
TRAVEL EXPENSES

Approved by: Board of Directors**Effective Date:** Nov. 23, 2012

B-12

Issued By: Administration**Review Date:** Nov. 19, 2020**Department(s)** All**Version:** 3Archived: Y

POLICY:

The Hospital may assume the reasonable out-of-pocket travel expenses for those who may from time to time be required to travel in the service of the Hospital.

1. TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION:

Where authorized travellers are attending the same function, shared travel will be required, where possible.

Travel by Vehicle

When road transportation is the most practical and economical way to travel, the order of preference should be:

Public Transit

Local public transportation including hotel/airport shuttles, should be used wherever possible.

Personal Vehicle

The Hospital assumes no financial responsibility for personal vehicles. The hospital will, however, pay the kilometric rate if you are, with prior approval, using your own vehicle for hospital business.

If you will be driving more than 200 kilometres in a day, you should consider using a rental vehicle.

If you are going to drive your personal vehicle for more than five days within a single calendar month – even if you are not exceeding 200 kilometres in a single day - you should consider lower cost options, such as vehicle rental or audio or video conferencing.

The approver must make a decision on the type of vehicle used for travel (personal or rental) based on the frequency of travel as well as the distance per trip. If a decision is made, with your approver, for you to continue using a personal vehicle, both your research and the rationale must be documented. If using a personal vehicle, keep daily logs to track the business use.

Personal vehicles used on Hospital business must be insured at the vehicle owner's expense for personal motor vehicle liability. Coverage should be equal to or greater than the minimum liability specified in the Insurance Act. Drivers must satisfy themselves whether their motor vehicle insurance coverage should include business use of their vehicles. The hospital will not reimburse costs of insurance coverage for business use, physical damage/collision or liability. The Hospital is not responsible for reimbursing deductible amounts related to insurance coverage. The Hospital assumes no financial responsibility for privately owned vehicles other than paying the kilometric rate when used for hospital business. Those driving a personal vehicle on hospital business cannot make claims to the hospital for damage as a result of a collision. Parking fees incurred while on Hospital business may be reimbursed with the submission of a receipt with the expense report.

Kilometer allowance will be paid at the current Hospital approved rate from (a) the Hospital, or (b) the employee's home, (whichever is closer) to the destination. This allowance will be determined in accordance with the rate established each fiscal year.



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Reimbursement and Rates:

Rates are based on kilometres accumulated from April 1 of each year (fiscal year).

Rates may be established in a collective agreement, and, if they are not, the rates in this Policy apply.

Expense claims must be submitted with distances calculated in kilometres.

Total Kilometres Driven per Fiscal Year

0 – 4000 km	0.40
4001 – 10, 700 km	0.35
10, 701 – 24, 000 km	0.29
More than 24, 000 km	0.24

Rental Vehicle

When renting a vehicle, a compact model, or its equivalent, is required.

Any exceptions must be:

- documented and approved prior to the rental if possible; and
- guided by the principle that the rental vehicle is the most economical and practical size, taking into account the business purpose, number of occupants and safety (including weather) considerations.

Luxury and sports vehicles are prohibited. To avoid higher gasoline charges, refuel your rental car before returning it.

Collision and liability insurance offered by the car rental agency should be purchased if the Hospital’s insurance does not cover the replacement value for rental cars. Receipts for fuel purchases, parking lot charges and tolls must be submitted with expense reports.

Taxis

Prior approval to use a taxi should be obtained, whenever possible. Taxis may be justified in cases where:

- group travel by cab is more economical than the total cost of having individuals travel separately by public transit or shuttle; or
- taking a cab allows you to meet an unusually tight schedule for meetings.
- taxis may not be used to commute to work or home except under exceptional circumstances; for instance:
 - weather, health or safety conditions indicate it is the best, appropriate option; or
 - transport of work-related baggage or parcels is required.

If a taxi chit is not provided, the traveller must submit an original receipt attached to the expense report.

Train

Travel by train is permitted when it is the most practical and economical way to travel. A coach class economy fare is the standard.

Business Class may be acceptable, with prior approval, in limited circumstances such as:

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- the need to work with a team;
- choosing a travel time that allows you to reduce expenditures on meals or accommodation (e.g., compare an economy (coach) class ticket plus a meal, with the cost of a ticket for VIA 1, where the meal is included);
- accommodation requirements; and
- health and safety considerations.

Air

Air transportation may be supported for trips that are beyond reasonable driving distance. Approval for all travel by air must be obtained and documented in writing for staff members. Travel will be in economy class and booked in advance to take advantage of discount fares. The original e-ticket will be required to be attached to the expense report for each segment of travel.

2. HOTEL ACCOMMODATION:

Travellers may be reimbursed for the expenses incurred for overnight accommodation provided that the standard of accommodation is considered reasonable. Travellers are responsible for reviewing and confirming all room charges and must submit the detailed hotel bill with the expense report.

In the normal conduct of business, reimbursement for overnight accommodation within your office area will be neither authorized nor approved. However, in emergency or highly unusual situations, exceptions will be considered. For example:

- You are required to remain close to your office for periods long in excess of (your) standard working hours.
- Your services are deemed necessary (and approved accordingly) for the purposes of emergency or crisis management.

There will be no reimbursement for hotel suites, executive floors or concierge levels when traveling.

Reimbursement will be made for single accommodation in a standard room.

For extended stays at a single location, accommodation must be arranged with prior approval. This will take advantage of lower weekly or monthly rates.

Penalties incurred for non-cancellation of guaranteed hotel reservations are the claimant's responsibility and may be reimbursed only in an exceptional circumstance.

Private stays with friends or family are acceptable, and a cash payment or gift may be provided to the friends or family:

- A maximum of \$30 per night is allowed for accommodation including any meals with friends or family, in lieu of commercial accommodation.
- Instead of a receipt, you must submit a written explanation describing the purpose of the trip, identifying the host and the number of days you stayed.
- The \$30 value may be given in the form of a small gift (which must be accompanied by a receipt) or by cash or cheque.

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3. LONG-DISTANCE BUSINESS AND PERSONAL CALLS:

Calls may be reimbursed; however, discretion should be used in the frequency and length. Reimbursement may be made for reasonable costs for necessary personal calls home for each night away. Wherever possible, the most cost-effective method should be used (e.g. hospital-issued cell phones) in order to minimize costs.

4. TELECOMMUNICATION:

With prior approval, you may use your government cell/mobile phone for business purposes when traveling.

Speak with your approver to determine what is covered in your cell/mobile phone plan and how the hospital wishes to handle long distance or roaming charges.

Note that any use of a mobile phone is subject to a security assessment if traveling outside of Canada.

Wherever possible, you are expected to use the least expensive means of communication, such as:

- calling cards; and
- internet access through the local provincial government network.

Use audio or video conferencing whenever possible, as an alternative to travel.

If you are away on government business, reimbursement will be made for:

- reasonable, necessary personal calls home for each night away; and
- additional business expenses, such as:
 - business calls;
 - emergency calls from air or rail phones;
 - internet connections and computer access charges;
 - facsimile transmissions;
 - word processing and photocopying services;
 - rental and transportation of necessary office equipment.

5. OTHER KINDS OF EXPENSESPassports, Visas and Immunization:

You may be reimbursed for:

- the cost of a passport if you are traveling to the United States;
- the cost of a passport and/or visa, plus the cost of immunizations and medications if necessary, for international travel.

Personal Care:

If traveling on business for five consecutive days or more, reimbursement is allowed within reasonable limits for expenses such as:

- laundry
- dry cleaning
- hotel valet services (e.g., shirt pressing, suit steaming, shoe polishing, etc.)

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Itemized receipts are required.

You will not be reimbursed for personal or recreational items (e.g., toothbrush, pay-per-view, or items from the mini-bar).

Tips/Gratuities:

You may be reimbursed for reasonable gratuities for porter, hotel room services, and taxis. Keep a record of gratuities paid.

Examples of reasonable amounts for gratuities include:

- 10% on a taxi fare;
- \$2-\$5 for housekeeping for up to two nights in a hotel, up to \$10 for a longer stay;
- \$2-\$5 per bag for a porter.

6. MEALS:

Reasonable and appropriate meal expenses may be reimbursed.

You may incur a meal expense when you are on Hospital business and you:

- are away from the office area (i.e., at least 24 km) over a normal meal period; or
- have prior approval for the expense (e.g., a business meeting within the area of the hospital that must occur over lunch).

Meal expenses will be reimbursed at the established meal reimbursement rates, regardless of the actual meal costs. This is a meal allowance. Taxes and gratuities are included in the meal reimbursement rates. Receipts are not required to be submitted with meal claims or retained.

Meals must be purchased in order to be able to submit a claim for reimbursement. Alcohol cannot be claimed and will not be reimbursed.

In limited and exceptional circumstances (e.g. health considerations; limited options available) where a meal expense is higher than the meal reimbursement rate, the actual cost of the meal may be reimbursed. In these situations, the claim for meal reimbursement must be accompanied by an original itemized receipt and a written rationale for exceeding the rate. A credit card slip is not sufficient. Approval is subject to managerial discretion.

Reimbursement is for restaurant/prepared food only. Reimbursement for groceries must have prior approval. A receipt and a written rationale must be submitted with the claim.

No reimbursement shall be made for meals consumed at home prior to departure or on return, or for meals included in the cost of transportation, accommodation, seminars and/or conferences.

Meal claims should not exceed \$45/day (\$10 for breakfast, \$12.50 for lunch, \$22.50 for dinner) for local business meals. Meal expenses when travelling on Hospital business may be adjusted to reflect the cost of dining in a particular region. Meal tips and taxes are to be included with meal claims.

There may be situations where an individual pays the meal expenses for a group of individuals. In such cases, the individual may be reimbursed for the total of all meals purchased at the reimbursement rate for that meal.

Group meal expenses can be claimed only:

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- by the most senior person present – expenses cannot be claimed by an individual that are incurred by his/her approver; and
- for individuals covered by this policy.

7. ALCOHOL:

Costs incurred for alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable. Travellers are required to ask the restaurant for a separate invoice when having alcohol with their meals.

Costs incurred for alcoholic beverages will be excepted under certain circumstances such as special events. Alcohol expenses must be approved by the CEO (or their delegate) or Board Chair (or their delegate). The Hospital requires the invoice detailing the alcohol purchase be initialled by the person approving the expense.

8. HOSPITALITY:

Hospitality is the provision of food, beverages, accommodation, transportation or other amenities at the hospital's expense to persons who are not engaged in work for the hospital. Hospitality should be extended in an economical, consistent and appropriate way when it will facilitate hospital business or is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy.

Functions involving only people who work for the Government of Ontario, are not considered hospitality functions and cannot be reimbursed. This means that hospitality may never be offered solely for the benefit of hospital employees.

Hospitality may be extended in an economical and consistent manner when:

- it can facilitate government business; and
- it is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy or protocol.

Expenses that do not fit the definition of hospital hospitality will not be reimbursed. Examples of such expenses would be:

- office social events;
- retirement parties; and
- holiday lunches.

Prior written approval is required for hospitality events where alcohol will be served.

Hospitality may be extended on behalf of the hospital when:

- engaging in discussion of official public matters with, or sponsoring formal conferences for:
 - representatives from other governments;
 - the broader public sector;
 - business and industry;
 - public interest groups; or
 - labour groups;
- honouring distinguished people for exceptional public service in Ontario;
- conducting prestigious ceremonies for heads of state, government or distinguished guests from the private sector;
- the business of the agency/organization includes hospitality functions;



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- other hospitality functions as approved by the CEO, providing they conform to the rules listed in this section of the policy.

For hospitality events where guests may include current or prospective vendors of record, approvers must:

- obtain prior approval from senior management; and
- avoid either the actual or perceived preferential treatment of any vendor.

The reimbursement of alcohol expenses is allowed only when the appropriate approvals are in place. Hospitality may include the consumption of alcohol at a meal or a reception with invitees as defined above, but only when there is a business case.

Alcohol should be provided in a responsible manner, e.g., food must always be served when alcohol is available.

Preference should be given to wine, beer and spirits produced in Ontario.

Expenses for a group can only be claimed by the most senior person present – expenses cannot be claimed by an individual that are incurred by his/her approver.

9. GIFT GIVING

Appropriate token gifts of appreciation, valued up to \$30, may be offered in exchange for gifts of service or expertise to people who are not engaged in work for the Government of Ontario. Gifts valued over \$30 must have prior approval.

10. REFUND POLICY:

If a traveller finds it necessary to cancel a conference/session, it will be his/her responsibility to make arrangements to cancel the registration and accommodation immediately and request a refund.

If registration and accommodation arrangements are made through the Administrative Office, it will be the responsibility of the traveller to notify the Administration Office immediately in order that a refund can be requested.

In the event that travel is cancelled, any travel expenses that have been reimbursed to the traveller by the vendor including, but not limited to, the cost of train or flight tickets must be reimbursed to the hospital within thirty (30) days of such cancellation.

11. DOCUMENTATION:

All expenses are to be recorded on the *Employee Expense Report (Travel-Event-Education) Form #421*. The completed form, along with all applicable receipts, should be provided to the Staff member’s direct supervisor for approval or the CEO (as applicable). Once approved, the form and receipts should be forwarded to the Business Office for reimbursement.

Information about expenses must be posted on the appropriate public website for the following individuals:

- Designated persons in the organization



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12. INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

There must be prior documented CEO approval for any travel outside of Ontario and Canada.

REFERENCES:

1. OHA Hospital Expense Policy Guidelines – March 2010
2. Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive- Issued by the Management Board of Cabinet Effective January 1, 2020.
3. [Employee Expense Report](#) (Travel-Event-Education) Form #421