

Travel Policy & Expense Guidelines

POLICY:

Regional Hospital (PRH) employees, board members and volunteers may be required, as part of their assigned duties to travel to meetings, conferences and other Hospital associated business as well as daily client/patient related duties.

The purpose of this guideline is to:

- Set out the rules and principles for the reimbursement of expenses
- Provide a framework of accountability to guide the effective oversight of public resources in reimbursement of expenses
- Establish the practice for employees who regularly use their own vehicle to perform client related duties
- Ensure that there is sufficient information available to maximize any HST credits available to the Hospital

The employees authorized to use their vehicles for business purposes and client/patient related duties will be reimbursed at the current hospital rate. An employee who reports directly to a field appointment from home will be paid travel reimbursement based on the lesser of the distance between home and appointment, or the Hospital or assigned based office and the appointment. If the employee travels from the last appointment directly home, reimbursement is again based on the lesser distance from the appointment to home or the appointment to the Hospital or assigned based office.

PRINCIPLES:

This guideline is based on the following key principles:

1. Accountability

PRH is accountable for prudent use of public funds used to reimburse travel, meal and hospitality expenses. All expenses support legitimate business objectives.

2. Transparency

PRH guidelines for reimbursement of travel, meal and hospitality expenses are clear, easily understood and available to the public on the Hospital website.

3. Value for Money

Public funds are used prudently and responsibly. Plans for travel, meals, accommodation and hospitality be necessary and economical with due regard for health and safety.

4. Fairness

Legitimate expenses that are incurred during the course of business are reimbursed. Employees are required to keep sufficient records to account for details of the business travel per day (ie: google maps of kms coverage during the trips).

5. Best Practice

Best practices are in place and include:

- Prior approval to incur expenses is obtained by Supervisor or approved delegate

- Approval to travel with clients/patients must also be obtained in advance
- Other options for meeting are always considered before travel is approved including teleconference and videoconference
- Good record keeping practices are maintained for verification and audit purposes
- Corporate credit cards are used

APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This guideline applies to any person in the organization making an expense claim, including the following:

- Employees
- Board members
- Volunteers

Consultants and other Contractors:

Hospitality, incidental or food expenses including: meals/snacks/beverages, gratuities, laundry/dry cleaning, valet services, dependent care, home management and personal telephone calls are not considered allowable expenses for consultants and contractors. Reimbursement for allowable expenses can be claimed and reimbursed only when the contract specifically provides for it.

PROCEDURE:

Authorization and reimbursement:

Travel outside of North America can only be authorized by the CEO.

Employees, Board members and volunteers will submit a travel expense estimate to their immediate supervisor for approval.

- For frontline employees approval is obtained from the Manager; for Managers from the Director; for Directors from their Vice-President; for Vice-Presidents from the CEO and for the CEO, the chair of the Board; for board members, the chair of the Board; and for the chair of the Board, the CEO
- For volunteers approval is obtained from the Manager of Staffing, Scheduling and Volunteers, or designate

The “Travel Expense form 13” is available on the intranet.

- If the final expenses exceed the estimate, approval of actual travel expenses will be submitted to the supervisor for final approval
- If Departments have established a more detailed form to better capture their monthly travel claims for client/patient related duties– these forms should be completed in full and submitted for approval and signature prior to returning to Finance.

Approved Travel Expense forms are forwarded to the Finance Department for processing. The highest ranking individual in most cases should take responsibility for the travel expenses of the group.

The Travel Expense form will be accompanied by original receipts. If receipts are not provided, a reasonable written explanation must be provided.

No individual can approve his/her own expenses, or that of a subordinate that has paid for travel or meal expenses to their benefit.

The Finance Department will review the claim and ensure that reimbursement is consistent with this policy.

- When aspects of the claim are not consistent with the policy, the Finance Department will review the claim with the person who has authorized it.
- When adjustments have been made to comply with the policy the person who has authorized the claim will review it with the claimant

Claims must be submitted no later than **seven days (7)** following the travel date.

In certain circumstances, a Department may have established a unique process with the Finance Department for submission of travel expenses. This is acceptable if the Finance Department has approved the process.

Travel Expense claims are processed by the Finance Department and reimbursed by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct bank deposit).

- In cases where expenses do not exceed \$100.00, cash reimbursement may be made subject to the availability of cash
- In exceptional circumstances a manual cheque can be produced

Where an employee has charged expenses to his/her personal credit card, reimbursement of these expenses may be processed in advance of the travel date.

Travel:

It is expected that employees will choose the most economical and direct form of transportation.

- First class travel is not covered, unless authorized in advance by the Vice President or President and CEO or the chair of the Board of Directors

Travel by air is permitted when this is the most economical and practical way to travel.

- Travel must be arranged in advance and be booked by fixed dates; open-ended tickets are prohibited. The standard is economy class

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

Travel of others (persons who are accompanying on non-Hospital related business, and who is not a support person for an employee with a disability) is not covered and must be paid for directly by the employee.

Employees who use their own vehicles are reimbursed at the per kilometer rate established by the Hospital from time to time and as identified in the chart following the procedure.

- This allowance is to cover the cost of fuel, depreciation, maintenance and insurance coverage of \$2,000,000.00 (including accident deductibles)

The use of rental vehicles is encouraged and employees are required to use the agency with which the Hospital has a contract (see chart following the procedure)

- Reservations should be made by the employee
- The size of the vehicle must be the most economical and practical for the business purpose and number of occupants
- Rental of luxury and sports cars is prohibited
- Collision and liability insurance offered by the car rental company must be purchased
- The rental car must be refueled whenever possible before returning it in order to avoid higher gasoline charges imposed by the rental vehicle agency
- If the car rental is not covered by a PRH purchase order, a copy of the rental agreement must be attached to the Travel Expense report

Parking lot charges are reimbursable with receipts.

- Parking meter charges are reimbursable without receipts
- Employees who travel less than 5 kilometers on Hospital business are reimbursed a flat rate (see chart following procedure).

When practical, the use of public transportation and hotel shuttles is encouraged.

- Taxi or shuttle charges are reimbursable with receipts
- Public transportation fees are reimbursable without receipts

Meals:

Employees will be reimbursed for meals in accordance with the Travel Expenses Chart (see chart following procedure).

- No reimbursement will be made for meals consumed at home prior to departure, or upon return to home, or for meals included in the cost of accommodation, seminars and/or conferences

No reimbursement will be made for meals of persons accompanying the employee on non-business related travel. Alcohol cannot be claimed and will not be reimbursed as part of a travel or meal expense. Detailed receipts must be submitted in order for the Hospital to claim reimbursement for HST paid.

- Credit card slips or statements, and debit receipts are not acceptable in place of detailed receipts

Accommodations:

Employees should ask for a corporate rate and/or use the most economical accommodation.

- In some cases, a preferred rate is offered for conferences where the event is being held
- Reimbursement will be made for single accommodation in a standard room
- No reimbursement will be made for suites, executive floors or concierge levels

Private stays with family or friends is encouraged.

- Gratuitous lodging expenses are allowed (see chart following procedure).
- No receipt is required

Standard tips and gratuities are reimbursable and must be documented on the claim form.

- Receipts are not required

Employees are responsible for reviewing all room charges to ensure that charges are correct. Long distance business calls and charges for business related usage such as computer access charges, internet connections, photocopying, word processing services, rental of equipment, and facsimile transmission charges are reimbursable.

- For travel in excess of one full day, one personal call per day is permitted, and will be reimbursed

Hospitality:

For the purpose of this policy, *Hospitality* is defined as the provision of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation and other amenities to persons who are not employed by the Hospital, or by another Broader Public Sector organization.

Activities involving only employees, or persons employed by another Broader Public Sector Organization cannot be reimbursed.

Service of Alcohol as Hospitality:

Where the provision of alcohol is included in the provision of Hospitality, prior approval must be obtained **from the President and CEO**, and a business case to support the request must accompany the claim.

- Alcohol should be provided in a responsible manner, and food must always be provided when alcohol is provided
- Preference should be given to wine, beer, and spirits produced in Ontario

Non-reimbursable expenses:

The following expenses are the responsibility of the employee:

- Cost of alcoholic beverages
- Parking violations and other expenses resulting from unlawful conduct
- Cost of entertainment (e.g. movies, theatre tickets, sight-seeing trips, excursions, sports events)
- Laundry and cleaning expenses
- Passport fees
- Items lost or stolen in transit
- Service charges, interest rates, or annual fees associated with credit cards.
- Any travels/kms accrued that are not related to client/patient related duties will not be reimbursed.

Overpayment:

In circumstances where the claimant has been paid in excess of the actual allowable expenses, the overpayment is considered a debt to the Hospital, and the employee is expected to repay the excess amount.

DOCUMENTATION:

Where original receipts are required, a written explanation must be provided to support the lack of documentation.

The Finance Department will maintain complete details of all travel expense claims for verification and audit purposes.

REFERENCES:

Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive Issued by the Management Board of Cabinet and effective April 1, 2011

Brock University. *Travel and Related Expense Policy*. January 2004

London Health Sciences Centre. *Employee Travel and Expense*. January 2008

Ministry of Community and Social Services *Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive* November 2004 (revised August 2006)

Ministry of Government Services, *Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive* issued by the Management Board of Cabinet, revised April 1, 2010 – accessed March 16, 2011
www.mgs.gov.on.ca

Travel Expenses Chart

Reimbursable expenses – rates in effect at April 1, 2022:

Travel:

Type of travel	Allowed expense	Supporting document
Personal Vehicle	\$0.57/km for first 10,000 km's travelled in Fiscal year; \$0.53/km for km's over 10,000 km's in Fiscal year	Identify # of km on claim
Rental	Standard mid size car, suitable for business activity and # of passengers. Rental agent is Enterprise (613) 635-7368	Rental agreement and gas receipts
Air travel	Economy class	Receipt or credit card statement
Rail travel	Coach class	Receipt or credit card statement
Gas (for rental)		Receipt required
Taxi	Amount charged	Receipt
Public transit	As per current rate	None required
Parking lot charges	Amount charged	Receipt
Parking meter	Amount spent	None required
Shuttle	Amount charged	None required

Meals:

Meals	Allowable amount	Supporting document
Reasonable expenses	Actual Expenses	Detailed receipts

- Only the meal of the employee is covered.
- Cost of alcohol is not covered.
- Credit card, debit slips, and hotel charges are not accepted.

Accommodation:

Accommodation Covered	Allowable amount	Supporting document
Standard hotel, single occupancy	The lowest cost available within reasonable proximity to the event. Ask for corporate rates, or conference rate	Receipts required
Gratuities	Max of \$10/day	No receipt required
Private stay with family or friend *preferred	\$30 per night	No receipt required