

Volunteer Travel Instructions

1. New volunteers or volunteers who have not submitted travel in several months must send all required vendor information to travel@gal.fl.gov. The SGAL Budget Director will create a vendor file for the volunteer and activate a proxy traveler account that will allow the State Office to process the volunteer's travel through the State's travel reimbursement system.
2. Volunteers must complete, sign and date the Request for Reimbursement of Travel form. On this form, volunteers must check the box next to each criterion that applies to trips included on the travel voucher form.
3. Volunteers must complete, sign and date the Volunteer Travel Voucher form and email it, along with the Request for Reimbursement of Travel and all other required backup documentation (receipts) to travel@gal.fl.gov.
4. The Volunteer Travel Voucher Form must include the date, starting and ending location, time of departure and return, and mileage for each eligible trip listed on the travel voucher form.
5. All extraordinary travel included on a volunteer travel voucher form must be properly documented in Optima. If more than one child is assigned to a case, the volunteer must note which child or children were associated with a specific visit in the Optima contact log. State Office staff will verify Optima contact logs as part of the request for payment audit.
6. If an eligible trip exceeds 100 miles (round trip), the volunteer must complete the car rental vs mileage worksheet, enter the mileage for that trip in the car rental vs mileage column of the travel voucher form and attach a copy of the form with the signed Request for Reimbursement of Volunteer Travel and Travel Voucher forms. To complete the car rental vs mileage worksheet, volunteers must
 - a. Enter the date of the trip in the date field located in the top right corner of the form
 - b. Enter the number of days the rental car will be needed. Volunteers may only enter 1 if the trip is a single day trip. For approved overnight trips, volunteers may enter 2 or 3 depending on the number of nights approved by the Director of Operations.

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- c. The volunteer must use the FDOT map miles calculator website to calculate the estimated map miles for the trip. That total must be entered as the number of map miles to and from destination.
<https://fdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=fcb8b493d1c84f909f94a8ebfafbb317>
 - d. Enter the estimated price per gallon of gas in the price per gallon field located in the center right section of the screen. Volunteers can obtain an average price per gallon in Florida and some major metro areas in Florida from the [gasbuddy.com](https://www.gasbuddy.com/charts) website.
<https://www.gasbuddy.com/charts>
 - e. After entering the average price per gallon, the yellow highlighted section will calculate the miles to enter for the trip in the car rental vs mileage column on the travel voucher form.
7. In lieu of driving their own personal vehicle, volunteers are authorized to rent a car from Avis for official State business when performing the extraordinary travel activities noted on the Request for Reimbursement of Volunteer Travel form.
- a. Volunteers who opt to rent a car for a child visit will be reimbursed for allowable expenses associated with the rental car but will not be reimbursed for mileage for that trip.
 - b. Cars rented for authorized travel must be reserved through the State of Florida Department of Management Services contract using the Florida DMS-Avis reservation portal
<https://www.carrental.com/abgPartners/sof/>
 - c. Unlike State employees, volunteers may only rent a car through the DMS State Contract when they are traveling on approved State business.
 - d. Volunteers who rent a car for an authorized trip will be reimbursed at the current State contract daily rate (\$27.32 per day) plus tax. The State cannot reimburse for optional charges such as fuel, insurance, etc.
 - e. Volunteers must print the Letter of Introduction located on the I Am for the Child website. Volunteers must present a copy of that letter and their SGAL ID badge to the clerk at the Avis location when the car is picked up. It is the volunteer's

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- responsibility to ensure that the Avis facility charged the correct daily rate for the rental car both at the time of pick up and at the time of return.
- f. When renting a car, both the rental car and fuel expenses must be properly documented on the Volunteer Travel Voucher form. The volunteer must also attach valid, legible receipts for the rental car and fuel purchases to the travel voucher form.
8. All trips more than 150 miles (round trip) must be approved, in advance, by the SGAL Director of Operations. The Statewide Office will not reimburse overnight travel expenses if the reimbursement request does not include a copy of the approval email.
 9. All overnight travel must be approved, in advance and in writing, by the SGAL Director of Operations. The Statewide Office will not reimburse overnight travel expenses if the travel reimbursement request does not include a copy of the approval email.
 - a. Volunteers approved for overnight travel will be reimbursed for meals, per diem and lodging in accordance with Florida State statute and Department of Financial Services policies.
 10. Volunteers may only claim miles to attend court (in a different Judicial Circuit) when they are subpoenaed or otherwise required by the attorney to appear in court to offer testimony on behalf of children they are appointed to represent. For these trips, the travel voucher form must reflect court appearance as the reason for travel.
 11. All Out of State travel must be approved, in advance, by the SGAL Executive Director. Volunteers must submit requests for Out of State travel through their Circuit Director. The Circuit Director must send these requests to either the SGAL Director of Operations or the SGAL Budget Director. The Circuit Director will be notified, in writing, if the trip is approved. A copy of the Executive Director's written approval must be included with the volunteer travel reimbursement forms.
 12. The State Office will reimburse mentors for extraordinary travel related to visits with mentees. Mentors must list "mentoring" as the reason for travel when an approved trip is related to activities with a child/youth he or she is paired with as a mentor.
 13. Volunteers may be reimbursed for travel related to their assistance with certain volunteer recruitment activities provided:
 - a. The specific recruitment event is held at a location other than an SGAL office or site of an SGAL Circuit wide event, and
 - b. The trip requires extraordinary travel on the part of the volunteer (i.e. more than 25 miles roundtrip), and

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- c. The Circuit Director asks a volunteer to assist the recruitment team with the event. A copy of the Circuit Director's approval must be attached to the travel voucher form.
- d. Volunteers must list "recruitment" as the reason for travel when an approved trip is related to assisting the volunteer recruitment team at a volunteer recruitment event.

Restrictions on volunteer travel

1. Only travel activities specifically included on the Request for Reimbursement of Travel form are eligible for reimbursement by the Statewide Office. The Statewide Office cannot reimburse volunteers for travel to attend training, meetings, or similar activities.
2. With few exceptions, travel reimbursements are provided to volunteers who perform extraordinary travel to visit children represented by the Guardian ad Litem Office. The Statewide Office only requires one child visit per month so volunteers may only claim reimbursement for one child visit per month. The Director of Operations (or her designee) may approve additional visits at her discretion, and in such cases, a copy of the approval must be included with the travel reimbursement request documents.
3. Volunteer travel reimbursement requests must be submitted within 60 days of the trip date. Optima cases close for editing after 60 days so the Statewide Office cannot reimburse volunteers for trips submitted more than 60 days after the trip date. No exceptions will be made to the 60-day submission requirement.
4. Volunteers must print and sign all required travel forms. The Statewide Office will reject unsigned reimbursement requests and travel voucher forms. It is the volunteer's responsibility to submit signed forms to travel@gal.fl.gov, within the required 60-day time frame.
5. Prior to rejection, State Budget Office staff may contact both the volunteer and assigned Child Advocate Manager / Staff Advocate to discuss deficiencies or errors on a reimbursement request or travel log form.
6. Volunteers will only be reimbursed for fuel when a car is rented through the DMS State contract for a reimbursable child visit. It is up to the volunteer to document the fuel cost(s) on the travel voucher form, obtain a receipt for fuel purchase(s) and include a legible copy of the receipt with the signed travel voucher form. The Statewide Office and Florida Department of Financial Services cannot accept

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prepaid gas receipts or bank/credit card statements as “receipts” when reimbursing fuel costs.

7. Volunteers who choose to rent a vehicle from a vendor other than Avis will only be reimbursed for \$27.32 per day plus sales tax for the rental.
8. Volunteers approved for overnight travel will be reimbursed for not more than \$225 per day for lodging expenses. This includes both the room rate and all applicable fees and taxes.
9. The State will reimburse volunteers for tolls associated with approved extraordinary trips if a toll receipt or other backup documentation (e.g. Sunpass statement) is included with the travel voucher form.
10. Employees whose job duties include child representation activities (i.e. attorneys and child advocate managers/staff advocate) may not serve as volunteers. Their travel must be included on their employee travel log and submitted monthly via their employee STMS account.