



POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION MANUAL	REFERENCE NUMBER: C21
SECTION: COUNCIL POLICY	POLICY TITLE: TRAVEL & EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1.** To establish a Policy of the Municipality of the District of Argyle to compensate elected officials and municipal employees for reasonable expenses incurred when participating in activities related to council/municipal business provided that appropriate prior authority is obtained in accordance with this policy.

## 2. SIGNING AUTHORITY

- 2.1.** The following positions' travel and related expenses shall be authorized as follows:

Position	Signing Authority
Member of Municipal Council	CAO or Director of Finance
CAO	Warden or Deputy Warden
Employees	Immediate Supervisor

- 2.2.** A Signing Authority may designate another signing authority, and that designation shall be documented.

- 2.3.** All council and staff are prohibited from authorizing expenses incurred on their own behalf.

## 3. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1.** Everyone who incurs an expense in relation to municipal business is responsible for
- familiarizing themselves and complying with the provisions of this policy;
  - completing and submitting expense claims with necessary supporting documentation;
  - exercising reasonable diligence and care in incurring expenses prudently and responsibly; and
  - with respect to travel, cancelling reservations as required, safeguarding travel advances and funds provided, and considering alternatives to travel such as teleconferencing and videoconferencing.



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#### **4. AUTHORITY TO TRAVEL**

- 4.1.** All municipal travel, for which an expense claim will be submitted, must be approved at the appropriate level within the Municipality.
- 4.2** Staff will require Manager's approval in advance for travel outside Nova Scotia. Manager's will require CAO's approval, by assent or in writing, or specific expense must be included in the budget.

#### **5. ACCOMMODATIONS EXPENSES**

- 5.1.** Council members and employees are expected to participate in the government rate programs or the conference attendee rates when possible. Under these programs, provincial and municipal employees are entitled to special accommodations rates. The government rate should be requested at the time of booking and be confirmed before direct billing.
- 5.2.** Council members and employees shall be expected to book accommodations no more than one (1) night before or after the meeting, conference or function, as dictated by a combination of the meeting, conference or function's schedule and travel time to return home. Arrangements outside of this time frame shall be considered personal expenses unless for legitimate business reasons as approved by the CAO.
- 5.3.** All personal charges at hotels (any charges not authorized in this policy) are to be settled at the hotel prior to departure.

#### **6. INELIGIBLE REIMBURSEMENTS: POLITICAL, CONSTITUENCY, AND LOCAL TRAVEL ACTIVITIES**

- 6.1.** The expenses of a Council member for political activity associated with election or re-election is not reimbursed by the municipality.
- 6.2.** There shall be no reimbursement to councillors for travel within the municipality because such travel is deemed to be included in the part of the Council member's salary or remuneration that is an allowance for expenses incidental to the discharge of the duties of such persons as elected officers.
- 6.3.** There shall be no reimbursement for travel for employees or councillors attending Council meetings located at the administrative office, as travel from home to the municipal office is considered a personal expense.



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## 7. PER DIEM MEAL ALLOWANCES

**7.1.** Council members or employee are entitled to the following daily meal allowance, with no requirement to submit a receipt:

Breakfast - \$20

Lunch - \$25

Dinner - \$35

**7.2.** In situations where the claimant has no option other than going over the allowances (breakfast at a hotel that goes over \$20 or set meal price at an event that goes over the lunch or dinner allowances), a receipt must be kept and attached to the expense claim. The claimant should keep both the detailed receipt and the proof of payment receipt.

**7.3.** Meal allowances are not paid for meals provided free of charge at meetings, conferences or functions, hotels etc.

**7.4.** For medical, allergic, or food sensitivity reasons, Council members or Employees could be paid a meal allowance for meals provided free of cost. In those exceptional cases, the Council member or Employee must provide a receipt for the meal, and the meal shall be reimbursed at the rates in section 6.1.

**7.5.** When staff are placed in situations where a meal is above the per diem rate, the CAO may approve such coverages.

**7.6.** The Warden and CAO shall be authorized to be reimbursed for reasonable meal expenses incurred for business purposes. These meal expense claims shall be public knowledge, and the total of the claim shall be published on the Municipal Website.

## 8. MILEAGE FOR TRAVEL

**8.1.** Council members and employees shall be reimbursed for actual kilometres travelled on authorized municipal business (meetings, conferences, functions or training & continuing education etc.) and will only be reimbursed for use of their own vehicle. Where several Council members and/or Employees attend the same meeting, conference, function or training each shall make reasonable efforts to share a vehicle.



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**8.2.** Actual kilometres travelled will be reimbursed at the kilometre rate equal to the current mileage rate set by the Province.

**8.3.** An employee's place of work shall be considered the starting point and point of return of any trip, unless the employee leaves from and/or returns directly home.

**8.4.** Council members and employees who are present at a meeting or conference which is cancelled shall be entitled to reimbursement of travel.

**8.5.** Employees and council members appointed by Council to Boards, Committees, Commissions or to attend meetings, conferences, seminars etc., shall be entitled to travel expenses, where the expenses are not paid by said Boards, or Commissions. Members shall be responsible for submitting their claims for travel expenses.

**8.6.** Community members appointed by Council to Boards, Committees, Commissions or to attend meetings, conferences, seminars etc., shall be entitled to travel expenses, where the expenses are not paid by said Boards, or Commissions. Members shall be responsible for submitting their claims for travel expenses.

## **9. VEHICLE RENTAL**

**9.1.** The cost of a rental vehicle shall be a reimbursable expense in instances where:

- a) The cost of a rental vehicle and fuel is less than mileage paid using a personal vehicle;
- b) two or more Council members, the CAO and/or employees of the Municipality, or any combination thereof, are travelling together, and it is more economical than the combined cost of using personal vehicles.

## **10. INSURANCE**

**10.1.** The municipality does not accept any liability under any circumstances for claims arising from the use of privately owned vehicles. Persons using privately owned vehicles for municipal business travel are responsible for ensuring: the vehicle is properly insured for such use; compliance with all relevant statutory requirements; and payment of insurance premiums.

## **11. OUT OF PROVINCE TRAVEL**

**11.1.** Unless otherwise authorized in this policy, all requests for out-of-province travel shall be made in writing and shall contain the following information:



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- a) the purpose and duration of trip;
- b) the location (s) to be visited;
- c) the dates and times of arrival and departure;
- d) and pre-paid transportation, meals, or accommodations, and any other anticipated expenses.

**11.2.** When air travel is the most economical, time and effective means of transportation, persons choosing to use a personal vehicle on their own time, except to the extent of work time that would have otherwise been devoted to air travel. Reimbursement during travel shall not exceed the lesser of the cost of the least expensive airfare available; or the actual kilometre charges (i.e. there shall be no additional reimbursement for accommodations and meals during the travel period.

## **12. LOSS OF WAGES PAYMENT FOR MULTIDAY CONFERENCES OR SEMINAR**

- 12.1.** In the event a Council member loses wages due to their attendance at a multiday conference or seminar, they would be entitled to a \$250 loss of wage payment.
- 12.2.** Proof of loss wages must be provided to the CAO prior to payment.
- 12.3.** The loss of wages payment is a taxable benefit and will be recorded as such.

## **13. ADVANCE OF EXPENSES**

- 13.1.** Upon request, the CAO or delegate, may approve an advance to cover the anticipated expenses of an authorized municipal trip.
- 13.2.** Within thirty (30) days of the completion of a trip for which a travel advance was made, the employee must account for the advance by submitting a travel expense claim for allowable expenses and by remitting any balances in excess of the expenses actually incurred and claimed. If the advance has not been accounted for within the prescribed time limit, the Director of Finance may deduct the balance owing to the Municipality from any sum of money that may be due and payable by the Municipality to that Council member or employee.

## **14. EXPENSE CLAIMS**

- 14.1.** Expense claims must be submitted on the form provided from time to time by the municipality and shall be signed by the Council member or employee.



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**14.2.** The business reason for each expense must be submitted with all expense claims and a detailed itemized receipt is required for all expense claims except:

- a) claims for per diem meal allowances;
- b) claims for personal vehicle kilometrage for authorized travel

**14.3.** No expense claim shall be paid unless the claim is first approved for payment by the Signing Authorities who have authority to approve the claim. Before approving an expense claim, a Signing Authority must ensure that:

- a) the claim is consistent with this policy;
- b) the expenses claimed were necessarily incurred in the performance of municipal business;
- c) appropriate receipts are provided to support the claim; and the claim documentation is appropriately filed;
- d) the expenses claimed have appropriate justification; and
- e) all requirements, as determined by the municipal audit committee have been fulfilled.

**14.4.** In considering an expense claim for payment, a signing authority may request additional explanations, documentation or justification from the claimant, and may refuse to approve any claim or expense that the signing authority decides is unreasonable or not in compliance with this policy.

**14.5.** The Finance Department has the right to withhold payment until all supporting documentation has been received.

## **15. LIMITS ON REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES**

**15.1.** Notwithstanding any other provision of this Policy, the following limits shall apply to the reimbursement of expenses:

- a) a Claimant shall only be reimbursed for costs that they have incurred. A claim may not be submitted on behalf of another council member, committee member or employee.



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- b) the expenses of a Council member for political activity associated with election or re-election is not reimbursable;
- c) airplane travel shall be booked by staff or shall only be reimbursed at the lowest rate which would have been available if staff had booked the airfare;
- d) Hotel accommodations shall not exceed the cost of a standard room. Hotel upgrades shall be at the personal expense of the Claimant unless there are ergonomic necessities attributable to physical requirements including, but not limited to wheelchair accessibility;
- e) The cost of alcohol and cannabis is prohibited and shall not be billed to any municipal credit card, nor is it reimbursable;
- f) Fees, deposits, interest and surcharges incurred on a personal credit card shall not be reimbursed;
- g) The use of petty cash to pay an expense claim is prohibited.
- h) Debit and credit card transactions slips are not acceptable as receipts;
- i) When municipal travel and personal travel is combined, only documented and approved expenses directly related to the Municipality of Argyle are reimbursable. Extended travel time and expenses are at the traveler's own expense;
- j) There shall be no reimbursement of travel related expenses for individuals other than a Council member, Committee Member, the CAO or an employee of the Municipality of Argyle. The Municipality will not reimburse and expenses incurred for partners travelling with a Council member or employees.
- k) There shall be no reimbursement for travel by a Council member within the Municipality as such travel is deemed to be included in the part of the Council member's remuneration that is an allowance for expenses incidental to the discharge of the duties of such persons as elected officers.
- l) There shall be no reimbursement for travel for Council members or employees attending Council meetings located at the administrative office, as travel from home to the municipal office is considered a personal expense.



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## **16. USE OF MUNICIPAL CREDIT CARDS**

- 16.1.** The following limits shall apply to the use of municipal credit cards:
- a) travel advances for individuals with a credit card will be prohibited;
  - b) the municipal credit card shall only be used for expenses that are permitted under this policy, and shall not be used for cash advances or personal expenses;
  - c) reimbursement for interest incurred on a municipal credit card is prohibited.

## **17. FRAUD, MISUSE OR MISAPPROPRIATION OF MUNICIPAL FUNDS**

- 17.1.** Fraudulent irregularity, misuse or misappropriation of municipal funds may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
- 17.2.** Suspicious activity and potential misuse of funds must be reported to the CAO immediately. If suspicious activity involves the CAO, report to the Warden.

## **18. TIMEFRAME**

- 18.1.** A claim for reimbursement of an expense shall be submitted for approval within forty five (45) days of the expense being incurred, and within 15 days of the fiscal year end of the Municipality (March 31). Failure to meet these deadlines may result in denial of reimbursement from the signing authority.
- 18.2.** Expenses must be submitted and charged to the year in which they occurred and cannot be carried forward to the next year.

## **19. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

- 19.1.** Pursuant to the Municipal Government Act, the CAO shall ensure that the Municipality does the following:
- a) Within 90 days of the end of each fiscal quarter, prepares and posts an expense report on the municipal website for the Warden, CAO (including an employee of the Municipality delegated any of the responsibilities or powers of the CAO pursuant to Subsection 29 (b) of the Municipal Government Act) and each member of council on their expenses regarding the following:
    - travel and travel related expenses, including transportation, accommodation and incidentals;





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- meals;
- training and education

b) By September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, prepares and files with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and annual summary report that summarizes the expense reports for the preceding fiscal year, that is compliant with the requirements of the Department of Municipal Affairs and the requirements set out in the Financial Reporting and Accounting Manual.

## 20. REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

- 20.1.** The Municipal Audit Committee shall review the Expense Annual Summary Report
- 20.2.** By the January 31<sup>st</sup> immediately following a regular election held under the Municipal Elections Act, Council shall review this policy and, following a motion by Council, either re-adopt the policy or amend the policy and adopt the policy as amended.

Chief Administrative Officers' Annotation for Official Policy Record	
Date of Notice to Council Members of Intent to Consider (7-days minimum)	July 18, 2016
Date of Passage of Current Policy	September 13, 2016
Date of Notice to Council Members of Intent to Consider – V1.1	March 28, 2024
Date of Passage of Current Policy – V1.1	April 25, 2024
Date of Notice to Council Members of Intent to Consider – V1.2	January 30, 2025
Date of Passage of Current Policy – V1.2	February 27, 2025
I certify that this policy was adopted by Council as indicated above.	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-end;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Warden </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Date </div> </div>	



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_____	_____
Chief Administrative Officer	Date

Version Log		
Version #	Amendment	Date
1	Original Policy	July 25, 2016
1.1		April 25, 2024
1.2	Signing authority clarification added	February 27, 2025
1.3	Adding back section 6 and adding part to section 7	