

**JUDICIAL BRANCH**  
**TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES FOR JUDGES**  
**Effective January 1, 2026**

Judges are entitled to reimbursement for all reasonable and necessary business-related travel expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties, pursuant to the following guidelines.

**TRANSPORTATION**

The most economical mode of transportation reasonably available should be used for travel, in light of time, cost, work requirements, safety, and customary practice. To request assistance in securing travel accommodations, one may contact the Financial Division of the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts at **(217) 782-7770**.

Judges may use privately owned motor vehicles for travel. Effective **January 1, 2026**, the mileage reimbursement rate is **\$.725** per mile. The trip should be by the most direct, normally used route. Mileage in and around the destination city may also be included for reimbursement. No reimbursement will be provided for mileage incurred by judges to procure meals. Parking fees, tolls, and phone calls not exceeding five minutes in duration may also be reimbursed. Baggage handling tips are limited to **\$3.00** per day on arrival and departure days only, unless approved by the Administrative Director or his/her designee.

Travel between a judge's residence city and headquarters city, or any portion thereof, shall not be reimbursed. Travel between a judge's residence city and temporary work location is reimbursable provided that (1) the judge does not pass through his/her headquarters city, and/or (2) the travel does not coincide with the judge's regular commute, including any portion of the miles between the judge's headquarters city and residence city. In instances where a judge, traveling between his/her residence city and temporary work location, passes through his/her headquarters city or takes a route that coincides with his/her regular commute, only mileage in excess of the judge's regular commute to the temporary work location will be reimbursed. The Circuit Court Judges Travel Expense Act (5 ILCS 300/1) provides that a circuit court judge is eligible for travel expenses incurred outside his/her county of residence in connection with judicial duties.

Judges may utilize Amtrak as a transportation option. Judges traveling on official State of Illinois business receive a discounted rate from Amtrak. The one-way coach rates are available Monday through Friday by contacting Amtrak directly at (800) 872-7245. The Amtrak coach rates for travel between Alton and Chicago is **\$29.00**, Bloomington/Normal and Chicago is **\$16.00**, Carbondale and Chicago is **\$39.00**, Champaign and Chicago is **\$17.00**, Macomb and Chicago is **\$26.00**, Mattoon and Chicago is **\$22.00**, Springfield and Chicago is **\$24.00**, and Springfield and Joliet is **\$18.00**. Amtrak requires travelers using the State of Illinois discount to make reservations in advance. Reservations must be cancelled at least 24 hours prior to the train's scheduled departure to qualify for a full refund.

A judge seeking reimbursement for travel costs, including overnight accommodations, other than travel for his/her temporary court assignment and/or travel to Judicial Conference seminars, shall request prior approval from the Administrative Director or his/her designee. In addition, travel expenses incurred on Friday nights, Saturdays, and Sundays will not be reimbursed without prior approval of the Administrative Director or his/her designee. When seeking prior approval for reimbursement, a judge shall submit a request documenting the specific extenuating circumstance to the Administrative Director or his/her designee, via writing or e-mail, before incurring any travel costs. Failure to do so may result in denial of a judge's request for reimbursement. Examples of travel that are not eligible for reimbursement include travel to retirement ceremonies, seminars not sponsored by the Administrative Office, retirement presentations by the Judges' Retirement System, and lunch meetings unless the meeting is business-related.

A judge using a privately owned or State owned vehicle for State business must possess a valid driver's license as required by the Illinois Vehicle Code (625 ILCS 5/6-101). In addition, the Illinois Vehicle Code (625 ILCS 5/10-101) requires a judge using a privately owned vehicle for State business to obtain liability insurance coverage on the vehicle at the minimum amounts identified (625 ILCS 5/7-203). The travel voucher template contains a certification in Box #31, stating that the "[t]raveler certifies that she/he is duly licensed and carries at least the minimum auto liability insurance coverage," which meets these statutory requirements.

The Vehicle Code (625 ILCS 5/12-603.1) also requires that "[e]ach driver and passenger of a motor vehicle operated on a street or highway in this State shall wear a properly adjusted and fastened seat safety belt." All persons using a motor vehicle while traveling on official business of the Judicial Branch shall comply with this law.

Receipts for all other miscellaneous travel charges that individually exceed **\$10.00** (such as parking or cab fares) shall be submitted with the travel voucher. No reimbursement will be provided for parking and/or cab fare incurred by judges to procure meals.

The use of leased or rented vehicles, other than taxi cabs and shuttle vehicles, as well as the use of privately owned aircraft, is permitted only when circumstances warrant and when authorized by the Administrative Director or his/her designee in advance.

Reimbursement for travel outside the State of Illinois must be approved in advance by the Administrative Director or his/her designee.

## **LODGING**

Each judge shall ensure that he/she obtains the lowest available rate for lodging and that the rate is within the maximum reimbursement allowed. During October and November, 2025, the maximum lodging rate for Cook and Lake Counties is **\$223.00**, plus tax. During December, 2025, January, February, and March, 2026, the maximum lodging rate for Cook and Lake Counties is **\$142.00**, plus tax. During April, May, and June, 2026, the maximum lodging rate for Cook and Lake Counties is **\$234.00**, plus tax. The maximum lodging rate for St. Clair County is **\$150.00**, plus tax. The maximum lodging rate for DuPage County is **\$115.00**, plus tax. The maximum lodging rate for Will County is **\$114.00**, plus tax. In all other counties of the state, the rate is **\$110.00**, plus tax. Unless a higher amount is approved by the Supreme Court or Administrative Director or his/her designee, any amount that exceeds the maximum reimbursement allowed will be absorbed by the judge.

Costs for lodging at conference or meeting sites that have been arranged or approved by the Supreme Court or Administrative Director, or his/her designee will be reimbursed at the rates negotiated with the facility offering the lodging, even though the rate may exceed the amount otherwise allowable. The judge must identify him or herself to the facility as a participant in the program to be charged the negotiated rate.

Receipts for lodging expenses shall be submitted with the travel voucher. For the Comptroller's Office to initiate payment, the lodging receipt must show that the lodging bill was paid and that the bill has a zero balance. Generally, overnight lodging expenses will not be reimbursed within the area surrounding the judge's headquarters.

## PER DIEM/MEALS

**NEW PER DIEM/MEAL REIMBURSEMENT RATES:** Per diem will be paid for travel that includes overnight lodging or is more than 12 continuous hours.

Under certain circumstances and in the absence of overnight lodging, per diem may be reimbursable provided the judge is on travel status for **more than** 12 continuous hours. Judges would be eligible for the **First Day of Travel** per diem rate less any meals provided and in the absence of overnight lodging when travel is **more than** 12 continuous hours. Please see the attached *Travel Reimbursement Schedule* for per diem/meal rates.

Per diem will be paid for a judge's travel that includes overnight lodging. Per diem will be reimbursed at a daily rate less any meals provided. Per diem for the first and last day of travel will be reimbursed at the **First and Last Day of Travel** per diem rate less any meals provided. If breakfast, lunch or dinner are provided, the per diem is reduced by the amount identified for the specific meal(s) provided. Please see the attached *Travel Reimbursement Schedule* for per diem/meal rates.

Breakfast and dinner may be reimbursable in the absence of overnight lodging or if travel is 12 continuous hours or less. If a judge leaves home at or before 6:00 a.m. to travel to a meeting, the judge is eligible for the breakfast meal allowance. If a judge traveling to a meeting arrives home at or after 7:00 p.m., the judge is eligible for the dinner meal allowance. Lunch is not a reimbursable expense. Please see the attached *Travel Reimbursement Schedule* for per diem/meal rates.

## VOUCHERS

All allowable travel expenses must be itemized on a *State of Illinois Travel Voucher C-10* form, which is available on the Supreme Court's website by choosing the **Forms** tab and selecting **State C-10 Travel Voucher Form**. The completed form must contain the date, time, purpose of travel, city of headquarters, and city of residence in the appropriate boxes. No travel voucher will be processed without a city designation for both residence and headquarters. In most instances, the judge's headquarters should be the city at which the judge performs the largest portion of his/her work. If this is not the case, the judge shall document the facts and circumstances by which another city is designated as headquarters. It is the responsibility of the judge and his/her chief judge to designate both the headquarters and residence in accordance with federal tax regulations.

Multiple travel dates may be combined on one travel voucher, as long as all trips identified conclude within the same calendar month. If a single trip begins at the end of a calendar month and concludes in the first days of the next calendar month, the judge must submit this single trip on one travel voucher.

The Chief Circuit Judge shall approve all travel reimbursement vouchers submitted by circuit and associate judges.

**\*Travel Vouchers Can Be Submitted Electronically:** Travel vouchers and accompanying receipts can be scanned and submitted via email to the Accounting Unit at [accounting@illinoiscourts.gov](mailto:accounting@illinoiscourts.gov). Traveler's **must** sign on the Traveler Signature line on the travel voucher. Travel vouchers for Circuit and Associate Judges must also be signed by their Chief Circuit Judge or their designee. Any unusual items contained on the travel voucher shall be identified in a cover memorandum. Receipts for all expenses claimed (other than meals) that individually exceed **\$10.00 must** be legible and submitted with the travel voucher and emailed to [accounting@illinoiscourts.gov](mailto:accounting@illinoiscourts.gov).

**\*Travel Voucher Submission Procedures:** Travel vouchers **must** be submitted and received by the AOIC within **60 days** of the traveler's last date of travel. Travel vouchers received after the **60-day** deadline will be treated as taxable income and processed through payroll. In the event of extraordinary circumstances that prevent a traveler from submitting a travel reimbursement voucher within the required **60 days**, a traveler can submit a *Judicial Branch Prompt Submission of Travel Vouchers Exception Form* with their travel voucher identifying the reason for delay.

Questions concerning travel reimbursements, or any other vouchers submitted for payment may be addressed to the Accounting Unit, at **(217) 782-7770 or by email at [accounting@illinoiscourts.gov](mailto:accounting@illinoiscourts.gov).**

**TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT SCHEDULE  
JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES OF THE JUDICIAL BRANCH  
(Effective January 1, 2026)**

<u>Type of Reimbursement</u>	<u>Rate</u>
<u>Mileage</u>	
Auto	\$0.725/mile
<u>Lodging (exclusive of tax)</u>	
Counties of Cook and Lake	
October & November, 2025	\$223.00
December, 2025, January, February & March, 2026	\$142.00
April, May, & June, 2026	\$234.00
County of St. Clair	\$150.00
County of DuPage	\$115.00
County of Will	\$114.00
All Other Counties	\$110.00
Out-of-State – Please contact the Accounting Unit at (217) 782-7770 or <a href="mailto:accounting@illinoiscourts.gov">accounting@illinoiscourts.gov</a> for specific lodging rates.	Varies by Region

**Amtrak – For Monday through Friday Travel Contact 1-800-872-7245 for State Rate**

Destination	State Rate	Destination	State Rate
Alton and Chicago	\$29.00	Macomb and Chicago	\$26.00
Bloomington/Normal and Chicago	\$16.00	Mattoon and Chicago	\$22.00
Carbondale and Chicago	\$39.00	Springfield and Chicago	\$24.00
Champaign and Chicago	\$17.00	Springfield and Joliet	\$18.00

**Per Diem/Meals**

Travel that is more than 12 continuous hours and is absent of overnight lodging, will be reimbursed the **First Day of Travel** per diem rate less any meals provided. Travel that includes overnight lodging will be reimbursed per diem at the daily rate less any meals provided. Per diem for the first and last day of travel will be reimbursed at the **First and Last Day of Travel** per diem rate less any meals provided. If breakfast, lunch and/or dinner are provided, the per diem is reduced by the amount identified for the specific meal(s) provided.

In-State Travel	Cook & Lake Counties	DuPage County	St. Clair County	Will County	All Other Counties
<b>Breakfast</b>	\$23.00	\$20.00	\$22.00	\$18.00	\$16.00
<b>Lunch</b>	\$26.00	\$22.00	\$23.00	\$20.00	\$19.00
<b>Dinner</b>	\$38.00	\$33.00	\$36.00	\$31.00	\$28.00
<b>Per Diem – Day</b>	\$92.00	\$80.00	\$86.00	\$74.00	\$68.00
<b>First &amp; Last Day of Travel</b>	\$69.00	\$60.00	\$64.50	\$55.50	\$51.00

Out-of-State per diem varies by region. Please contact the Accounting Unit at (217) 782-7770 or by email at [accounting@illinoiscourts.gov](mailto:accounting@illinoiscourts.gov) for specific per diem rates.