American Bar Association  
Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources  

REIMBURSEMENT POLICY  

I. GENERAL POLICY  
The ABA Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources provides reimbursement to individuals specified in this policy for certain expenses associated with their travel to and participation in meetings and conferences specified below. The Section depends on these individuals’ contributions of time and energy, and reimbursement is provided to reduce the financial burden on them and to encourage and facilitate their participation at these events. All individuals requesting reimbursement must be current Section members, with the exception of speakers and award recipients.

II. REIMBURSABLE AND NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES  

A. Reimbursable Expenses  

1. Air, Train, and Bus Transportation Costs; Costs for Rental or Private Vehicle  
Reimbursement is available towards the cost to travel by air, train, or bus to/from the transport hub nearest to the meeting location, or, if travel is by rental or private vehicle, to/from the meeting location. Reimbursement for the cost to travel by train, bus, rental, or private vehicle shall not exceed the cost of a round trip advance-purchase non-refundable coach airline ticket. Every reasonable effort must be made to purchase tickets at the lowest advance purchase fare.

If it is impractical to travel by common carrier, the cost to rent a moderately-sized vehicle and the cost of fuel and tolls will be reimbursed for travel to/from the meeting location. If less expensive than a rental vehicle, a private vehicle will be reimbursed based on mileage to/from the meeting location at the IRS reimbursement rate current at the time of travel plus the cost of tolls.

2. Hotel Expenses  
For a meeting with a hotel room block, reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax—not to exceed the room block rate specified in the meeting notice. Government employees should make every reasonable effort to secure a government-rate room at the meeting hotel, if available and less than the room block rate. Reimbursement will only be made for rooms at the meeting hotel unless the room block has been sold out and preapproval has been given by the Section Director.

If there is no room block, an approved rate set by the Section Director plus tax will be the maximum reimbursable amount per night.

B. Non-Reimbursable Expenses  

1. Registration Fees  
Reimbursement is not available for meeting registration fees, including fees for any optional activities.

2. Food and Meal Expenses  
Reimbursement is not available for the cost of food or meals.
3. **Ground Transportation**
Reimbursement is not available for ground transportation costs (such as taxi, ride share services, shuttle vans, and local trains and buses), including but not limited to travel to/from the transport hub and hotel, local travel during the meeting, and parking fees for rental or personal vehicles.

For certain meetings where ground transportation between the transport hub nearest to the meeting location and the meeting location is not readily available or is determined to be too expensive by the Budget Officer, in consultation with the Section Chair, may authorize the reimbursement of rental vehicles for ground transportation. In such circumstances, reimbursement is available only towards the cost to rent a moderately-sized vehicle and for the cost of fuel. The reimbursement amount request shall be counted towards the maximum amount allowable for travel. Participants will be informed in advance if circumstances are such that reimbursement for a rental car is available, and all participants are encouraged to travel with others, if possible.

4. **Delays and Cancellations**
If a flight, train, or bus is delayed or canceled, reimbursement is not available for expenses incurred as a consequence. For example, if a flight is delayed, additional reimbursement is not available for the cost of a rental car to drive to complete the travel. If your plans change and you are no longer able to attend the event, your incurred travel and hotel expenses will not be reimbursed. The ABA reserves the right to cancel any program and assumes no responsibility for personal expense.

5. **Other Non-Reimbursable Expenses**
Reimbursement is not available for incidental expenses such as phone calls, movie rentals, and internet service. The Section does not reimburse for optional field trips, tours, social events, sports, fitness club, or spa fees. Additionally, the Section does not reimburse travel agency fees, airline luggage fees, and hotel gratuities.

III. **Eligible Reimbursable Events and Eligible Amounts for Reimbursement**

A. **Council Meetings (Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer)**
   1. **Council Members and Executive Committee**
      a. Government, Academic, Public Interest, Retired, and Unemployed
         (1) Up to $500 towards the cost of travel to the transportation hub nearest the meeting location or to the meeting location by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions as described in II. above.

         (2) Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for the duration of the meeting (the period beginning on the first meeting day and ending on the final meeting day), subject to the restrictions as described in II. above. The cost of a room for the night preceding the first day of a meeting will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival in time for the first mandatory event.

      b. Private Practitioners (includes all practice settings except for Government, Academic, Public Interest, Retired, and Unemployed)
(1) Eligible for a maximum reimbursement of $500 total per Council meeting for expenses in the reimbursable categories as described in II. above.

2. **Invited Non-Council Guests**
   If the Section Chair determines that a non-Council member’s attendance is warranted for the meeting, that individual may qualify for reimbursement in accordance with the parameters set forth in III.A.1.

3. **Committee Chairs (Leadership Day/Fall Council only)**
   Committee chairs’ participation in Leadership Day and the Fall Council Meeting, held immediately following the Fall Conference, is encouraged. A committee chair (substantive or special committee) who is an employee of a government agency, academic institution, or non-governmental organization, retired, or unemployed is eligible for reimbursement.
   
   a. Up to $500 for the cost to travel to Leadership Day’s location by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above.
   
   b. Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for the one or two nights, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above. The cost of a room for the night preceding Leadership Day will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival in time for the first event. The cost of a room for the night of the final day of a conference will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival home that day.

4. **Leadership Development Program (Leadership Day/ Fall Council only)**
   Reimbursement is available for returning LDP class members to cover travel expenses related their attendance at the Fall Council Meeting to make their LDP project presentation who meet one of the following criteria: government employee, academic, public interest lawyer, young lawyer, solo/small firm practitioner, or unemployed. Reimbursement requests must meet the guidelines below.
   
   a. Up to $500 for the cost to travel to the conference location by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above.
   
   b. Returning LDP class reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for the night preceding the Fall Council Meeting will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival in time for the first event. The cost of a room for the night of the final day of the Fall Council Meeting will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival home that day.

B. **Section Officers Conference Fall Leadership Meeting**
   Reimbursement is limited to Officers (Executive Committee) positions, not including the Immediate Past Chair, for attendance at the annual Section Officers Conference Fall Leadership Meeting. For each Officer, the Section Chair should determine if the meeting agenda includes programming in the Officer’s area of responsibility and warrants their attendance.
   
   1. Up to $500 for the cost to travel to the meeting location by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above.
2. Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for the duration of the meeting (the period beginning on the first meeting day and ending on the final meeting day), subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above. The cost of a room for the night preceding the first day of a meeting will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival in time for the first mandatory event.

C. Leadership Training
Reimbursement is available to all individuals who will be Section Officers, or who are nominated to Officer positions, for the subsequent ABA year, if they have a role in facilitating the Leadership Training webinar and/or the business meeting typically held in conjunction with this event.

1. Up to $500 towards the cost to travel to the location where Leadership Training is being facilitated by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above.

2. Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for the duration of the event (the period beginning on the first meeting day and ending on the final meeting day), subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above. The cost of a room for the night preceding the first day of a meeting will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival in time for the first mandatory event.

D. Section In-Person Programs (Fall Conference, Spring Conference, and One-Day Programs)

1. Speakers
Reimbursement may be provided to certain speakers at in-person educational conferences, if the speaker is an employee of a government agency, academic institution, or non-governmental organization, or is retired or unemployed. The amount of reimbursement available is to be determined by the available funds in each program budget, and is subject to approval by the Education Officer and the Program Chair. The Education Officer may determine the extent to which eligible speakers will be reimbursed using the guidelines delineated below.
Ordinarily, no more than one speaker may be reimbursed per panel. All other speakers are expected to pay their own expenses.

a. Up to $500 towards the cost to travel to the meeting location by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions as described in II. above.

b. Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for either the night before or the night after the presentation as necessary to accommodate the speaker’s travel arrangements or longer if the presence of speaker is deemed necessary to the success of the program and approval has been granted by the Program Chair, subject to the restrictions as described in II. above.

2. Moderators
There is no reimbursement available for moderators.

3. Keynote Speakers
Keynote speakers may qualify for reimbursement as described in III.D.1.
4. Education Officer and Planning Chair
To recognize the additional personal expenses associated with these positions and the desire to have the Education Officer and Planning Chair attend the in-person conference(s), reimbursement funding is available.

a. Government, Academic, Public Interest, Retired, and Unemployed
   (1) Up to $500 towards the cost to travel to the location where the meeting is held by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions as described in II. above.

   (2) Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for the duration of the program (the period beginning on the first day and ending on the final day of scheduled events), subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above. The cost of a room for the night preceding the first day of a program will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival in time for the first event. The cost of a room for the night of the final day of a program will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival home that day.

b. Private Practitioners
   (1) Eligible for a maximum reimbursement of $500 total per in-person meeting for expenses in the reimbursable categories as described in II. above.

5. Executive Committee and Council Members
There is no travel reimbursement available for Executive Committee and Council Members at one-day conferences unless they otherwise qualify for reimbursement as described in III.D.1. or III.D.4. The Section Chair may be reimbursed to the limits described in IV.A.

6. Committee Chairs
There is no travel reimbursement available for Committee Chairs at one-day conferences unless they otherwise qualify for reimbursement as described in III.D.1 or III.D.4. (See III.A.3 for Leadership Day/Fall Council Meeting reimbursement details.)

7. ABA Law Student Division Liaison and the Univ. of Tulsa Law School Student Editor-in-Chief (Fall Conference only)
The Section’s assigned ABA Law Student Division Liaison and the Univ. of Tulsa Law School Student Editor-in-Chief for The Year in Review may claim reimbursement as outlined below.

a. Up to $500 for the cost to travel to the Fall Conference’s location by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above.

b. Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for up to four evenings, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above. The cost of a room for the night preceding the first day of the conference will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival in time for the first event. The cost of a room for the night of the final day of a conference will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival home that day.
8. **Membership Diversity Enhancement Program**
Reimbursement is available for up to $400 in eligible expenses as outlined in II. above to attend one Section-sponsored CLE program during the ABA year in which an individual is selected as a member of the Membership Diversity Enhancement Program.

9. **Leadership Development Program**
Reimbursement is available to all persons who are selected members of the Leadership Development Program (LDP) and meet one of the following criteria: government employee, academic, public interest lawyer, young lawyer, solo/small firm practitioner, or unemployed. LDP members who meet this requirement may be reimbursed to attend the Section’s Fall Conference during the ABA year in which they are a member of LDP. See III A 4 above for reimbursement for returning LDP class members for the Fall Council Meeting.

   a. Up to $500 for the cost to travel to the conference location by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above.

   b. Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for the duration of the conference (the period beginning on the first day and ending on the final day of scheduled events), subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above. The cost of a room for the night preceding the first day of a conference will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival in time for the first event. The cost of a room for the night of the final day of a conference will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival home that day.

E. **In-Person Planning Committee Meetings (Spring Conference and Fall Conference)**
For Planning Committee meetings, the amount of reimbursement available is to be determined by the available funds in each planning meeting’s budget, and is subject to approval by the Education Officer and the Program Chair. The Program Chair may determine the extent to which Planning Committee members will be reimbursed using the guidelines delineated below.

1. **Planning Committee Members**
Reimbursement may be provided to a Planning Committee member for attendance at the in-person planning meeting if the individual meets one of the following criteria: government employee, academic, public interest lawyer, or is retired or unemployed.

   a. Up to $500 for the cost to travel to the meeting location by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above.

   b. Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for the duration of the meeting (the period beginning on the first meeting day and ending on the final meeting day), subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above. The cost of a room for the night preceding the first day of a meeting will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival in time for the meeting.
2. **Education Officer and Planning Chair**
   
a. Private practitioner Education Officers and Planning Chairs are eligible for a maximum reimbursement of $500 total for expenses in the reimbursable categories as described in II. above. Otherwise, if applicable, they may qualify for reimbursement as described for Planning Committee members III.E.1.

**F. Publications’ Boards**
For meetings of the Book Publishing Board, *Natural Resources & Environment* Board, and the *Trends* Board lasting four (4) hours or more, the amount of reimbursement available is to be determined by the available funds in each board’s budget, and is subject to approval by the Publication Officer and the Board Chair (or equivalent position). The Board Chair may determine the extent to which members will be reimbursed using the guidelines delineated below.

1. **Publications’ Board Members**
   Reimbursement may be provided to board members for attendance at the in-person board meetings if the member meets one of the following criteria: government employee, academic, public interest lawyer, or is retired or unemployed.
   
a. Up to $500 for the cost to travel to the meeting location by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above.
   
b. Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for the duration of the meeting (the period beginning on the first meeting day and ending on the final meeting day), subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above. The cost of a room for the night preceding the first day of a meeting will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival in time for the meeting.

2. **Publications Officer (Book Publishing Board Meetings)**
   
a. Private practitioner Publication Officers are eligible for a maximum reimbursement of $500 total for expenses in the reimbursable categories as described in II. above. Otherwise, if applicable, they may qualify for reimbursement as described for Planning Committee members III.F.1.

**G. Section Award Ceremonies**
Reimbursement may be provided to award recipients for their attendance at the award ceremony in which the award will be bestowed, if the recipient, or the organizational award winner’s designee, meets one of the following criteria: government employee, academic, public interest lawyer, or is a student, retired or unemployed.

1. Up to $500 for the cost to travel to the city where the ceremony is held by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above.

2. Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for either the night before or the night after the presentation as necessary to accommodate the award recipient’s travel arrangements or longer if the presence of recipient is deemed necessary and approval has been granted by the Membership Officer and the Chair of the Special Committee on Section Awards, subject to the restrictions as described in II. above.
H. **SEER Socials**  
The amount of reimbursement available to SEER Social hosts is to be determined by the available funds in this budget and is subject to approval by the Membership Officer. Reimbursement may be provided to an approved Section member host to cover expenses associated with a SEER Social events. Reimbursable expenses are limited to $200 for food and/or non-alcoholic beverages.

IV. **ADDITIONAL EXPENSES OF THE SECTION CHAIR**

A. **Representing the Section at Events**  
1. When a Section Chair attends an ABA event, or an event held by a third-party, to represent the Section, the Chair is eligible for a maximum reimbursement of $500 towards travel and lodging expenses for each event as described in II., provided the event has been accounted for in the Section budget.

If the Section Chair is an employee of a government agency, academic institution, or non-governmental organization, or is retired or unemployed, the individual will be reimbursed using the guidelines delineated below.

a. Up to $500 for the cost to travel to the event location by air, train, bus, or rental or private vehicle, subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above.

b. Reimbursement is available for the actual cost of a room and tax for the duration of the meeting (the period beginning on the first meeting day and ending on the final meeting day), subject to the restrictions outlined in II. above. The cost of a room for the night preceding the first day of a meeting will be provided only if “same-day” transportation will not allow for arrival in time for the meeting.

B. **Registration Fees**  
The Section Chair shall not be required to pay registration fees for any Section event. In addition, the Section Chair shall not be required to pay any fees, including meal and function fees, for attendance of one accompanying guest of the Chair’s at Section events.

C. **Section Chair’s Stipend**  
During the fiscal year of their chairmanship, the Section Chair may claim up to $4,000 in reimbursable expenses related to their work for the Section. These expenses may be outside of the approved expense parameters described in II. above. These expenses may be reimbursement of additional travel costs, meals, etc. Stipend expenses must be eligible under the ABA Business Conduct Standards.

V. **REIMBURSEMENT REPORTING**  
Section staff shall ensure an expense reimbursement form is provided to an individual who has made a qualifying reimbursement request. The form will ask the requestor to confirm that the expenses for which reimbursement is being sought meet the ABA Business Conduct Standards. The completed form with appropriate documentation should be submitted to the indicated ABA staff within two weeks of the conclusion of the last travel date.

*This revised policy was adopted by the Section’s Spring Council Meeting on April 27, 2019 at a duly called meeting at which a quorum was present. It is effective as of that date and supersedes all previous reimbursement policies of the Section.*