

The Corporation of the City of North Bay

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	SECTION: V- FINANCE
	APPROVED: APRIL 1 , 2010 REVISED:
	SUBJECT: TRAVEL AND EXPENSE POLICY
	POLICY 5 - 01

1) **POLICY**

This policy is intended to establish clear and equitable guidelines relating to corporate business travel and reimbursement of acceptable business expenses.

2) **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that expenses incurred by City staff and elected officials are necessary, reasonable and provide best value for the Corporation of the City of North Bay.

3) **SCOPE**

The following policies, rules, and conditions apply to all staff, elected officials, and volunteers incurring expenses on behalf of the City of North Bay.

4) **ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT**

a. **Budget**

Annual budget allocations will be approved by Council within the Operating Budget. The Operating Budget will establish reasonable expenditure limits for identified positions, departmental divisions, the Mayor and members of Council.

Operating budget allocations will include, but not necessarily be limited to, travel, professional development, mileage, meals, telephone/blackberry, and meeting expenses.

It is understood that participation in necessary but unanticipated events may result in over expenditures within certain expense budget line items. Every reasonable effort shall be made to adhere to overall budget allocations for named positions, departmental divisions and elected officials.

b. Use of Approved Forms

All expenditures will be itemized and detailed on current, approved City forms.

Sufficient information shall be provided to demonstrate that the expense was business related and necessary.

The form shall be co-signed by the individual incurring the expense and the manager/supervisor having the designated signing authority and responsibility for the area. In instances where there is no reporting relationship, forms shall be co-signed by the individual incurring the expense and an individual having the appropriate level of approval authority.

c. Approval Authority

i. Mayor/Deputy Mayor

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are to obtain approval for international travel from the General Government Committee of Council. Requests of this nature will be considered at such time as the General Government Committee has received a report from the City Clerk or Chief Administrative Officer detailing the nature of the request. A copy of the report will be provided to the remainder of Council for information purposes.

The General Government Committee will not unreasonably withhold approval provided sufficient funding is available and it can be demonstrated that the travel is business related and necessary.

Expenses submitted for reimbursement shall be in accordance with approved City policies and verified by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or, in the absence of the C.A.O., the Acting C.A.O.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will engage in domestic travel only when it can be demonstrated that it is business related, necessary and aligned with the priorities of Council.

Expenses submitted for re-imbusement will be verified by the C.A.O. or Acting C.A.O.

ii. Councillors

An annual budget allocation for Council travel and professional development will be determined in the Operating Budget.

The City Clerk will apprise Council of annual municipal conferences and training and development opportunities. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate members of Council who wish to attend recognized business related conferences and training programs.

Council recognizes that budget limitations may restrict the number of Councillors that may attend an event or impose restrictions on the number of events an individual member of Council may attend throughout the year or over the term of Council.

Where it is necessary to limit attendance, the General Government Committee of Council will determine which member(s) of Council should attend. In this instance, consideration will be given to the relevance of the event to the Councillor's committee membership and participation in local agencies, boards, and commissions. Expenses submitted for re-imburement will be verified by the C.A.O or Acting C.A.O.

iii. Senior Management Team

The C.A.O. and members of the City's Administration Senior Management Team will have budget allocations approved by Council during the annual operating budget process.

Expenditures for items such as business travel, training and development, mileage, and business related incidental costs will be incurred at the discretion of the Senior Manager, provided that it can be demonstrated that such expenditures are business related and provide a benefit to the City and have regard for approved budget allocations.

The C.A.O. will have expenses verified by the C.F.O. or other member of the Senior Management Team.

All expenses incurred by the senior manager will be approved for payment by the C.A.O. or Acting C.A.O.

iv. Staff Positions

Expenditures incurred by City staff will be within approved departmental budgets and aligned with Business Unit priorities. Travel and extraordinary expenses must be approved in advance by the Manager or Managing Director having approval authority.

All expenses incurred by staff must be approved on appropriate forms by the Manager or Managing Director having approval authority.

5) TRAVEL

a. Transportation

Generally the mode of transportation which offers the best reasonable value to the City having considered the safety and convenience of the traveler should be considered.

In instances where the one way travel distance is 350 kilometres or less, automobile travel should be the default mode. Where travel involves one individual and is for a single day event to the national or provincial capital, air travel may be considered.

i. Road Travel

Employees may use personal vehicles for out of town travel in accordance with City mileage policies provided that the use of the personal vehicle does not increase the cost to the City.

Employees may use City fleet vehicles for out of town travel provided that a vehicle is available and the traveler is appropriately licensed and has obtained approval from a manager having the authority to grant such approval.

Where it is not feasible to use a fleet vehicle, a vehicle may be rented from a firm providing preferred rates to the City as negotiated by the Manager of Purchasing.

The type of vehicle rented should reflect the number of travelers, the normal weather conditions for the time of year, and be defensible under public scrutiny.

Rental vehicles may be acquired at the destination location achieved by air travel where it can be demonstrated that the vehicle rental has a justified business purpose that cannot be met at less expense by utilizing taxis.

In instances where the one way travel distance exceeds 350 kilometres, air travel may be considered.

ii. Air Travel

Airline selection should be based on best value for the City of North Bay and not on the individual traveller's rewards program membership.

Every effort should be made to take advantage of early booking discounts or airline promotional seat sales.

Trips should be planned in a manner that avoids the need for change of flight charges or trip cancellation charges.

In those instances where it is necessary to cancel a flight the traveler is to advise the CAO of the cancellation in writing or by email.

The traveler will advise of the reason for cancellation and the value of the ticket remaining. The cancelled ticket value remains the property of the City of North Bay and should be used toward the travelers next required flight.

iii. Bus and Rail

Bus and rail fares incurred as part of City business will be reimbursed with the provision of valid receipts.

b. Accommodation

The City of North Bay recognizes that elected officials and employees traveling away from home on City business should not suffer a reduction in their living standards. Accommodation should be appropriate for the length of stay and business need. The standard of accommodation must also be sustainable under public scrutiny.

Accommodation should occur at or in close proximity to the travel destination at which the meeting, conference or professional development is occurring.

Accommodations should be selected based on the best reasonable value for the City and not the individual travelers reward program.

Every effort should be made to take advantage of government or web based preferred pricing.

c. Meals

The City of North Bay provides a per diem meal allowance as contained in Appendix "A" to this policy. Rates contained in Appendix "A" will be reviewed from time-to-time and in any case at least once every four years. The results and any recommendation forth coming from the review will be presented to Council during the following year's operating budget deliberations.

Meal expenses cannot be claimed if meals are prepaid through an accommodation package or included as part of the conference or professional development seminar.

Partial per diem meal allowances may be claimed.

The per diem meal allowance limit does not apply when the elected official or employee is entertaining a client or other government official(s) for the purposes of necessary business related discussions.

The purchase of alcoholic beverages is restricted to reasonable quantities accompanying a meal. The restriction does not apply to approved entertainment of third parties where it can be demonstrated that it is reasonable and necessary for business purposes and defensible under public scrutiny.

d. Incidental Fees

Normal and reasonable incidental fees for business related travel such as tips; taxi and parking will be reimbursed with a valid receipt. One personal phone call per day, to a maximum of ten minutes, will be reimbursed.

Extraordinary expenses such as mini bars and room movie rentals will be the responsibility of the traveler and not reimbursed by the City.

e. Travel Companion

In certain instances an elected official or member of staff may find it necessary or desirable to have a travel companion join them on out-of-town travel. The practice is acceptable provided that the City will not be responsible for any incremental increases in expenses associated with the addition of the travel companion. Where a City fleet vehicle is being used for transportation, it will be necessary to have approval in advance from a manager/supervisor having the appropriate authority, in order to transport a companion passenger.

f. Traveler with Disability

Additional expenses that are required to accommodate the travel needs of an elected official or employee with a disability will be reimbursed provided they have been authorized in advance by a manager having the appropriate approval authority and are necessary to accommodate the disability.

6) IN TOWN EXPENSES

This policy recognizes that the Mayor, members of Council and certain staff will incur expenses which are deemed necessary for carrying out the business of the organization.

In order to qualify as a reimbursable expense it must be demonstrated that the expense:

- is in line with Council policies;
- is justified as a City business requirement;
- is documented on appropriate City forms with clear receipts attached;
- is reasonable and conservative and in line with public sector norms;
- represents increased or incremental spending directly related to City business which expense the elected official or employee would not otherwise have incurred;
- is approved by a person able to exercise independent judgment and having the appropriate level of approval authority; and
- will satisfy the external auditor in terms of process and transparency.

a. Expenses of Mayor and Members of Council

This policy recognizes that the Mayor and members of Council will incur expenses associated with carrying out the functions of their office.

Normal administrative expenses will comply with operating budget approvals and follow established City purchasing and procurement policies.

Monthly expense accounts will be submitted on approved City forms and verified by the C.A.O.

Expenditures for meals and entertainment must be accompanied by detailed receipts and demonstrate that the expense was business related.

From time-to-time the Mayor and / or members of Council are expected to attend community events which require paid admission. Where the event has the potential to impact the City's business image the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and a select representative from Council will be reimbursed for their admission and that of a guest. Receipts will be required with any charitable tax receipt to be submitted to the City.

Attendance at more broad based community events, fund raisers and entertainment will be at the discretion of the Mayor and / or member of Council and will not be reimbursed by the City.

b. Expenses for Employees and Volunteers

Normal administrative expenses will comply with operating budget approvals and follow established City purchasing and procurement policies.

Monthly expense accounts will be submitted on approved City forms and authorized by the individual having appropriate authority.

Expenditures for meals and entertainment must be accompanied by detailed receipts and demonstrate that the expense was business related.

From time-to-time members of staff are expected to attend community events which require paid admission. Where the event has the potential to impact the City's business image the staff member will be reimbursed for their admission and that of a guest. Receipts will be required with any charitable tax receipt to be submitted to the City.

Attendance at more broad based community events, fund raisers and entertainment will be at the discretion of the member of staff and will not be reimbursed by the City.

APPENDIX "A"

Per Diem Meal Allowance as at January 1, 2010

Breakfast \$10.00

Lunch \$15.00

Dinner \$25.00

Total \$50.00