

TRAVEL, MEALS AND HOSPITALITY EXPENSES

Policy

The Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive, issued by the Ontario Management Board of Cabinet, sets out requirements for establishing expense rules where expenses are reimbursed from public funds.

The expense rules apply to any person in the agency making an expense claim, including the following:

- Board members,
- Employees, and
- Consultants and contractors engaged by the agency, providing consulting or other services

DCAFS will reimburse for all reasonable travel and miscellaneous expenses incurred in the course of work on behalf of the agency.

This directive is based on four key principles.

- A. Accountability – DCAFS is accountable for public funds used to reimburse travel, meals and hospitality expenses. All expenses must be work related and support business objectives.
- B. Transparency – DCAFS is transparent to all stakeholders. The rules for incurring and reimbursing travel, meal and hospitality expenses are clear and easily understood. The policy has to be posted on the agency's website in accessible formats, so the expense rules are available to the public.
- C. Value for Money – Taxpayer dollars are used prudently and responsibly. Plans for travel, meals, accommodation and hospitality are necessary and economical with due regard for health and safety. Expenses must be modest and appropriate.
- D. Fairness – Legitimate authorized expenses incurred during the course of business of DCAFS are reimbursed. Expenses must strike a balance between economy, health & safety and efficiency of operations.

The Agency will not reimburse expenses which do not comply with this policy. In the event of an overpayment of expense claims, such overpayment will be recovered promptly from the payee. Employees and other claimants are obliged to familiarize themselves with this policy and to comply with it. They should seek clarification from their managers or respective authorized approvers if required. Managers or approvers are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and for taking remedial action if required.

Approved by the Board of Directors
October 28, 2009
February 27, 2013
January 30, 2019

This policy is supported by the operational procedure below.

TRAVEL, MEALS AND HOSPITALITY EXPENSES

Procedure

Non-Reimbursable Expenses

Expenses of a personal nature will not be reimbursed. Such expenses include but are not limited to:

- Recreational purpose (e.g.: video rentals, mini-bars)
- Personal items
- Traffic/parking violations
- Alcoholic drinks
- Expenses incurred on behalf of friends/family

Reimbursable Expenses- General

Receipts

Original itemized receipts (not photocopies), showing taxes paid, must be submitted for all expense claims. Credit card slips by themselves are not sufficient to support a claim for reimbursement.

In the event of missing receipts, an exception may be made at the discretion of the individual's manager and only with appropriate documentation from the claimant that a receipt has been misplaced.

For all purchases with an Agency credit card, [See Corporate Purchasing Cards policy](#).

Expense claims with supporting documentation (e.g. travel requests, receipts etc.) must be submitted on the [Staff Expense Form](#) within 90 days of the date on which expenses are incurred and in the case of the last quarter, by fiscal year end. There must be a description of each expense claimed and an explanation for any unusual expense. Exceptions are at the discretion of Senior Managers or the Executive Director.

If there is an overpayment of an expense claim, the overpayment must be repaid promptly.

For approved expense limits, see [Authority to Commit Funds and Sign Cheques](#).

Authorizations

Managers approving expense claims are responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy. Expense approval limits are as designated in the agency's designated payment signing authority document.

Guidance on Exceptions

Requests for reimbursement that are not in compliance with this policy will be rejected, and must be corrected and resubmitted for approval. Decisions whether to approve the reimbursement of an exceptional expenditure incurred for/related to business purposes must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and approved by an employee's Manager, Director or Executive Director. A decision to approve an exception will be guided by the following principles:

- Trust – use discretion and latitude to act in a fair and reasonable manner in addressing exceptions that are business related
- Flexibility – management decisions respect the duty to accommodate, respond to persons' needs and to consider unforeseen circumstances
- Stewardship – to ensure consistent, fair and equitable application of this policy giving consideration to all circumstances while maintaining the shared responsibility and prudent use of agency resources

Where the Manager decides to exercise discretion in making an exception and in order to ensure a proper record for audit purposes, the rationale for the exception must be documented and accompany the expense claim.

Advances

In general, the Agency does not extend advances. Under extenuating circumstances, documented advances may be approved by the Executive Director and are subject to taxable benefits.

Loyalty Programs

Staff may participate in loyalty programs (i.e. frequent traveller programs) provided they select the most cost-effective means of travel.

Travel Expenses

- The most practical and economical way to travel (including accommodation) will be chosen in each circumstance, unless an exception is granted by the appropriate authority.
- Normal travel related to a direct service or other Agency business and within the Agency's area of jurisdiction should be undertaken using a vehicle from the Agency fleet. Travel outside of the agency's jurisdiction requires approval from an employee's immediate Manager. Agency expense guidelines will govern reimbursement claims.
- Travel outside of Ontario requires prior approval from a Director or Executive Director.
- Travel outside of Canada requires prior approval from the Executive Director. A detailed travel request (including purpose, need, cost, alternatives considered), must be submitted for pre-approval.

Medical/Health Insurance

Employees will not be reimbursed for the cost of privately arranged medical/health insurance for travel since coverage in the event of illness, injury or death is provided through the agency health insurance plan. Refer details to the Agency's Employees Benefits Plan.

Vehicle Insurance

Only employees with valid drivers' licenses are authorized to drive their own or other vehicles in the course of agency business.

Personal vehicles used for agency business must be insured at the vehicle owner's expense for personal motor vehicle liability. Certain designated positions, such as After Hours staff, require the regular use of an automobile, for use on Agency business as a term of employment. These employees are required to have a reliable automobile, a valid driver's license, and business automobile insurance including a minimum of \$1,000,000 Third Party Liability as well as Accident Benefits and Business Use endorsement. The agency does not reimburse costs of business use coverage or collision and liability coverage.

The agency assumes no financial responsibility for privately owned vehicles other than paying the kilometric rate when used for agency business.

Accidents must be reported immediately to local law enforcement authorities, the rental car agency (if applicable), the automobile insurance company (if using a personal vehicle) and the person's immediate manager.

Car Rental

For any single day trip where the round trip distance is to exceed 200 km, employees are encouraged to rent cars through the agency's preferred vendor when a car rental is a more reasonable alternative in the case after balancing factors such as economy, health & safety and efficiency of operations.

The size of rental car is not to exceed a mid-size car. Upgrades to full size cars are permitted if the rate charged does not exceed mid-size car rental rates. Exceptions are to be documented and approved in writing. In no case will luxury or sports car rentals be reimbursed.

Before taking possession of the rented vehicle, double check the vehicle kilometres and gas gauge to ensure consistency with the recording on the rental agreement. If there is a discrepancy, please address it with the car rental company at that time.

Before returning the rented vehicle, the rental car must be refuelled, in order to avoid higher gasoline charges imposed by the rental company.

Kilometre Reimbursements Rates for Personal Vehicle Use

All staff, volunteers, foster parents and students will be reimbursed for mileage expenses for the use of their personal vehicles for agency business at a rate of 51¢ per kilometre (effective April 1, 2018). Staff at Head Office are required to book an Agency vehicle for all travel, and may only use their own vehicle if they can demonstrate to their Manager, that a vehicle was not available for use. Staff are authorized to use their own vehicle to travel to meetings or visits at the start or the end of the work day if their home is more than 25 km from their workplace and the travel is closer to home than the workplace.

Mileage claims are to be submitted on the approved expense claim form and approved by the person's manager.

The claims must include the following information:

- Case name / number or Purpose of Travel
- Starting address (or institution name)
- Ending address (or institution name)
- Km's travelled
- Date of travel

Reimbursement will be paid for:

- a. All distances between the locations of first and last work appointments,
- b. Distances to location of first appointment from home or from location of last appointment to home, after deducting the distance from home to location of regular office.

For longer trips (over 200 km. both the claimants and the approvers have to ensure that the kilometres claimed are reasonable relative to distances indicated by internet mapping programs.

Taxi Travel

Where practical, local public transit/hotel shuttles must be used. Receipts for reimbursement are not required.

Where other means of travel are not available or practical, taxi travel will be reimbursed only with receipts.

Rail Transportation

Travel by rail (coach class) is permitted when this is the most practical and economical way to travel.

Air Transportation

Travel by air is permitted when this is the most practical and economical way to travel. The standard is economy class. Travel in fare classes above economy will only be reimbursed at the economy class rate.

Other Travel Expenses

Accommodation

Reimbursement for hotel accommodation in the Agency's geographical jurisdiction area will not normally be made. Exceptional or emergency situations may arise where personnel who reside out of town are required to remain in the agency's jurisdiction overnight – for example extended meeting on urgent and important business, large IT projects, etc and these may be approved at the Manager's discretion.

For any overnight accommodation, manager approval must be secured prior to the expenditure.

Reimbursement will be made for single accommodation in a standard room and no reimbursement will be made for suites, executive floors or concierge levels.

Private stays with family and friends are encouraged. A maximum of \$30.00 per night for gratuitous lodging is allowed. No receipt is required.

For extended stays out of town at a single location, long term accommodation must be approved by a Senior Manager, to take advantage of lower weekly or monthly rates. This may include the rental of a housekeeping facility.

Other Out of Pocket Expenses

Reasonable gratuities for meals, hotel room services and taxis will be reimbursed. Receipts are not necessary to support reimbursement of these expenses but documentation for purposes of the expenses is required. Reasonable expenses related to parking meters, bus tickets and subway tokens will be reimbursed; receipts are required.

Calls to Home

Reimbursement will be made for reasonable costs for necessary personal calls home for each night away.

Additional Business Expenses

While travelling on agency business, additional business expenses may be incurred not otherwise specifically contemplated in this policy. Such reasonable expenses such as business calls, air/rail phones, computer access charges, photocopying, and fax expenses will be reimbursed with receipts.

Meal Expenses

Meal expenses will be reimbursed according to the existing guidelines. Original, itemized receipts must be provided. Reimbursement of meal costs in no case will include alcoholic beverages.

Reimbursement for the costs of meals is subject to the rates as set by the Board of Directors.

Meal Rates

Breakfast	\$8.75
Lunch	\$11.25
Dinner	\$20.00

For a full day of meal claims, (i.e. breakfast, lunch and dinner) employees have the discretion to allocate the daily total three meal rate of \$40.00 among their meals.

For less than a full day of meal claims, employees are to be guided by the schedule of rates above.

These allowances apply to all meals claimed by staff, including those for clients (child or adult).

Reimbursement of actual meal expenses that exceed the set rates requires an explanation of the extenuating circumstances and must be approved by a Director.

Meal Expenses – Clients

We believe it is not wise to encourage the expectation that workers will always take a client (child or adult) out for a meal/snack when visiting and we do not encourage this practice. However we recognize that there are circumstances where workers may purchase meals/coffee for clients. In cases where this is authorized by the supervisor the cost of the meal/snack for the client will be reimbursed within the same limits as Meal Expenses, above. This does not include reimbursement of the staff meal. If a worker has a doubt about whether an expense is appropriate, they should consult their Supervisor prior to making the expenditures.

In every case where a worker takes a client to lunch, the claim for the expense must be substantiated with a detailed receipt, client's name (or case number), and the rationale for the purpose.

Corporate Purchasing Cards

Corporate Purchasing card expenses must be substantiated by detailed receipts, showing taxes, and compiled with monthly statements to be provided to accounting for payment. A credit card slip is not deemed sufficient detail.

Refer to [Corporate Purchasing Cards](#) for more details.

Hospitality

Hospitality is the provision of food, beverages, accommodation, transportation or other amenities at agency expense to people who are not engaged in work for the agency.

Hospitality should be extended in an economical, consistent and appropriate way when it will facilitate agency business or is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy. Hospitality

expenditures should be consistent with the status of the guest(s), the number of persons attending and the business purpose to be achieved.

Hosts must ensure that hospitality expense records include:

- The circumstances of the event (business purpose)
- The form of hospitality
- Cost supported by receipts
- Name and location of establishment
- Names, titles and companies of attendees
- Approvals by appropriate individuals in the agency

Retirement events, staff recognition are not covered by hospitality.

In no circumstance can hospitality, incidental, or food expense be considered an allowable expense for consultants or contractors. Reimbursement can be claimed only when the contract specifically provides for it.

Recipients of Hospitality

Acceptance of hospitality from vendors, current or prospective, may constitute a conflict of interest and therefore is disallowed. Supervisors are responsible to ensure that employees are aware of their conflict of interest obligations. Exceptions are made in extenuating circumstances as approved by a Senior Manager, and will be documented.

Gifts of appreciation may be accepted if token in nature, valued at up to \$30.00. Gifts valued above \$30.00 must be graciously and respectfully declined. If acceptance is unavoidable, it will be reported to the Director who will determine the appropriate action.

In all cases where hospitality is provided to agency staff or board members, conflict of interest guidelines will prevail in determining whether such hospitality should be reasonably accepted. If in doubt, a worker should consult with his/her supervisor.

Exceptions, where the gift is in recognition of some accomplishment or performance and made by another organization, are permitted where approved by the Executive Director.

Responsibility of Claimants

In arranging travel, all claimants must:

- Consider alternatives to travel such as teleconferencing and videoconferencing and obtain approvals from appropriate authorities for travel
- Use service providers designated by the agency where appropriate
- Request and accept lowest common carrier fare
- Use the corporate charge card to prepay hotel accommodations where possible
- Supply an itinerary to and notify their supervisor of any changes so that travellers may be contacted in an emergency
- Cancel hotel bookings prior to 4:00pm (or as specified by the hotel) to avoid no-show charges

- Submit all expense claims on a timely basis – expense submissions are not to cross fiscal years, and will no longer be the agency's responsibility once the year-end (March 31) is closed
- Provide explanations for unusual expenses
- Provide original receipts for all expense claims
- Provide descriptions for all expenses claimed

Responsibility of Approvers

- Ensure that expenses are compliant with this policy
- Ensure that no Agency vehicle was available if personal vehicle was used
- Determine and authorize when business travel is necessary
- Ensure that travel arrangements are consistent with this policy
- Consult with the employee to ensure travel arrangements accommodate both their needs and the agency's travel policies
- Ensure that appropriate receipts are provided to support expense claims
- Ensure that unusual items are appropriately explained or proof is given for prior approval
- Ensure the rationale for an exception is documented and accompanies the expense claim
- Ensure that all workers are aware of conflict of interest guidelines

Procedure	Dated:	Approved by:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> created <input type="checkbox"/> revised <input type="checkbox"/> reviewed	October 26, 2011	Trish Keachie, Executive Director
<input type="checkbox"/> created <input type="checkbox"/> revised <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> reviewed	February 5, 2013	Terry Dineen – Manager of Finance & Administration
<input type="checkbox"/> created <input type="checkbox"/> revised <input type="checkbox"/> reviewed	December 7, 2018	Nancy Buchanan, Director of Corporate Services
<input type="checkbox"/> created <input type="checkbox"/> revised <input type="checkbox"/> reviewed		

References