

COUNCIL POLICY



Travel and Subsistence Reimbursement

Number:	CP-21	Approved:	July 8, 2025
Department:	Finance		
Resolution No:	TP/25/229	Replaces:	FIN-001-026
Last Review Date:	December 2018	Next Review Date:	May 2028

Policy Statement

Elected Officials and Town Employees attending meetings, conventions, seminars or conferences on behalf of the Town will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses.

Members of the public-at-large who are appointed by Council to Town Boards and Committees will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses.

Purpose

This policy provides a framework of accountability and guidelines for the effective oversight of resources in the reimbursement of travel, meals, and travel-related expenses.

Definitions

“CAO” means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town of Ponoka.

“Claimant” means a person submitting a claim for eligible expenses.

“Delegation” means a group of people officially chosen or appointed to represent a government.

“Dignitaries” means a person who holds a high rank or position of authority in government.

“Employee” refers to any individual employed by the Town of Ponoka to perform duties or tasks in exchange for compensation

“Hospitality” includes expenses which are incurred while entertaining external stakeholders in accordance with Section 4, which may include Excluded Expenses listed under Section 3.

“Proof of Expenditures” means an itemized receipt, with all gratuities and tax details, and the credit or debit card receipt showing the full amount paid.

“Town” means the Town of Ponoka.

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Policy Guidelines

1. General Principles

- 1.1. All expenses reimbursed through this policy are public funds and subject to public accountability.
- 1.2. Employees attending courses, conferences, seminars, or events must have approval in advance by their Manager.
- 1.3. Travel should be by the most cost-effective and practical means.
- 1.4. Expenses must be necessary, reasonable, and for official Town business purposes only.
- 1.5. A claimant using a personal vehicle for business use shall be reimbursed for the distance travelled from their workplace or principal residence, whichever is a shorter distance to their destination.
- 1.6. Expense claim forms are to be submitted to Finance within 30 days of completion of the course, conference, seminar or event.

2. Eligible Expenses

2.1. Registration Fees

Registration fees for approved courses, conferences, seminars and events will be eligible for 100% reimbursement upon submission of an expense report and applicable receipts.

2.2. Accommodations

When travelling on Town business and overnight accommodation is required; hotel, motel and camping accommodations qualify for 100% reimbursement upon submission of an expense report and applicable receipts.

If employees choose to use private accommodation, such as staying with family or friends, an allowance of \$50 will be reimbursed for each night away.

2.3. Meals and Subsistence

Claimants may choose to be reimbursed based on:

- a) The actual meal cost (excluding alcohol) with itemized receipt and up to **20%** gratuity, or

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- b) The meal allowance if no receipt is available.

Meal allowances (including gratuity):

- a) Breakfast **\$15**
(If the departure time is earlier, or the return time is later than 7:30 a.m.)
- b) Lunch **\$20**
(If the departure time is earlier, or the return time is later than 1:00 p.m.)
- c) Dinner **\$30**
(If the departure time is earlier, or the return time is later than 6:30 p.m.)

Only one method (actual cost or allowance) may be claimed per meal.

2.4. Incidental Allowance

A flat daily allowance of **\$10** can be claimed for every 24 hours away on Town business for incidental expenses that are frequently paid out in cash and difficult to obtain receipts for. Examples of incidental expenses incurred during business travel are tips for hotel staff, purchasing a coffee or pop from a vending machine, transportation between place of lodging and places where meals are taken.

2.5. Parking Fees

When applicable, parking fees qualify for 100% reimbursement when representing the Town. Reimbursement will be upon submission of an expense report with Proof of Expenditures.

2.6. Mileage

When authorization is received for the use of a personal vehicle for Town business, the claimant may claim mileage expenses based on the kilometers traveled. Mileage rates will be determined annually by the *Canada Revenue Agency for travel within Alberta* (www.canada.ca by province).

3. Excluded Expenses

- 3.1. Purchases of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or similar items.
 - 3.1.1. Purchase of tobacco for indigenous ceremonial purposes is permitted.
 - 3.1.2. Purchase of alcohol for Hospitality is permitted in specific situations (Refer to Section 4).

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- 3.2. When meals are provided as part of the training, conference, or seminar, a meal allowance may not be claimed. If claiming meals during a Conference, the agenda is to be attached to the expense claim.
- 3.3. Mini-bar, room service, or in-room entertainment.
- 3.4. Rental or entrance fees for personal entertainment such as movies, concerts, recreation centres, galleries, or theatres.
- 3.5. Upgrades to travel or accommodations.
- 3.6. Fines or violations.
- 3.7. Personal items.
- 3.8. Spouse or guest expenses, with the exception of approved staff events where guest attendance is expressly invited.
- 3.9. Contributions to a charity or political party.

4. Hospitality

- 4.1. Hospitality expenses will only be considered for hosting Dignitaries or Delegations.
- 4.2. Hospitality expenses may only be reimbursed with prior approval of the CAO
- 4.3. Hospitality expenses must be modest and appropriate to the occasion.
- 4.4. Hospitality should only be offered when it serves a clear business purpose and is proportionate to the nature of the engagement.
- 4.5. Hospitality involving only internal staff is not reimbursable.
- 4.6. Claims must be supported by itemized receipts and a statement including:
 - The names of the attendees
 - Their organization or affiliation
 - The purpose of the meeting or event
 - Claim must be signed by the CAO.

Responsibilities

1. Town Council
 - 1.1 Adopt and support this policy.
 - 1.2 Authorize budget allocations for training, travel and associated expenses.
2. Chief Administrative Officer
 - 2.1 Ensure policy review occurs and verify the implementation of this Policy.
 - 2.2. Ensure policy compliance.

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3. General Managers/Managers
 - 3.1 Approve staff attendance at courses, conferences, seminars and events.
 - 3.2 Review and approve expense claims.
 - 3.3 Ensure that travel is cost-effective, necessary, and in line with Council's Strategic Priorities and the Employee Code of Conduct.
 - 3.4 Confirm that claims are submitted with proper documentation.

4. Employees/Claimants
 - 4.1 Understand and follow the requirements outlined in this policy.
 - 4.2 Ensure all expenses claimed are reasonable and submitted in a timely manner.
 - 4.3 Maintain transparency and accountability when representing the Town in accordance with the Employee Code of Conduct.

Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in non-reimbursement and, where applicable, further administrative review or disciplinary action.

Related Policies

Progressive Discipline Policy
Employee Code of Conduct Policy

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Travel and Subsistence Reimbursement APPROVAL

Signature of Mayor

Signature of CAO

Date

Date

POLICY RECORD

Approval and Amendment History

Date of Council Approval	Council Motion Number	Description	Date of Next Review
July 8, 2025	TP/25/229	Update	2028