

# KEY EXPENSES

## TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR FIREFIGHTERS

### PROFESSIONAL FEES & DUES:

Dues paid to professional societies related to your profession are deductible. These could include professional organizations, business leagues, trade associations, chambers of commerce, boards of trade and civic organizations. However, dues paid for memberships in clubs organized for business, pleasure, recreation or other social purpose are not deductible. These could include country clubs, golf and athletic clubs, airline clubs, hotel clubs and luncheon clubs.

### UNIFORMS & UPKEEP EXPENSES:

Generally, the costs of your firefighter uniforms are fully deductible if they aren't provided to you without charge by your employer. IRS rules specify that work clothing costs and the cost of maintenance are deductible if: (1) the uniforms are required by your employer (if you're an employee); and (2) the clothes are not adaptable to ordinary street wear. Normally, the employer's emblem attached to the clothing indicates it is not for street wear. The cost of protective clothing (e.g. safety shoes or goggles) is also deductible.

### TELEPHONE EXPENSES:

The basic local telephone service costs of the first telephone line in your residence are not deductible. However, toll calls from that line are deductible if the calls are business-related. The costs (basic fee and toll calls) of a second line in your home are also deductible if the line is used exclusively for business.

When communication equipment, such as a cell phone, is used part for business and part personally the cost of the equipment must be allocated to deductible business use and non-deductible personal use. Keep your bills for cellular phone use and mark all business calls.

### CONTINUING EDUCATION:

Educational expenses are deductible under either of two conditions: (1) your employer requires the education in order for you to keep your job or rate of pay; or (2) the education maintains or improves your skills as a firefighter. Costs of courses that are taken to meet the minimum requirements of a job, or that qualify you for a new trade or business, are NOT deductible

### MISCELLANEOUS:

House dues and meal expenses may be deductible. Firefighters are often required to eat their meals at the station house. One court case (Sibla) said that the costs of such meals are nondeductible unless the firefighters: (1) are required to make payments to

a common mess fund as a condition of employment, and (2) must pay whether or not they are at the station house to eat the meals. Contact this office for further details on this deduction.

### EQUIPMENT & REPAIRS:

Generally, to be deductible, items must be ordinary and necessary to your job as a firefighter and not reimbursable by your employer. Record separately items having a useful life of more than one year. Normally, the costs of such assets are recovered differently on your tax return than are other recurring, everyday business expenses such as flashlights, batteries and other supplies.

### AUTO TRAVEL:

Your auto expenses are based on the number of qualified business miles you drive. Expenses for travel between business locations or daily transportation expenses between your residence and temporary work locations are deductible; include them as business miles. Expenses for your trips between home and work each day, or between home and one or more regular places of work, are COMMUTING expenses and are NOT deductible.

Document business miles in a record book as follows: (1) give the date and business purpose of each trip; (2) note the place to which you traveled; (3) record the number of business miles; and (4) record your car's odometer reading at both the beginning and end of the tax year. Keep receipts for all car operating expenses – gas, oil, repairs, insurance etc. – and of any reimbursement you received for your expenses.

### OUT-OF-TOWN TRAVEL:

Expenses incurred when traveling away from "home" overnight on job-related and continuing education trips that were not reimbursed or reimbursable by your employer are deductible. Your "home" is generally considered to be the entire city or general area where your principal place of employment is located. Out-of-town expenses include transportation, meals, lodging, tips and miscellaneous items like laundry, valet etc.

Document away-from-home expenses by noting the date, destination and business purpose of your trip. Record business miles if you drove to the out-of-town location. In addition, keep a detailed record of your expenses – lodging, public transportation, meals, etc. Always list meals and lodging separately in your records. Receipts must be retained for each lodging expense. However, if any other business expense is less than \$75, a receipt is not necessary if you record all of the information timely in a diary. You must keep track of the full amount of meal and entertainment expenses even though only a portion of the amount may be deductible.



Occupational Series



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# INTRODUCTION

In order to deduct expenses in your trade or business, you must show that the expenses are "ordinary and necessary." An ordinary expense is one that is customary in your particular line of work. A necessary expense is one that is appropriate but not necessarily essential in your business. The application of these terms to you relies heavily on the "facts and circumstances" of your unique situation.

**IMPORTANT** – For Federal purposes, the expenses included in this brochure are no longer deductible after 2017 and generally through 2025 as a result of tax reform (TCJA). However, not all states conformed to TCJA and these items may still be deductible on your state tax return.

## PROFESSIONAL FEES & DUES:

Association Dues	
House Dues (Sibla 1980, CA9) 611 F2d 1260, 80-1 USTC	
Union Dues	
Other: _____	
Other: _____	

## UNIFORMS & UPKEEP:

Alterations	
Boots	
Cleaning	
Emblems	
Gloves	
Hat	
Helmet	
Jacket	
Laundry	
Pants	
Repairs	
Shirts	
Shoes	
Ties	
Whistle	
Other: _____	

## TELEPHONE EXPENSES:

Cellular Calls	
Paging Service	
Phone Cards	
Toll Calls	
Other: _____	

## AUTO TRAVEL:

Between 1st & 2nd Job (mi)	
Between Stations (mi)	
Continuing Education (mi)	
Out-of-Town Business Trips (mi)	
Library (mi)	
Purchasing Equipment & Supplies (mi)	
Uniform Cleaning & Maintenance (mi)	
Parking Fees (\$)	
Tolls (\$)	
Other: _____	
Other: _____	

## SUPPLIES & EXPENSES:

Answering Machine	
Batteries	
Beeper	
Binoculars	
Briefcase	
Flashlight	
ID Case	
Key Strap	
Map Book	
NoteBook	
Pager	
Polish	
Recorder	
Repairs - Equipment	
Safety Equipment	
Safety Glasses	
Tapes - Recording	
Other: _____	
Other: _____	

## CONTINUING EDUCATION:

Correspondence Course Fees	
Materials & Supplies	
Registration	
Seminar Fees	
Supplies	
Textbooks	
Training Sessions	
Other: _____	

## OUT-OF-TOWN TRAVEL:

Airfare	
Bridge & Highway Tolls	
Bus & Subway	
Car Rental	
Laundry	
Lodging (do not combine with meals)	
Meals (do not combine with lodging)	
Parking	
Porter, Bell Captain	
Taxi, Uber, Lyft & similar	
Telephone Calls (including home)	
Train	
Other: _____	

## MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES:

Errors and Omissions Insurance	
Job Seeking	
Legal (Protection and production of taxable income)	
Liability Insurance	
Professional Subscriptions	
Other: _____	
Other: _____	
Other: _____	