

# DIOCESE OF BUFFALO INTERNAL AUDIT NEWSLETTER

Priest Mileage Reimbursement

11-2023

## INTERNAL AUDIT TEAM

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## PRIEST MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

### What is Mileage Reimbursement?

- Mileage reimbursement is a per-mile reimbursement for expenses associated with driving on behalf of the Family of Parishes or the Diocese for business reasons.
- The mileage reimbursement rate covers vehicle operations, such as, gasoline, oil, tires, maintenance, insurance, registration, and depreciation. These costs are calculated into the IRS rate.
- Examples of business-related mileage are traveling between two places of work, meeting with parishioners/sick visit for parishioner, or running business-related errands.

### How to Calculate Mileage Reimbursement?

- The calculation for mileage reimbursement is based on the IRS rate of \$0.655.
- Due to the payment of insurance, there is a reduction of reimbursement for the first 15,000 miles. This reduction is determined by whether the individual has taken a defensive driving course and in return receives a decrease in insurance cost.
- Since the assigned residence is also your place of work, there will not be any commuter mileage to deduct. Therefore, every mile you drive on behalf of the Family of Parishes, or the Diocese will be reimbursable if it is for legitimate business purposes and your reimbursement form is completed with the correct IRS mandated guidelines.

### Mileage Log Information

- Mileage logs are required to be printed and submitted with a check request on a monthly or quarterly basis. Starting September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, all clergy business miles will be paid as a reimbursement for actual miles driven after submitting a properly completed business mileage log. Business mileage logs must be submitted, again preferably monthly, by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month or the 15<sup>th</sup> of December, March, June, and September for quarterly reimbursement. Mileage reimbursement requests received after are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Each time you use your vehicle for business purposes, you are required to record the following information:
  - The date of your trip
  - Starting and ending odometer
  - Your starting point
  - Your destination
  - The **business** purpose of your trip
  - Tolls and parking fees (if applicable)

- Mileage log forms are available on the Internal Audit Webpage for use.

### Review & Approval of Mileage Reimbursement

- All Priest mileage reimbursement must be reviewed and approved.
  - Parochial Vicar's mileage must be reviewed and approved by the Pastor or other designated individual (i.e., Parish Trustee, Finance Council member). Approval must be documented with a signature of the approver along with the date of review.
  - Pastor's mileage will be reviewed by the Vicar Forane.

Please download the **updated** Priest Mileage Forms via the Internal Audit webpage: <https://www.buffalodiocese.org/internal-audit/>

For worksheets related to Priest Mileage Reimbursements, please follow the link below to the Internal Audit Webpage.

<https://www.buffalodiocese.org/internal-audit/>

Please contact Zachary Kinnaird at (716) 847-5578 if you have any questions. Or the Audit Team at (716) 847-5572

# **FAQ**

- **Why won't my reimbursement amount calculate to a number and is showing "#Value"?**
  - Make sure only numbers are entered into the worksheet when needed (i.e., When entering miles, only enter the number, do not add "miles").
- **What if I must travel last minute on my day off?**
  - There are always going to be emergencies. If an emergency occurs, business mileage would be allowed to be taken to and from your starting location.
- **What if I need more lines for my mileage on the Excel spreadsheet?**
  - On the Internal Audit webpage, there is an Excel workbook labeled "Priest Mileage Log (Log Only)" under the Mileage Reimbursement tab. If you need anymore line, please print out the sheet multiple times and you may attach them together for reimbursement.
- **Can I go anywhere for my local shopping and count it as business mileage?**
  - For rectory table, travel to local groceries stores must be in the surrounding area. You should not pass a Wegmans, Aldi's, Tops, etc. to go to one of the previously mention stores, but farther away. The purpose is to support your local businesses as well as reducing the cost to the Parish Family and or Diocese.
- **What if I prefer to shop at a specific store like BJ's, Sam's Club, etc.?**
  - If you prefer to shop at specific stores, these trips are permitted as business mileage with the understanding these trips are less frequent. Additionally, your detailed receipts for items purchased will coincide with your mileage logs.
- **Is mileage for my Spiritual direction considered business mileage?**
  - Mileage for Spiritual direction can be included as reimbursable business mileage.
- **Is mileage for my personal confession business mileage?**
  - Mileage for personal confession can **NOT** be reimbursed as business mileage.

**If you have other specific questions or need help in completing your mileage reimbursement, please contact Internal Audit for assistance.**