans, trucks, motorcycles, limousines, helicopters, and boats are not reimbursable under any circumstance. If there is an upgrade due to lack of vehicles by the rental car agency, it should be a no-cost upgrade.

Rental cars, ride-share and taxi fares require an itemized receipt for reimbursement including Physicians or APPs name, dates of service, pick-up and drop-off time, and location. Gratuity may not exceed 20% of the non-taxable portion of the fee.

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## PHYSICIAN AND ADVANCED PRACTICE PROVIDER CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION POLICY

Personal vehicles may only be used with prior written authorization by the Clinic Manager and are reimbursed at the IRS Standard Mileage Rate: <https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>

### BAGGAGE FEES

Reimbursement for a maximum of two bags is allowed with itemized receipts.

### ONLINE TRAVEL AGENCY (OTA) EXCLUSIONS

Physicians and APPs may not utilize online travel agencies (examples include but are not limited to Booking.com, Expedia, Priceline, and Costco) for lodging, airfare, and car rental bundles. Bundles often do not include flexible cancellation policies or itemized receipts and hotel folios, preventing an accurate reporting of expenses.

### APP BASED LODGING

App-based lodging arrangements made through Airbnb, VRBO, Sonder, TurnKey, and other similar platforms are allowed up to the maximum allowed by GSA per diem as described in Lodging Expenses. Physicians and APPs will be reimbursed for lodging expenses based on the zip code of the property on the receipt. **Lodging expenses more than the per diem rate for the location will not be reimbursed.**

ROLE	NAME(S)	REVIEW DATE
APPROVED BY	Kalen Privatsky, William Park, Matthew Mulder, and Shahina Banthanavasi	7/15/2024
CHIEF AMBULATORY OFFICER	William Park, MD	
VMC CROSS-REFERENCE	Travel Expenses policy	
NEXT REVIEW DATE	2025	