



Policy	Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy
Approved By:	Council
Approval Date:	October 26, 2020
Amendment Date:	

TRAVEL AND EXPENSE REIMBURESMENT POLICY

1.0 OBJECTIVES

- 1.1. Provide guidelines for Council Members and employees when incurring expenses related to travel, conferences, courses, and other District related business;
- 1.2. Ensure there are reasonable limits placed on travel, conference, courses, and other related expenses;
- 1.3. Ensure travel expense approvals and reimbursement are provided in an efficient manner;
- 1.4. Promote transparency and prudence when using taxpayer funds for travel and related expenses; and
- 1.5. Support professional development in matters relating to District of Oak Bay business.

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 This Policy applies to Council Members, and employees of the District of Oak Bay.
- 2.2 This policy does not apply to Oak Bay Police Department employees or members of the Oak Bay Police Board.
- 2.3 This policy does not provide guidance for the payment or reimbursement of professional dues or tuition reimbursement.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

In this Policy,

“DISTRICT EMPLOYEE” means Council Members and employees of the District of Oak Bay but does not include employees or Board members of the Oak Bay Police Department.

“AUTHORIZED APPROVER” means the department manager identified in the chart in Section 4.10 who is responsible for approving an employee’s means of transportation and expense claim.

4.0 POLICY – GENERAL PROVISIONS

4.1 Eligible expenses under this Policy, subject to Section 5.0, include:

- 4.1.1** Accommodation,
- 4.1.2** Transportations,
- 4.1.3** Meal,
- 4.1.4** Registration fees,
- 4.1.5** Incidentals including without limitation telephone, photocopying or facsimile,
- 4.1.6** Taxes incurred on all above items

4.2 Subject to approved budget limits, Council Members are authorized to attend the following:

- 4.2.1 The annual Union of British Columbian Municipalities convention;
- 4.2.2 The annual Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities convention;
- 4.2.3 The annual Federation of Canadian Municipalities convention; and
- 4.2.4 Other meetings, courses, seminars, conferences, conventions related to District of Oak Bay business with the annual total not exceeding \$1,000 per Councillor.

Reimbursement for attendance by Councillors at meetings, courses, seminars, conferences and conventions exceeding these limitations will be subject to Council resolution.

4.3 Wherever feasible, expenses subject to this Policy should be paid with a corporate credit card rather than through a reimbursement process.

4.4 District employees wishing to combine a business trip with personal travel may do so at their own expense. For greater clarity, District employees will be required to pay for any additional accommodation and living expenses that are not related to the business travel.

4.5 Partner travel will not be paid by the District. No expense claim may be made for expenses of a spouse, partner or other relative or friend travelling with the District employee.

4.6 Travel advances will not be provided unless in exceptional circumstances as determined by the Director of Financial Services. Travellers may request a travel advance no later than ten (10) business days prior to departure and the amount must not exceed estimated expenses.

4.7 All claims for reimbursement must be signed by the traveller and the Authorized Approver in Section 4.10. All original receipts must be submitted for expenses. Claims for reimbursement should be submitted to the Finance department within 30 days of when the expenses were incurred.

4.8 The expense reimbursement amounts outlined in Section 5.0 set out the maximum reimbursement that an employee may claim when authorized (either by Council resolution, department director approval, or policy) to attend meetings, courses, seminars, conferences, conventions and other District of Oak Bay related function.

4.9 The Authorized Approver may require employees to carpool or share accommodation (as deemed appropriate). At no time should an employee be out of pocket as a result of incurring expenses detailed in this policy.

4.10 Expense reimbursement requests from an employee can only be approved by authorized approver as detailed in the chart below.

Employee	Authorized Approver
Department employee	Department Director or designate
Department Director	Chief Administrative Officer or Director of Financial Services
Chief Administrative Officer	Mayor or designate
Councillor (including Mayor)	Director of Financial Services or designate

5.0 POLICY – SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

5.1 Transportation:

5.1.1 A traveller may choose their means of transportation, subject to approval by his or her Authorized Approver in Section 4.10 – air, ferry, bus, train, car, or combination thereof. Per diems will be paid on the same basis as travel by air unless alternative means of transportation are more convenient.

5.1.2 Air travel:

- (a) **Class:** All travel must be economy class except in emergencies where other options are not available. Employees may choose to upgrade at their own expense.
- (b) **Fare:** The traveller is expected to obtain the most economical fare available for a direct, return flight to/from the destination.
- (c) **Advanced booking:** Flights should be booked at least 14 days prior to departure to obtain most economical fare when feasible.

5.1.3 Ground Transportation:

- (a) **Own Vehicle** - A traveller who chooses to travel outside the Capital Regional District using their own vehicle may claim the lesser of: (1) economy airfare and ground transportation expenses, or (2) Mileage at the Canada Revenue Agency reasonable per kilometre rate for the year of travel, plus parking expenses, tolls, ferries and other reasonable expense related to transportation.
- (b) **District Vehicle** - A traveller who uses a District Vehicle may claim the lesser of: (1) economy airfare plus ground transportation expenses, or (2) actual out of pocket expenses such as parking, tolls, ferries incurred during the period of travel.
- (c) **Travelling as a Group** - When two or more travellers are travelling in the same vehicle, only the traveler who incurs the expenses of operating the vehicle may

claim mileage or in the case of a District vehicle, the actual out of pocket expenses. Where one or more travellers are sharing a taxi, only the traveller with who incurs the expense may claim for reimbursement.

- (d) **Rental Vehicles** - There may be situations where it is necessary to provide a rental car. Economy or compact cars must be used unless there are three or more travellers travelling together or where local or seasonal conditions require a four wheel drive or truck, in which case, an upgrade to a full size car or four wheel drive truck is permitted. Vehicle rental, insurance, parking and fuel expenses will be reimbursed. Rentals for luxury vehicles will not be reimbursed. Employees may upgrade the rental vehicle at their own personal expense.
- (e) **Damage to employee vehicle:** Loss or damage to a District employee's vehicle while parked is not the responsibility of the District.

5.1.4 Accommodation

- (a) **Class of Room:** Travel accommodation will be based on single occupancy in a standard room and be booked at the lowest rate (preferred, government, special, conference) available. Upgrades will not be reimbursed. Employees may upgrade the room class at their own personal expense.
- (b) **Advanced Bookings:** accommodation should be booked far enough in advance to take advantage the most economical rate available.
- (c) **Location:** Travel accommodation should be booked as close as possible to the business function/conference and/or where the hosting organization has reserved a block of rooms.
- (d) **Private Accommodation:** Should a traveller choose to stay in a private accommodation (i.e. with friends or relatives) may claim an allowance of \$50 per night. No receipts are required.
- (e) **Expenses not eligible for reimbursement:** The following items will not be reimbursed:
 - Mini bar charges,
 - Movies or game rentals,
 - Laundry, cleaning expenses,
 - Personal telephone calls, or
 - Other incidental expenses not explicitly covered in this Policy.

5.1.5 Per Diems

- (a) **Rates:** Daily rate is \$70 for travel within North America (outside Canada, the rate will be paid in US dollars).

