



TRAVEL AND EXPENSE CLAIMS

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Responsibility: Director, Finance

POLICY

City Council believes that members of City Council and employees should be reimbursed for reasonable personal expenses incurred while on authorized City of Fort Saskatchewan ("City") business. Members of City Council and employees are neither expected to subsidize the operations of the City nor indulge themselves at the City's expense.

DEFINITIONS

- *Capital Region* - that area of land that lies within a 75 kilometer radius of Edmonton
- *City Representative* - individual, who is not an employee, who performs business on behalf of the City or an unfunded City Committee or City Board members. This includes, but is not limited to, members of City Council, members of City Boards/Commissions/Committees and volunteers
- *Employee* - individual who is hired to work full time or part time for the City and is included on the City's biweekly payroll
- *Travel Status* - absence from an employee's workplace while on City business. Travel status will originate from the employee's workplace, as per Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) *Allowable Motor Vehicle Expenses*, unless the employee is originating directly from their principle residence. Then, travel status will originate from the employee's principle residence.
- *Workplace* - the location at, or from which an employee ordinarily performs the duties of his/her position. In the case of an employee whose duties are of an itinerant nature, his/her workplace is the actual building where his/her pertinent administrative matters are conducted (i.e. where his/her reports are prepared and/or submitted).

GUIDELINES

1. A Department General Manager may approve travel for employees when other means of conducting City business are not practical. When travel is authorized, the most direct, practical and cost effective route and mode of transportation should be used.
2. A cash advance from the City's accounts payable is permitted to ensure that an employee has sufficient funds on hand to pay for significant City expenses such as accommodation, automobile rental or where a supplier is reluctant to accept a City purchase order or cheque. Any employee that has been issued a corporate credit card will not be eligible for cash advances.
3. An expense claim form (available from the intranet) must be completed for all reimbursements

submitted under this policy. The supervisor must authorize all expenditures. Expenses claimed by the City Manager must be authorized by the Mayor or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Mayor. Expenses claimed by members of Council must be authorized by the Mayor. Expenses claimed by the Mayor must be authorized by the Deputy Mayor.

4. Employees on travel status are entitled to reimbursement for transportation, accommodation, meals and miscellaneous travel costs.

5. Travel Expenditures

- (a) Transportation

- (i) Air, bus or train transport at the most economical means (commonly referred to as “economy” or “coach”) will be approved, taking into account the net cost to the City. In extraordinary circumstances, the employee must acquire authorization from the Department General Manager with accompanying documentation supporting the decision. If the employee chooses to upgrade the level of transportation, the employee is responsible for the difference between that level and the economy rate.
 - (ii) Where an employee chooses to use a method of transportation other than that prescribed above and approval for such is obtained, the employee shall be reimbursed or paid an allowance, as the case dictates, as though the method of transportation prescribed above was used.
 - (iii) An employee may, with consent from their supervisor, select a route and method of transportation to combine personal activities with City business. In this case, the reimbursement or allowance shall be paid on the basis that would have applied had the trip been made in accordance with the above.
 - (iv) If personal activities extend the period of working time required for a trip, the additional time shall be deducted from the employee’s accruals for vacation/time-off-in-lieu or granted as leave without pay.
 - (v) Where a City approved registration fee requires payment for spouses/guests that are not City employees, such payment may be made, and included as part of the registration payment. A copy of the spouse’s/guest’s full reimbursement is to be included upon submission for payment of the employee’s credit card. A spouse, or any other non-employee person(s) travelling with an employee is responsible for their own travel fare and related expenses will not be processed through the City’s accounts payable or reimbursed to the employee.

- (b) Private Vehicle Use

- (i) The City will reimburse an employee for kilometerage, based on Government of Alberta kilometerage rates.
 - (ii) An employee using a personal vehicle while conducting City business will be reimbursed for actual (not estimated) kilometers travelled at the approved rate. An employee must submit an expense claim detailing business purpose, location, departure/arrival times and distance travelled for each trip claimed.
 - (iii) An employee authorized to use his/her personal vehicle for out-of-town travel will receive the lower of a reimbursement equal to the economy return airfare, if applicable, or the actual kilometers travelled while on City business during the trip. However, if it is deemed to be more practical to travel by personal automobile than by other means (e.g. conference in Calgary where rental car costs or taxi/bus fares from the airport are substantial) the cost of actual kilometers travelled will be reimbursed.
 - (iv) If two or more employees travel in the same vehicle while on City business, only one may claim expenses for kilometerage.
 - (v) An employee using his/her personal vehicle while conducting City business must carry at least one million (\$1,000,000.00) dollars of public liability and property damage insurance.

In the event of an accident, the insurance deductible will be the responsibility of the employee.

- (vi) Fines for moving violations incurred while conducting City business are the responsibility of the employee and are not eligible for reimbursement.
- (vii) Where an employee is required by his/her insurance company to have business insurance in order to conduct City business, over and above personal vehicle insurance coverage, the City will reimburse only for that portion of the premium that pertains to the City business insurance.
- (viii) Taxi and limousine fares will be reimbursed **plus a gratuity to a maximum of fifteen (15%) percent of the fare. Bus and commuter train fares will also be reimbursed.** Car (economy class only) rental fees for areas outside the Capital Region may be claimed when such rental is deemed to be more economical/practical than bus/taxi rates, i.e. when a large amount of business related travel is required.
- (ix) While on City business, mileage is claimable from the workplace to a destination within or outside of the City's municipal limits. Mileage is also claimable from the employee's principle residence location to a destination outside of the City's municipal limits if that travel is as a result of City business. Mileage is not claimable from the employee's principle residence location to the workplace as per CRA *Allowable Motor Vehicle Expenses*.

(c) Accommodation

- (i) An employee on travel status outside the Capital Region for one or more nights is entitled to reimbursement of the cost of commercial accommodation. Accommodation claims inside the Capital Region will be considered only when deemed beneficial to the City and previously authorized. Claims by employees must be authorized by their supervisor. Claims by the City Manager must be authorized by the Mayor or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Mayor. Claims by members of Council must be authorized by the Mayor. Claims by the Mayor must be authorized by the Deputy Mayor.
- (ii) Reservations are to be made under the City of Fort Saskatchewan to take advantage of any available government/corporate rate. A spouse accompanying an employee is responsible for any required rate increase due to their occupancy and must not be settled with City funds. The increased amount must be paid by the employee's personal means at the time of settling the payment.
- (iii) Accommodation will be provided at the approved conference room rate or government rate in the locale of the meeting, whichever is lower.
- (iv) The cost of all personal entertainment such as movies and in-room items is the responsibility of the employee, is not eligible for reimbursement and must not be settled with City funds. These costs must be paid by the employee's personal means at the time of settling the payment.
- (v) Where private arrangements for accommodation are made and commercial facilities are not used, a daily allowance based on the Government of Alberta daily allowance rate may be claimed.

(d) Meals

- (i) When travelling on City business, an employee may claim either the actual cost of the meal or the meal allowance. The actual cost of the meal is the amount shown on the receipt, excluding alcoholic beverages, plus a gratuity of up to fifteen (15%) percent of the meal cost.
- (ii) The maximum reimbursement for food and beverage cannot exceed \$100 per day, with the cost of one single meal not exceeding \$50, inclusive of taxes and gratuities to a maximum of **fifteen (15%) percent.**
- (iii) Meal allowances are based on Government of Alberta meal allowance rates.
- (iv) When an employee is travelling on City business for part of a day, the employee may be reimbursed for the receipted amount or the meal allowance as follows:

- breakfast, if the departure time is earlier or the return time is later than 7:30 a.m.;
 - lunch, if the departure time is earlier or the return time is later than 1:00 p.m.; and
 - dinner, if the departure time is earlier or the return time is later than 6:30 p.m.
- (v) If a meal is included in the cost of airfare, an employee cannot claim a meal allowance unless the flight is delayed.
- (vi) If a meal is included in the cost of a conference, session, workshop, event, function, etc., an employee cannot claim a meal allowance unless the conference, session, workshop, event, function, etc. does not occur or is delayed.
- (vii) Reimbursement for the cost of alcoholic beverages is not permitted.
- (e) Miscellaneous Travel Costs
- (i) Personal Telephone Calls: In general, the cost of telephone calls of a non-business nature are not eligible for reimbursement. However, an employee on travel status is allowed reimbursement for the cost of one personal telephone call which is not to exceed fifteen (15) minutes in total, for each twenty-four (24) hour period while on City business.
- (ii) Medical Expenses: An employee will be responsible for all medical expenses incurred in excess of those covered by the City's existing benefits package. The supervisor will determine eligibility for reimbursement of all other expenses incurred subsequent to an emergency situation.
- (iii) Laundry Expenses: An employee may claim for laundry and dry cleaning costs incurred while travelling on City business.
- (iv) Personal Incidentals: Members of City Council or employees will not be reimbursed for expenses associated with personal incidentals. Personal incidentals include, but are not limited to, items such as:
- personal care items,
 - monetary gratitude given for service received which is not related to service received for City paid meals under Clause 5 (d) and Clause 6, and
 - personal use consumable items when consumed outside of City paid meals under Clause 5 (d) and Clause 6.
6. All working session meals and costs shall have prior approval from the supervisor. This includes employee retreats and on-site or off-site work session meals and costs. The frequency of such meals and costs is limited to a reasonable amount annually as determined by each Department General Manager and/or City Manager. Meals/Costs by the City Manager must be authorized by the Mayor or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Mayor. Meals/Costs by members of Council must be authorized by the Mayor. Meals/Costs by the Mayor shall be authorized by the Deputy Mayor.
7. Members of City Council or employees will not be reimbursed for expenses to attend a function that is promoted as a fundraiser for a political party or candidate.
8. Expense claims must be submitted for reimbursement within 30 days of the expense being incurred and must be accompanied by original receipts which detail the nature of the transaction thereon.
9. Authorizing parties are responsible to ensure that reimbursement is in accordance with this policy.
10. Where it is determined that an employee has falsified an expense claim, any overpayment shall be recovered and disciplinary action may be taken against the individual.
11. Any items of dispute will be submitted to the City Manager for arbitration and will not be processed for payment until an arbitration decision is rendered.

PROCEDURES

1. Employees will note on all receipts a brief explanation, in layman's terms, of the business nature of the expense along with attending parties/guests, their title and organization. When the original receipt is not provided, an **Employee Request for Reimbursement**, available on the City's intranet, must be completed. Credit card and debit card receipts are not acceptable as original receipts.
2. Cash Advances
 - (a) Cheque requisitions:
 - (i) must be approved by the supervisor at least seven (7) working days prior to when the cash is required. An employee must submit a cash advance request to Accounts Payable;
 - (ii) Accounts Payable will provide to the employee a cheque made payable to "individual's name - cash advance";
 - (iii) will be filed by the Accounts Payable Clerk who will request further information if the employee does not submit all receipts within seven (7) working days of the employee's return to work date after the event for which the funds were requested.
 - (b) Accounting:
 - (i) the employee will submit to Accounts Payable, within seven (7) days of return date indicated on the cash advance request, all receipts and backup documentation;
 - (ii) if the cash advance has not been totally expended, the remaining balance must accompany this submission;
 - (iii) if the advance has been exhausted and the employee has used personal funds to cover additional expenses, an expense claim is to accompany this submission.

City Manager (Original Signed by KK)