

**Travel Policy
of the
Christian Reformed Church in North America
(Abridged Version)**

Scope—The following travel policies and guidelines are applicable to the business-related travel of all denominational agency staff members, the members of various boards and committees, and any others traveling on behalf, or as a guest, of the CRCNA. If you have questions that are not addressed in this document, please contact the office of the Executive Director (travel@crcna.org). This includes requests for *any exceptions* as well as questions about reimbursement.

Purpose—To ensure that the denomination's budgeted travel dollars are spent as effectively as possible, various procedures are prescribed in this document through which the CRCNA can utilize its buying power to secure preferred rates and optimal arrangements. The option of meeting by conference call or a go-to meeting should be considered when feasible.

Preferred Travel Agents—Domestic and international air travel should be made through Activa Travel (Activa), 2905 Lucerne Drive SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546 (corptravel@activatravel.com, 616-588-5500 or 1-800-555-2184) or T.H.E. Travel Centre American Express (T.H.E. Travel Centre), 1A Conestoga Drive, Suite 103, Brampton, ON L6Z 4N5, (Marcia Faber at meadowvale@sympatico.ca, 866-203-8745 or 519-622-7925) for travel originating in Canada because:

- Travel agents are authorized to book flights at the lowest airfare available. Airlines continually modify their prices; thus, prices for any given itinerary may be reduced more than once between the time of the purchase and the departure time. Providing that all the fare requirements are met, the travel agency reissues the ticket for the lower airfare, and the CRCNA receives a credit voucher for the difference without any penalties.
- All airline tickets are part of the travel agency's databases, which allows instant reporting on the traveler's flights. This is especially helpful during emergency situations.
- Activa or T.H.E. Travel Centre are able to inform you about details regarding less expensive flights; for example, double connections or alternate departure cities. The travel agents are authorized to report to, or consult with, the office of the ED in cases when the traveler makes demands that appear to fall outside of the parameters of this travel policy. In cases of dispute, every effort will be made to come to a mutually satisfactory resolution.
- Should you encounter any problems whatsoever with your reservations, both Activa and T.H.E. Travel Centre are just a telephone call away. (See Air Travel – Domestic and International.)
- If you are aware of a less expensive flight than is offered through the Activa or T.H.E. Travel Centre system, the information for that flight—dates, airline, and flight numbers—are to be conveyed to Activa or T.H.E. Travel Centre so they can book the reservation through their system.
- Activa (and T.H.E. Travel Centre upon request) provides the CRCNA with monthly reports to assist us in making business travel more efficient and cost effective. These reports help us to monitor travel expenditures, plan our travel budget, and enforce travel policy guidelines.

Traveler's Responsibilities—All travelers are responsible for completing and submitting the travel expense form with appropriate receipts attached, within 10 days of the completion of the

trip, to the designated person in the agency for which the travel is necessary. Expense forms are available from the agencies in both the United States and Canada.

Please book airfare as far in advance as possible—at least four weeks prior to the travel date or as soon as plans are firmly in place. If feasible, stay over a Saturday night in order to get the lowest fare. If a lower rate becomes available, your reservation will be rebooked at the lower rate. For all domestic travel, which includes the 48 contiguous states, Alaska, Hawaii, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean, book coach class. For international travel, when documented quotations are obtained that show business class costs are the same or lower than coach class fare, business class is allowed. First class travel is usually not allowed. *Be sure to tell the travel consultant which agency or committee should be charged for your travel.*

Activa and T.H.E. Travel Centre offer assistance with acquiring or updating information for traveler's passports, handling visas for foreign countries as well as advising on vaccinations needed. Airline seats, special meal requests, hotel, car, and rail reservations are included with international travel services.

During travel, if you find it necessary to change any portion of your airline ticket, contact Activa at 800-555-2184 during business hours (8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.) or at the after-hours emergency number that, along with the ID number, is listed on your itinerary. However, if the emergency number is used for non-emergency information, there will be an \$18 charge. For T.H.E. Travel Centre, call 866-203-8745. If you cannot contact the travel agent's office, changes may be made by the airline at its ticket counter.

Internet Airline Reservations—

The CRCNA *strongly discourages* your purchasing tickets via any Internet-based ticketing services. Travel agencies can search the web for all reservations using a web-based software program designed to search web sites and individual airline sites, providing results in seconds. All restrictions and services for Internet-booked reservations will be reviewed at the time of the reservation. (Please see last paragraph under Preferred Travel Agents.)

Lodging—To maximize savings opportunities and to provide accurate reporting, lodging reservations should normally be made at the Prince Conference Center at Calvin College (preferably) or the Ramada Plaza, Grand Rapids; and at the Best Western-Burlington, Holiday Inn, or Quality Inn for local accommodations, or through Activa or T.H.E. Travel Centre for other locations. The designated travel service providers can also assist you with last-minute hotel reservations if you are traveling and need a reservation unexpectedly. In those circumstances, however, it is acceptable to make the arrangements directly with a hotel. When doing so, ask whether a promotional rate is available.

When special rates for air travel and lodging are provided for a conference, call Activa or T.H.E. Travel Centre to confirm that the conference pricing is the best option available. If it is not, then Activa or T.H.E. Travel Centre will make the arrangements for you. Should the conference pricing be the best option, Activa or T.H.E. Travel Centre will advise you to make the arrangements as noted on the registration form.

A single room with private bath in a suitable, moderately priced hotel is the standard—balancing quality, price, and security. Examples of moderately priced hotels are:

- Comfort Inn
- Quality Inn
- Hampton Inn
- Fairfield Inn
- Courtyard by Marriott
- Holiday Inn

Guarantee late arrival (after 4:00 p.m.) with a major credit card other than the card that the travel agencies use for flight reservations.

If travel plans change and it becomes necessary for you to cancel a hotel reservation, it is advised that the travel agency make the cancellation only if the travel agency originally arranged the reservation.

If you do call the hotel directly, obtain the name and/or identifying number of the person who handles your cancellation request. Ask for a cancellation number. This information is essential in reversing a “no-show” charge, should one be placed on your credit card in error.

Car Rental—Drivers need to be 25 years of age or older. CRCNA travelers are expected to use the CRCNA’s preferred car vendors because discounts are contingent upon the extent of the CRCNA’s participation. Corporate identification numbers are needed to obtain the discounts on rental cars and can be obtained from the office of the ED and the travel agencies.

For identification and billing purposes, all CRCNA travelers are asked to include the name of the agency for which they are traveling on the rental form.

Local arrangements: The CRCNA has contracted with the Grand Rapids Enterprise Rent-A-Car (616-475-1300) for discounted rates. Enterprise is willing to deliver and pick up the car from the denominational building for your convenience. Courtesy Dodge (616-241-9514) is another possibility for local (Grand Rapids) arrangements. In Burlington it is best to use Avis Rent-A-Car (905-333-5744.)

Non-local arrangements: The CRCNA has contracted with Avis Rent-A-Car System, Inc. as the preferred car rental company. If Avis is not the best choice in a specific location, we have a contract with Enterprise as well. When renting from an Enterprise location other than that at 1170 28th St. SE, Grand Rapids, please charge to your corporate or personal credit card for reimbursement.

Be aware that many rental agencies, including Avis, may prohibit rental returns when a location is closed. If the location has a drop box it should not be a problem. Also the rental agency may require notification if your rental return date is to be changed from the original request. Please inquire about the rental company’s return policy.

It is recommended that reservations for non-local auto rentals be arranged through Activa or T.H.E. Travel Centre. The travel agency will check with other national agencies for rates that are lower than the Avis contract rates and will secure a reservation at the lowest possible rate, but there must be a minimum difference of \$10 per day.

Primary liability insurance must be purchased for any automobile rented anywhere *outside* the United States, its possessions and territories, and Canada. Purchase this coverage from the

agency from which you are renting the vehicle. North American travelers are asked to opt out of the rental car insurance option.

A mid-size car is standard; a full-size vehicle is advisable when three or more travelers are traveling together in the same vehicle. Larger vehicles, such as vans, should be rented only when there is a specific need.

Please refuel a rental vehicle before returning it to a rental agency. Rental agency refueling fees can be significantly higher than retail cost. Fuel receipts should be obtained to submit for reimbursement with the expense form.

Cost of rental a car is not covered for committee or board members when shuttle service is provided to meeting site.

Personal Car—Travelers are encouraged to use a rental car when they are driving **more than** 200 miles/kilometers per day. Personal vehicles may be used when driving fewer than 200 miles/kilometers per day, and mileage will be reimbursed at the prevailing Internal Revenue Service rate for travelers originating in the U.S., and the per kilometer rate advised by Revenue Canada for travelers originating in Canada.

In addition to mileage or kilometer reimbursement, travelers are also reimbursed for parking fees, road tolls, and any other expenses directly related to the trip. Travelers are not reimbursed for car repairs, parking tickets, traffic violations, fuel costs, or insurance claims.

Airline transportation should be used for long-distance travel. If a traveler elects to drive for long-distance travel, the mileage/car rental reimbursement **should not exceed** the average cost of an airline ticket to that destination.

Taxi/Bus/Limo/Shuttle Service—The cost of taxi, bus, or airport shuttle service is reimbursable. Travelers are expected to choose the most cost-effective mode of transportation available. Receipts should be obtained for this expense.

Rail Travel—Rail travel is considered a viable travel option.

Spouse Travel—A spouse (or any family member or friend) may accompany the traveler on business trips. However, any additional costs incurred because of these travelers are non-reimbursable out-of-pocket expenses.

Services—

Airport parking: Travelers are encouraged to use the most economical parking facilities available, which is normally the airport's long-term lot.

Trip insurance: Activa provides \$100,000 accidental death insurance with every airline ticket they issue. Therefore, the purchase of additional flight insurance is a personal expense to the traveler and is not reimbursable. Please decline trip cancellation insurance offered by Activa Travel.

Personal property and damaged luggage: It is presumed that travelers carry insurance on their personal property. Charging transportation expenses to the CRCNA travel account at Activa or T.H.E._Travel Centre activates baggage insurance coverage. Any additional luggage insurance

purchased (available through Activa and T.H.E. Travel Centre) is a personal expense to the traveler. Damaged luggage must be brought to the attention of the responsible airline within 24 hours of flight arrival at the particular airport location. The airline repairs the luggage or provides compensation for repairs. Airline liability varies so it's best to check with the airline at the time of the incident.

The airline is liable for certain expenses incurred by a passenger due to delayed luggage. Check with the responsible airline before incurring costs for items such as toiletries, clothing, and equipment rental. The CRCNA will not be held responsible for lost luggage.

Meals—Necessary, reasonable, and properly documented meal expenses are reimbursable. Receipts are required for all meal expenses. The receipt should include the name and location of the establishment, the date, and the amount. On your receipt, you are requested to name the person(s) or group with whom this meal was shared and the general purpose of your meeting. Submit all receipts for reimbursement with the expense form.

Expense Reporting—In order for the CRCNA's travel policy to satisfy the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requirement for accountable plans, travelers must complete an Expense Report. (Request a copy at travel@crcna.org.) All required receipts must be attached to the report. Both the traveler and a supervisor/administrator must sign the report.

Required receipts must be originals or customer copies identified by the name/address of the business, dated, itemized, and properly signed or stamped to indicate that payment has been made.

Gratuities—Gratuities are allowed for normal tipping situations. Use the following as guidelines for tipping: 15% for meals, \$1 for doormen, \$1/bag for bell men/skycaps, and 10% for taxi.

Luggage fees—CRCNA will reimburse the traveler for the first piece of luggage when charged. Additional luggage will be a personal expense.

Passports—

(Information obtained from: http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

a. Air Travel

All persons traveling by air outside of the United States are required to present a passport or other valid travel document to enter or re-enter the United States.

b. Land and Sea Travel

Effective June 1, 2009, the U.S. government will implement the full requirements of the land, and sea phase of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI). The proposed rules require most travelers, including Canadian and U.S. citizens, entering the United States at sea or land ports of entry to have a passport, passport card, or other document approved by the Department of Homeland Security.

c. U.S. Passport and WHTI Compliant Documents

- U.S. Passport: U.S. citizens may present a valid U.S. passport when traveling via air, land or sea between the U.S. and the aforementioned Western Hemisphere countries.

- The U.S. Passport Card: The passport card is only valid for re-entry into the United States at land border crossings and sea ports-of-entry from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean region, and Bermuda.
- WHTI-Compliant Travel Documents for U.S. citizen travel via land or sea:
 - Trusted Traveler Cards (NEXUS, SENTRI, or FAST)
 - State Issued Enhanced Driver's License (when available)
 - Enhanced Tribal Cards (when available)
 - U.S. Military Identification with Military Travel Orders
 - U.S. Merchant Mariner Document when traveling in conjunction with official maritime business
 - Native American Tribal Photo Identification Card
 - Form I-872 American Indian Card

Note: The passport requirement does **NOT** apply to U.S. citizens traveling to or returning directly from a U.S. territory. A helpful website in obtaining a passport including necessary forms and cost is: <http://travel.state.gov>. Aactiva Travel Services is also willing to assist with passport documents.

d. Passport photos are available through various sources including AAA and Walgreens.

Passport Renewal: Some countries require that your passport be valid at least six months beyond the dates of your trip and/or have two to four blank visa/stamp pages. Some airlines will not allow you to board if these requirements are not met.

Conclusion—The travel policy has been developed to assure the most cost-effective, fair, and responsible use of denominational time and financial resources. The office of the ED is responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of this policy. It is, of course, understood that the director of Canadian ministries and agency supervisory personnel will need to be directly involved in the regular administration of this policy. However, suggestions, concerns, requests for exceptions, and issues in dispute should be addressed to the ED until further notice (write travel@crcna.org).

The travel policy is applicable to all the agencies of the CRCNA, agency board members and volunteers, delegates to synod, and all others whose travel expenses are provided for by one of the agencies, ministries, or offices of the CRCNA.

Approved by Ministries Administrative Council
 November 9, 2000
 Revised August 2006
 Revised April 2009

Quick Reference

Canada

Car Rental - Burlington
Avis Rent-A-Car, Burlington (C187900)
Worldwide discount number: D396500
Phone: 905-333-5744

Carter Car & Truck Rentals
1400 Plains Road East
Burlington, ON L7R 3P8
Phone: 905-631-7484

Lodging – Burlington
Quality Inn
950 Walkers Line
Burlington, ON L7N 2G2
Phone: 1-905-639-9290
Toll free: 1-800-361-6352
Fax: 905-639-6900

Best Western
2412 Queensway Dr.
Burlington, ON L7R 3Te
Phone: 905-639-2700

Holiday Inn
3063 South Service Rd.
Burlington, ON L7N 3E9
Phone: 905-639-4443

Travel Arrangements
T.H.E. Travel Centre American Express
1A Conestoga Drive, Suite 103
Brampton, ON L6Z 4N5
Phone: 1-877-878-5220
Marcia Faber: 866-203-8745 or 519-622-7925
meadowvale@sympatico.ca

United States

Car Rental – Grand Rapids
Enterprise Rent-A-Car
1170 – 28th St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508
Phone: 616-475-1300

Courtesy Dodge
440 28th Street
Wyoming, MI 49509
Main # 452-2143
Direct line for car rentals: 241-9514

Lodging – Grand Rapids
Prince Conference Center
Calvin College
1800 East Beltline SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
Phone: 616-526-7200 or 866-526-7200

Ramada Plaza
3333 – 28th St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49512
Phone: 616-949-9222
Fax: 616-949-9534

Travel Arrangements
Activa Travel
2905 Lucerne Drive SE, Suite 100
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
Phone: 616-588-5500 or 800-555-2184
Emergencies: 800-358-1805
Note: An \$18 per call charge may apply for
the use of after hours emergency number.
Fax: 616-588-5501

Questions regarding travel
travel@crcna.org