

3-62 Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses

EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT

Reference: Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive, April 1, 2011

Policy:

These expense rules apply to any of the following individuals making an expense claim: Employees, Board members, foster caregivers, volunteers and consultants and contractors engaged by the Society.

The following principles will govern travel and expense reimbursement practice at The Children's Aid Society of Haldimand and Norfolk (herein after referred to as the "Society"):

- The Society is accountable for public funds used to reimburse travel, meal and hospitality expenses. All expenses must support business objectives.
- The Society's transactions are transparent to all stakeholders. Rules for incurring and reimbursing travel, meal and hospitality expenses are clear, easily understood and available to the public.
- Public funds are used prudently and responsibly. Plans for travel, meals accommodation and hospitality are necessary and economical with due regard for health and safety.
- Legitimate authorized expenses incurred during the course of the Society's business are reimbursed.

The Society assumes no obligation to reimburse expenses which do not comply with this policy. In the event of an overpayment of expense, it is considered a debt owing to the Society and will be recovered promptly from the payee. Stakeholders are obliged to familiarize themselves with this policy and to seek clarification from their immediate supervisor as required. Management is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and for taking remedial action if required.

Procedure:

Non-Reimbursable Expenses

Expenses of a personal nature will not be reimbursed. Such expenses include but are not limited to:

- Recreation (e.g. video rentals, mini-bars)
- Personal items
- Traffic violations

- Parking violations (*Exception: The Society will reimburse employees for the cost of parking tickets acquired during emergency situations, while providing direct service to clients, as approved by the employee's immediate supervisor*)
- Alcoholic drinks
- Expenses incurred on behalf of friends/family

Receipts

Original receipts (not photocopies) must be submitted with all expense claims. Receipts must be sufficiently detailed to establish the appropriateness and reasonableness of items purchased. Credit card slips and debit transaction slips by themselves are not sufficient to support a claim for reimbursement.

Original receipts, plus credit card slips obtained via the use of Society credit cards must in all cases be submitted to Finance for reconciliation to the credit card statement.

In exceptional circumstances, if detailed receipts are not available or have been lost, a written explanation with detailed information must be provided.

Time Limit for Claims

Expense accounts are to be submitted 30 days after the last day of the month in which the expenses were incurred. Exceptions will only be at the discretion of the Director of Finance, a Director of Service, the Executive Director and in matters of the Board of Directors, the Board President or Treasurer.

If an individual is leaving employment with the Society, they must submit any claims before leaving.

Expense claims submitted later than one month after this deadline will not be paid.

Verification and Approval

Claims for travel and expense reimbursement will be approved by the immediate supervisor or by the authority level specified in this policy. All approvals will be consistent with the Payment Authority set out in Policy 3-60.

Supervisors, Managers, Directors of Service and the Executive Director having responsibility for approving expense claims are responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy. The Executive Director's claims for travel and expense reimbursement will be approved by the Director of Finance and the President of the Board of Directors, or the designate. Claims made by the Board of Directors will be approved by the Board President. The Board President's expenses will be approved by the Treasurer.

Approvers cannot approve their own expenses. Expenses for a group must be claimed by the most senior person present.

Responsibility of Approvers

- Ensure that all expenses are consistent with this policy
- Provide approval only for expenses that were necessarily incurred in the performance of Society business
- Determine and authorize when business travel is necessary
- Ensure that appropriate receipts are provided to support expense claims
- Ensure that unusual items are appropriately explained or proof is given of prior approval
- Ensure that all employees are aware of conflict of interest guidelines

Guidance on Exceptions

Requests for reimbursement should not be rejected solely because they arose from mistakes or misinterpretations of the requirements of this policy. Decisions to approve exceptional reimbursement must be reviewed on a case by case basis and approved by the Director of Finance, a Director of Service, the Executive Director and, in matters of the Board, the Board President or Treasurer. A decision to make an exception to a claim will be guided by the following principles:

- Trust – use discretion and latitude to act in a fair and reasonable manner
- Flexibility – management decisions respect the duty to accommodate, respond to persons' needs and interests and to consider unforeseen circumstances
- Stewardship – to ensure consistent, fair and equitable application of this policy giving consideration to all circumstances while maintaining the shared responsibility of wise and prudent use of Society resources

When the Director of Finance, a Director of Service, the Executive Director, the Board President or Treasurer decides to exercise discretion in making an exception, and in order to ensure a proper record for audit purposes, the rationale for the exception must be documented and accompany the expense claim.

Travel Advances

In general, the Society does not extend travel advances. Where travel is expected to be of a longer duration (more than two days) a cash advance may be provided at the discretion of the Director of Finance. Travel advances from petty cash or in amounts lower than \$100.00 will not be provided.

Loyalty Programs

Staff, foster caregivers, Board members and volunteers may participate in loyalty programs (e.g. frequent flyer programs) provided they select the most cost-effective means of travel.

Approval for Travel

- Normal travel related to direct client service or other Society business and within the Society's area of jurisdiction does not require prior approval – such claims are approved after incurrence. Approval for volunteer drivers is based on the Society's assigned plan. Society expense guidelines will govern reimbursement claims.
- Travel outside the Society's jurisdiction, but within Ontario, requires prior approval from an immediate supervisor. Society expense guidelines will govern reimbursement claims.
- Travel outside Ontario requires prior approval from the Executive Director. Travel outside of Ontario by the Executive Director requires approval by the Board of Directors. Travel outside Ontario by a Board member requires the approval of the Board President. Travel outside Ontario by the Board President requires the approval of the Treasurer. Society expense guidelines will govern reimbursement claims.
- Travel outside Canada requires prior approval from the Executive Director. Travel outside of Canada by the Executive Director requires prior approval by the Board of Directors. Travel outside Canada by a Board member requires the approval of the Board President. Travel outside Canada by the Board President requires the approval of the Treasurer. A proposal for travel outside of Canada must include a written rationale that demonstrates the travel is critical to the organization's priorities; and a budget that details the costs of travel arrangements (mode of transportation, accommodation, food, miscellaneous expenses, etc.) Society travel guidelines will govern reimbursement claims, and, in no circumstances will expenses of a personal nature be reimbursed by the Society.

Medical/Health Insurance

There will be no reimbursement for the cost of privately arranged medical/health insurance for employees traveling within or outside Canada since coverage in the event of illness, injury or death is provided through the Society health insurance plan.

Vehicle Insurance

A valid driver's license is required for all vehicles driven to conduct Society business.

Personal vehicles used for Society business must be insured at the vehicle owner's expense for personal motor vehicle liability. License plate and insurance coverage is recorded by the Human Resources Department. All persons conducting Society business are required to provide a minimum of one million dollars liability coverage. The Society does not reimburse the costs of liability or collision coverage. Drivers must satisfy themselves whether their motor vehicle insurance coverage should include business use of their vehicles. The Society will contribute to the cost of coverage required to transport clients for bargaining unit employees, up to the maximum amount established in the collective agreement.

The Society assumes no financial responsibility for privately owned vehicles other than paying the kilometric rate when used for Society business. The Society is not responsible for reimbursing deductible amounts related to insurance coverage. Those driving a personal vehicle on Society business cannot make claim to the Society for damages as a result of a collision.

Accidents must be reported immediately to local law enforcement authorities, the rental car company(if applicable), the automobile insurance company (if using a personal vehicle) and the employees immediate supervisor. The employees' immediate supervisor will report the accident to the Human Resources Director who will coordinate follow-up with the Workers' Safety and Insurance Board as necessary.

Car Rental

Employees are expected to rent a car when the round trip distance exceeds 200 kilometres. Rental cars are to be arranged through the Society's preferred vendor. The name of the car rental company and directions for booking a rental car will be available on the Society's Staff Home Page. Should an employee choose to use their personal vehicle when the round trip distance exceeds 200 kilometres, reimbursement will be limited to 200 kilometres at the prevailing rate per kilometer.

Foster caregivers and volunteers who intend to travel more than 200 kilometres round trip must consult the departmental supervisor. Board members consult the Board President. Volunteer drivers on assigned drives do not need separate approval.

Conference Travel

Employees are expected to rent a car if the total distance driven divided by the number of days in attendance at a conference exceeds 200 kilometres per day, for example:

- a) 2 day conference in Toronto: total distance equals 220 kilometres; total days equals 2; distance per day equals 110 kilometres = rental not required.
- b) 2 day conference in Ottawa: total distance equals 600 kilometres; total days equals 2; distance per day equals 300 kilometres = rental required.

Similar consideration is applied when overnight stays are required to visit clients.

The size of the rental car is not to exceed a full size car. Exceptions are to be documented and approved in writing by the employee's immediate supervisor prior to initiating the rental. In no case will luxury or sports cars be reimbursed.

Employees may choose to use the 407 ETR route. ETR toll charges will be reimbursed by the Society either to the rental car company or to the employee provided appropriate documentation accompanies the expense claim.

Kilometre Reimbursement Rates for Personal Vehicle Use

Employees are required to plan client visits so that one trip to each geographical area will suffice, whenever possible. This practice will ensure the most efficient use of work time and will minimize mileage expense to the Society.

All employees are expected to cover their own travel expenses in order to report to work and return home each day. In the event that a worker is called out by their supervisor after returning home from work at the conclusion of a work day, mileage from home to the destination and return may be claimed.

Employees shall be permitted to submit for reimbursement the actual kilometres driven for work-related purposes under the following conditions:

- a) From the Society's office to the home of a client or collateral and back to the office.
- b) From client home to client home when the worker will not be going directly to the office.
- c) Where employees travel directly from home to a client location or from a client location directly home, mileage will be reimbursed based on the distance from home to the client location or from the office to the client location, whichever is less.

- d) From home or office, whichever distance is less, to location of training, conferences, meetings, etc.

The Society will reimburse employees for the cost of parking tickets only when acquired during emergency situations, while providing direct service to clients, as approved by the supervisor. Toll road expenses will be reimbursed with prior supervisory approval.

Rates of reimbursement applicable to travel by bargaining unit employees will be in accordance with the Society's collective agreement. Reimbursement rates applicable to all other staff, volunteers and foster caregivers will be approved by the Executive Director.

Expense claims are to be submitted on the Society approved form and must include the:

- Case name / number where applicable
- Purpose of Expense
- Starting address
- Ending address (or institution name)
- Distance travelled
- Date of travel

Taxi Travel

Where practical, local public transit/hotel shuttles must be used. Receipts for reimbursement are not required.

Reimbursement for taxicabs may be claimed only where justified by exceptional circumstances, for example:

- When other means of transportation are not available;
- When health or safety warrants; or
- When the transport of work-related baggage or parcels is required.

Prior approval for this expense must be obtained wherever possible.

Taxicab expenses are also justified where group travel by taxicab is more economical than the total cost of other means of travel, had individuals travelled separately.

Rail Transportation

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

Air Transportation

Travel by air is permitted when this is the most practical and economical way to travel. The standard is economy class. Travel in fare classes above economy class will only be reimbursed at the economy class rate.

Other Travel Expenses

Reimbursement for hotel accommodation in the Society's geographical jurisdiction area will not normally be made. Exceptional or emergency situations may arise where personnel who reside out of town are required to remain in the Society's jurisdiction overnight. These exceptions must be pre-approved by a Director of Service or the Director of Finance.

Any overnight accommodation must be pre-approved by the employee's immediate supervisor. Approval will be based on distance to be travelled, and, in the case of conferences or training, the start and ending times of the program.

Individuals will be required to contact the hotel and reserve a room on their personal credit cards. Upon return, credit card receipts may be submitted immediately. Reimbursement will be made for the equivalent cost of single accommodation in a standard room. Reservations for suites, executive floors or concierge levels will be reimbursed for the equivalent cost of single room accommodation at the same location.

Private stays with family and friends are encouraged. A maximum of \$30.00 per night for gratuitous lodging is allowed. No receipt is required.

For extended stays out of town at a single location, long term accommodation must be considered to take advantage of lower weekly or monthly rates. This may include the rental of a housekeeping facility. Requests for long term accommodation must be approved by the Director of Finance.

Other Out of Pocket Expenses

Reasonable gratuities for meals (not to exceed 15% of after-tax cost) will be reimbursed. Reasonable gratuities for hotel room services and taxes will be reimbursed. Likewise reasonable expenses related to parking meters, bus tickets and subway tokens will be reimbursed. Receipts may not be available for some of these items and if they cannot be obtained a reasonable amount can be approved for these items.

Calls to Home

Reimbursement will be made for reasonable costs for a personal call home for each night away.

Meal Expenses

Original, itemized receipts must be provided. Reimbursement must not exceed the amount actually spent, (including taxes and gratuities) as validated by a receipt and will be limited to the caps detailed below.

Every claim for reimbursement must be accompanied by an original receipt. Meals charged to a hotel tab must be indicated on the billing from the hotel (a detailed itemized receipt is not required).

Reimbursement of meal costs in no case will include cost of alcoholic beverages.

No reimbursement will 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.

The cost of meals for Society employees during hours of work are generally borne by the employee. Meal expense, approved by the supervisor, is reimbursed in accordance with the established rates when an employee is required to purchase a meal in the course of official duties, for example:

- when meeting with a client or business professional during meal times
- short notice direction from a supervisor to be away from the office during meal times
- in circumstances where the employee would not have otherwise purchased the meal.

Working lunches involving staff members will not be reimbursed unless pre-approved by the Director of Finance, a Director of Service or the Executive Director.

Where work-related meal costs are set, for example, for meetings facilitated by OACAS or other agencies, the full cost of the meal expense will be reimbursed.

Meal Rates:

Breakfast	\$10.00, exclusive of taxes and gratuities
Lunch	\$10.00, exclusive of taxes and gratuities
Dinner	\$20.00, exclusive of taxes and gratuities

For a full day of meal claims, (e.g. breakfast, lunch and dinner) where an employee is away at a conference or training and meals are not provided, the employee has the discretion to allocate the daily total three meal rate of \$40.00 among meals. The total cost of meals for a full day cannot exceed \$40.00 (excluding taxes and gratuities).

The lunch limit for celebratory meals is increased to \$15. See details under Meal Expenses – Clients.

For less than a full day of meal claims, the schedule of rates shall apply.

Meal Expenses – Clients

Employees may take children in care out for a celebratory meal on their birthday or for their graduation. Advance approval is not required for this annual meal. Due to the “celebratory” nature of the event, staff may spend \$15 each for the child’s meal and their own for a lunch meal. All expenses require a detailed receipt. The type of celebration should be indicated on the receipt.

There are other circumstances when employees may purchase meals for clients. Meals, other than celebratory meals, must be approved by the employee’s supervisor. These expenses will be reimbursed within the same limits as Meal Expenses (i.e. \$10 for lunch). All expenses require a detailed receipt.

Meal Expenses - Overtime

The dinner allowance applies when an employee is on approved overtime three hours past normal closing time. A detailed receipt is required.

Meal Expenses – Volunteers, Foster Caregivers and Board Members

Meal expenses may be claimed in exceptional circumstances, such as travel outside the jurisdiction for 5 hours or more resulting in a meal being purchased and consumed outside the jurisdiction. Foster caregivers may be required to attend lengthy medical appointments outside the jurisdiction and may claim meal expenses for themselves. Meal expenses for children in care are not considered reimbursable and are included in the per diem.

Attending Conferences Outside Ontario

Requests to attend conferences outside Ontario require prior approval from the Executive Director. Requests to attend conferences outside Ontario by the Executive Director require prior approval by the Board of Directors.

The request to attend a conference outside Ontario must include a written rationale that demonstrates attendance at the conference is critical to the organization's priorities or to the professional development of the applicant. The rationale must demonstrate that similar opportunities do not exist within Ontario. A budget that details the costs of travel arrangements (mode of transportation, accommodation, food, miscellaneous expenses, etc.) must be attached to the request.

Reimbursement of expenses to attend a conference outside Ontario will be based on:

- travel will be reimbursed to the point of departure from Ontario (mileage to the airport, train station or bus depot, etc.)
- meal expense shall apply as noted under meal expenses

Society travel guidelines will govern reimbursement claims, and, in no circumstances will expenses of a personal nature be reimbursed by the Society.

Credit Cards

Credit card purchases must be substantiated by detailed receipts which are provided to the Finance Department for reconciliation of the credit card statement. A credit card slip is not deemed sufficient detail.

Refer to Use of Society Credit Card Policy 3-61.

Hospitality

Hospitality is the provision of food, beverages, accommodation, transportation or other amenities at Society expense to persons who are not clients, not engaged in work for the Society and not designated Broader Public Sector organizations or any of the Ontario government ministries, agencies and public entities covered by the OPS Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive. Hospitality should be extended in an economical, consistent and appropriate way when it will facilitate Society business or is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy.

When hospitality events are extended by the Society and guests include vendors or prospective vendors to the Society, managers are responsible for obtaining prior approval to ensure that the hospitality provided does not give, or is not perceived to give, preferential treatment to any vendor.

Acceptance of hospitality from vendors, current or prospective, may constitute a conflict of interest and may therefore be disallowed. Managers are responsible to ensure that employees are aware of their conflict of interest obligations.

Hosts must ensure that hospitality expense records include:

- The circumstances of the event (why is it held?)
- The form of hospitality
- Cost supported by receipts
- Name and location of establishment
- Names, titles and companies of attendees
- Approvals by appropriate individuals in the Society

Recipients of Hospitality

Gifts of appreciation may be accepted if token in nature, valued at up to \$30.00. Gifts valued above \$30.00 must be justified and approved by the Executive Director, Director of Service, or Director of Finance, and in matters of the Board, the Board President. In all cases where hospitality is provided to Society staff, volunteers, foster caregivers or board members, conflict of interest guidelines will prevail in determining whether such hospitality should be reasonably accepted. Management should be consulted in matters of uncertainty.

Expenses for Consultants and Other Contractors

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

Responsibility of Claimants

When arranging travel, all claimants must:

- Consider alternatives to travel such as teleconferencing and videoconferencing and obtain approvals from appropriate authorities for travel
- Use service providers designated by the Society where appropriate
- Request and accept lowest common carrier fare
- Supply an itinerary to and notify their immediate supervisor of any changes so that travelers may be contacted in an emergency
- Cancel hotel bookings prior to the time designated by the hotel to avoid no-show charges
- Submit all expense claims on a timely basis
- Provide explanations for unusual expenses
- Provide original receipts for all expense claims

- Provide descriptions for all expenses claimed

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