

*EXPENSE POLICY*

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**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Policy is to provide direction for reimbursement of necessary, actual, and reasonable expenses incurred in the conduct of West Hants Regional Municipality business.

**2. DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions are provided:

- a. "CAO" refers to the Chief Administrative Officer of the Municipality.
- b. "Resident Member" refers to committee members who are not members of Council or Municipal employees.
- c. "Collective Agreement" refers to the current written contract of employment, which contains provisions governing the terms and conditions of employment for certain employees.
- d. "Council" means the Council of the Municipality.
- e. "Councillor" refers to a Council member and includes the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, unless otherwise indicated.
- f. "Employee" refers to any person directly employed by the Municipality.
- g. "Municipality" refers to West Hants Regional Municipality.

**3. APPLICATION**

This Policy applies to all councillors, employees, and committee resident members of the Municipality.

Any breach of this Policy will be reviewed and may result in corrective or disciplinary action in accordance with applicable policies.

**4. TRAVEL EXPENSES**

Travel will be planned, with reservations made in advance, to take advantage of early booking discounts, when possible. Prior to booking travel, employees will ensure it is budgeted for and approved.

- Employees will ensure the appropriate approvals are obtained from their Director.
- Directors will ensure the appropriate approvals are obtained from the CAO.

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- Councillors will ensure the appropriate approvals are obtained from the CAO.

Employees, with consultation from Directors and Department Administration, are responsible to make all travel bookings, including those for hotels and transportation.

- Travel bookings for councillors will be the responsibility of the department in which the travel is related.

**Airfare**

- Employees, councillors, and resident members are required to use the lowest logical airfare.
  - Payments for airline tickets will be made using a Municipal credit card, for the additional travel insurance available for the cancellation of flights, lost baggage, and medical care.
  - Travel points associated with the purchase of tickets will be used by the Municipality to offset future travel costs.

**Lodgings**

- Employees, councillors, and resident members will use the hotel with the lowest reasonable cost, while balancing the proximity to the main conference or meeting location.
  - Personal charges, such as in-room movies or bar fridges, will not be expensed to the Municipality.

**Automobile Use**

- Employees, councillors, and resident members use of a personal automobile for business purposes will be reimbursed for actual vehicle use.
- The authorized mileage allowance rate will be set by the Municipality, yearly, based on the Province of Nova Scotia Mileage Rate.
- Mileage will be calculated based on the Google Map mileage from the starting point to the destination address, using the shortest, logical route. If the employee is not leaving from the Municipal Office, the employee must subtract the total kilometres they would have used going to and from home.
  - The Municipality may set specific mileage for frequently visited locations, such as the local bank branch or post office.
- For more than one employee, councillor, or resident member travelling to a common destination or for travel exceeding 300 kilometres, the most

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economical and safe means of transportation, as determined by the Director or Manager, will be used (for example, carpooling or car rental).

When travelling on Municipal business additional miscellaneous expenses may be incurred. Items such as ground transportation, laundry and dry cleaning (where the length of stay exceeds three (3) days), parking, tolls, etc., may be eligible for reimbursement.

## 5. MEAL ALLOWANCES

Meal allowances will be paid on a per diem basis, or if applicable, as per the Collective Agreement. The following per diem rates are inclusive of taxes and gratuities.

<b>Per Diem</b>	<b>Canada (CDN \$)</b>
Breakfast	\$ 17. <sup>00</sup>
Lunch	\$ 20. <sup>00</sup>
Dinner	\$ 30. <sup>00</sup>
Incidentals	\$ 5. <sup>00</sup>

### **Breakfast**

- The cost of breakfast may be claimed only when the employee has been travelling on Municipal business for more than one (1) hour before the recognized start time for the day's work.

### **Lunch**

- The cost of lunch may be claimed only when the employee has been travelling on Municipal business beginning before 12 pm.

### **Dinner**

- The cost of the evening meal may be claimed when the employee is not expected to return to their residence before 6:30 pm.

### **Incidentals**

- The cost of incidentals will only be claimed when the employee is staying overnight while on Municipal business.
  - Incidentals are for out of pocket expenses that the employee would not have incurred had they not been travelling. These may include using the copier in a business centre, sending mail, etc.

Meal allowance per diems will be reduced for each business conference meal provided, including meals provided by host organizations or other parties.

Specific high cost destinations will be addressed by the CAO on a case-by-case basis and authorized prior to travel.

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For Municipal business meetings held by Councillors with awareness of staff, the cost of meals provided must be reasonable and a receipt will be provided for reimbursement. **Alcoholic beverages will not be expensed.**

**6. MEETING MEAL ALLOWANCE**

On days where there are scheduled meetings of Council or Committees of Council, employees may choose to stay between closing hours and evening meeting times. Employees are entitled to a meeting meal allowance of \$12.<sup>50</sup> in lieu of mileage.

**7. CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS/EVENTS**

Employees, councillors, and resident members may claim all registration fees and course enrolment fees as an expense with prior approval.

**8. REIMBURSEMENT**

The Expense Claim Form must be submitted for approval to the CAO or Director within thirty (30) business days.

- Travel expenses incurred in foreign currency, must be converted by the traveler to equivalent Canadian dollars on the rate charged on the credit card or Bank of Canada exchange rates on the day of the transactions.
- When out-of-pocket expenses are anticipated to exceed \$200, an advance amount to 75% of the costs may be paid to the individual if deemed necessary by the CAO or Director.

All expenses incurred by Council and the CAO will be posted on the Municipal website for public information, quarterly.

**9. REVIEW**

In accordance with *Municipal Government Act, Section 23(7)* by the January 31<sup>st</sup> immediately following a regular election held under the *Municipal Elections Act*, Council will review the Expense Policy and following a motion by Council, either re-adopt the Policy or amend the Policy and adopt as amended.

**10. REPEAL**

The Travel Expense Policy dated November 1, 2016 of the former Town of Windsor is hereby repealed.

## EXPENSE POLICY

I, Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk of the West Hants Regional Municipality, the Province of Nova Scotia, do hereby certify that this is a true copy of the Policy as adopted by the Council of the West Hants Regional Municipality at a meeting duly called and held on the **26<sup>th</sup>** day of **May, 2020**.



R.N. Brown  
Municipal Clerk

<i>Adoption</i>	
<i>Notice to Council:</i>	May 12, 2020
<i>Approval:</i>	May 26, 2020
<i>Description:</i> Initial approval of Expense Policy, RCOFN-006.00.	