

226th General Assembly (2024)

Travel Expense Policies and Procedures For Commissioners and Advisory Delegates

Please read this information carefully before you make your travel and housing arrangements. These procedures and policies have been developed in the interest of good stewardship, and to provide fairly for the comfort and convenience of assembly commissioners and advisory delegates. Contact ga.helpme@pcusa.org with any questions or concerns. See <https://ga-pcusa.org> for additional information and resources.

GA Schedule

The GA Docket and the full Schedule of Events (with information about official meetings, assembly worship, and optional activities) are available at <http://ga-pcusa.org>. Please review these *before* you start to register.

Where and When

General Assembly (GA) committee meetings will be conducted online, June 25 through June 27; most commissioners and advisory delegates and all resource persons and other official participants will participate by Zoom and PC-Biz; these will be live-streamed for others. *Commissioners and advisory delegates are required to participate in these online meetings of the committee to which they are assigned.*

From Sunday, June 30 through July 4 the GA plenary meetings and worship services will be conducted at the Salt Palace Convention Center (SPCC) in downtown Salt Lake City. There will be online and live-stream access for some, but *commissioners and advisory delegates are required to be present in-person in Salt Lake City to participate in these sessions.*

Most commissioners and TSADs will travel to Salt Lake City on Saturday, June 29. Utah Presbytery's Committee on Local Arrangements (COLA) invites all assembly participants to the GA Welcome Reception from 6:00 to 8:00pm that evening in the Marriott City Creek Hotel (across the street from the SPCC).

YAADs will travel to Salt Lake City on Friday, June 28 to participate in an orientation for these delegates that begins with dinner on Friday and continues Saturday. Their lodging in Salt Lake City will be covered from Friday.

On Sunday assembly participants will be hosted for worship and lunch in Salt Lake area churches – be sure to sign up for one of these opportunities when you complete your GA registration.

The assembly reconvenes at 2:30pm on Sunday, June 30 and will adjourn by 1:00pm on Thursday, July 4. Most participants will depart that afternoon/evening, but available flight arrangements may require an additional night for some.

Registration, Travel and Lodging

How to Register: When assembly registration opens, you will receive an email from ga.helpme@pcusa.org with instructions and a link to create your **MyGA account** and begin your registration. This is how you will confirm your plans to attend and reserve lodging in one of the assembly hotels. This is a unique link for your registration that recognizes that you are a commissioner or advisory

delegate. *Please be sure to use this link - do NOT use the "public" registration link at the GA web site. Do NOT forward your email/link to anyone else.*

After creating your MyGA account you will directly enter the GA Registration process, where you will fill in pertinent information about yourself, your anticipated hotel arrival/departure dates and hotel preferences, etc. You will also have the opportunity to purchase tickets to one or more of several optional events and provide credit card payment for those.

Families: Spouses/partners and children are welcome to accompany a commissioner/advisory delegate, at their expense. You may reserve a double room when you register. The assembly covers the full single/double hotel room charge for the designated number of nights for commissioners and advisory delegates; there is normally no additional charge to share with one adult and up to two children.

You will be able to purchase additional tickets to meals or other activities that you are attending for a spouse or family members as you register.

Assembly Lodging

The three assembly hotels are each located within two blocks of the SPCC. Complete your assembly registration and fill in your arrival/departure dates and hotel preferences as soon as possible - *by April 26* - to reserve lodging in one of these hotels. Your allowable room charges at these properties are paid directly by the per capita budget.

The per capita budget directly pays for accommodations at the full single room rate for commissioners and advisory delegates in one of the assembly hotels with a direct bill arrangement. Participants are not expected to share a room with another commissioner/advisory delegate. Those who choose to share a room with a friend who is also a participant will indicate that as they register - both roommates must choose that option and list each other as roommates.

Reimbursement is normally NOT available for charges incurred for staying in other hotels, Airbnb's, or other alternative lodgings. Those who stay at home, with family or friends, etc. and commute will be reimbursed for mileage (not to exceed \$60/day) and parking (not to exceed \$25/day).

Length of Stay: For most commissioners and TSADs, lodging is covered for up to 5 nights (from Saturday, June 29, through Wednesday night, July 4) with the understanding that available flight arrangements may require an additional night for some, especially for departure flights.

Lodging for Friday, June 28, is also covered for young adult advisory delegates attending the YAAD orientation.

Charges for additional nights for personal reasons are at your expense.

If you drive to Salt Lake City, hotel charges prior to Saturday, June 29 or after the night of Wednesday, July 3 are normally considered a driving expense. Include these with related costs on your expense voucher. These are reimbursable provided the total (mileage, parking, lodging and meal costs in route) is still less than the lowest logical airfare, as determined by the assembly travel agency.

Payment and deposit: While the assembly budget covers your allowable hotel room charges, *you will need a major credit card or a cash deposit (\$200 or more) upon arrival at your hotel as a deposit* to cover any room charges for which you are responsible, and potential incidental charges such as meals and phone calls charged to your room. If you use a debit card for this purpose, the hotel will put a hold on the deposit amount so it will be unavailable until after you depart.

Travel to Salt Lake City

Air Travel: You will receive an email from garegistrar@pcusa.org (separate from the MyGA/Registration email and link from ga.helpme@pcusa.org) with instructions for booking travel and a link to an on-line booking tool that enables airfare to be charged directly to the assembly through Balboa Travel, the designated assembly travel agency. Travelers may also call a Balboa agent to book their travel. *Tickets booked through another travel agent or directly with an airline are not reimbursable.*

Make your travel arrangements soon (*by April 26*) for the best fares and choice of flights. *To avoid the highest fares, payment for airfares is limited to the 30-day advance-purchase amount.*

The per capita budget pays for travel between your home and Salt Lake City at the lowest logical main cabin round-trip fare. If you request a more expensive itinerary (a direct flight with a higher fare, a stopover in another city, etc.) in most cases you are responsible for paying the additional amount, as calculated by the GA travel agent.

Most fares are non-refundable, sometimes with fees for changes. *Be sure of your schedule and the accuracy of the reservation when you book your ticket.* The OGA will pay for or reimburse change fees or new tickets *only* when the assembly requires the travel change.

By Train: Salt Lake City is served by Amtrak (amtrak.com) which may be convenient and cost-effective for some. Train fares are reimbursable, up to the equivalent of the lowest logical airfare (as determined by Balboa Travel). Upgraded Amtrak services (sleeper cars, etc.) are not reimbursable.

By Car: Those who choose to drive to Salt Lake City rather than taking reasonably available commercial travel options (plane, train, etc.) are reimbursed for:

- mileage (at the IRS rate in effect over the assembly dates, currently 67 cents/mile)
- meals enroute (up to \$40 per day)
- lodging enroute (up to \$95 per night plus tax)
- parking charges in Salt Lake City (up to \$25/day)

HOWEVER, if this total exceeds the air/train fare that you and commissioners/advisory delegates who are your passengers would incur, reimbursement is limited to the equivalent of the lowest logical air/train fare(s), as determined by the assembly travel agency.

Detailed receipts are required for meal, lodging and parking expenses.

Drivers who live near enough to Salt Lake City that commercial travel is unavailable or not logical are reimbursed for mileage at the IRS rate in effect for the assembly dates, and parking charges in Salt Lake City (up to \$25/day – receipts required). For those staying in an assembly hotel, mileage reimbursement is limited to one round-trip between your home and downtown Salt Lake City.

Contact ga.helpme@pcusa.org with questions about or problems with assembly registration or booking travel.

Meals in Salt Lake City

Commissioners and advisory delegates receive tickets to the Welcome Reception and the four group meals (Sunday dinner, Monday dinner, Wednesday lunch, Wednesday dinner) at no charge; these will appear as pre-checked activities as you register online. Please be sure to register to attend one of the Salt

Lake City area churches hosting assembly participants for worship and lunch on Sunday, June 30 when you complete your registration.

Other meals are covered with the assembly per diem of \$57 (\$14-breakfast, \$15-lunch, \$28-dinner). For most commissioners and TSADs the per diem begins with lunch on Saturday, June 29 and ends with dinner on Thursday, July 4, to also cover some meals when traveling. For most YAADs it will begin with lunch on Friday, June 28. When you check in on-site you will receive a credit card with a pre-set limit equivalent to the per diem amount for those meal times in Salt Lake City not provided as group meals (or by one of the churches on Sunday). It can be used at the SPCC concession areas, hotel restaurants, and most other restaurants in the area.

Some assembly ministry areas and seminaries are sponsoring optional breakfast and lunch events during the assembly for those interested in learning more about their work. Most are ticketed meal events that involve a fee. These tickets can be purchased as you complete your assembly registration. Please review the *Schedule of Events* before you begin that process.

Ground Transportation

Salt Lake City has an excellent light rail system which includes service between the airport (SLC) and downtown, with a stop just a few blocks from the SPCC and assembly hotels. Those who are able are encouraged to use this economical and environmentally friendly form of transportation. The per capita budget will cover the \$5 round trip fare by adding that amount to the per capita meal cards for commissioners and advisory delegates).

For those not able to manage the light rail, shuttle service will be provided between the convention center and the airport on the peak arrival days (Friday, June 28 and Saturday, June 29) and on the peak departure date (Thursday, July 4).

More information about these arrangements and options will be sent to all registered attendees well in advance of the assembly.

Car rental and other ground transportation expenses in Salt Lake City are generally *not* reimbursable.

Dependent Care during the Assembly

The General Assembly is a business meeting, with very long days and few family-oriented activities, and it is not feasible to arrange for onsite childcare to accommodate commissioners and advisory delegates with children or other dependents so they can serve in these roles.

Instead, the GA Dependent Care Policy emphasizes a flexible approach to accommodating the variety of arrangements that some commissioners and advisory delegates may set up. For example, a commissioner or advisory delegate may decide that their situation is best accommodated with help in:

- Employment of a part-time sitter at the commissioner or advisory delegate's home or at the assembly
- The cost of care at a child or adult care center over and above that which is ordinarily incurred when the commissioner or advisory delegate is at home
- The cost of transporting a family member or other trusted person to the commissioner or advisory delegate's home or to the assembly to provide dependent care
- Additional travel, registration and/or housing costs for a dependent to attend a camp or conference above what would ordinarily occur if the commissioner or advisory delegate were not attending the assembly

Expenses for these and other eligible arrangements are reimbursable, up to the limit of \$100 per day for the first dependent, and \$50 per day for each additional dependent. This applies for up to the combined number of days the commissioner or advisory delegate requires such support to fully participate in the online GA committee meetings held June 25 through June 27 and/or to attend the in-person plenary sessions held in Salt Lake City June 30 through July 4 (including travel on June 29). Please review the policy at ga-pcusa.org for additional information and documentation requirements.

For those who do bring children to the General Assembly, a Family Room will be located near the plenary hall, open during the hours of plenary sessions and committee meetings. It will *not* be staffed; parents may spend time with their young child(ren) there. It will be equipped with a rocking chair, refrigerator and other appropriate furnishings and equipment.

Expense Reimbursement

As travel and hotel charges are paid directly by the assembly, and G.A. issued credit cards are used for meals on-site, most commissioners and advisory delegates will have no other expenses to claim. Those who do (for mileage, etc.) will obtain an expense reimbursement form from the treasurer on-site. Receipts are required. Reimbursement checks will be mailed following the assembly.

Changes and Cancellations

If at any time prior to the assembly you find that you are unable to serve as a commissioner or young adult advisory delegate, immediately contact your presbytery so that plans for an alternate can be made.

Questions? Please contact:
ga.helpme@pcusa.org