Travel, Meals, and Hospitality Expense Policy

Section:	Finance	**Policy No.:**	Fin. 6.0
Applicability:	All employees and the Board of Directors	**Effective Date:**	November 17, 2016
Approval Authority:	Michele Bell, Chief Executive Officer		
Date of Last Review:	February 11, 2025	**Last Revision Date:**	January 31, 2024

POLICY

Community Living Owen Sound and District (CLOS&D) recognizes that from time to time, employees and others are required to be away from the typical work environment, which may involve additional expenses. The following procedures must be followed to obtain reimbursement for reasonable expenses such as meals and accommodations while on CLOS&D-approved business.

SCOPE

Reimbursable expenses covered by this policy include transportation, parking, accommodation, and travel-related meals.
These expenses must be;
Work-related
Modest and, appropriate, and
Strike a balance between economy, health and safety, and operation efficiency.

All out-of-pocket expenses associated with an employee's duties will be reasonably considered and reimbursed.

PROCEDURE

All expenses must comply with the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act 2010

Eligible Expenses:

- Car rental expenses, approved in advance by the Manager.
- Kilometer reimbursement when using a personal vehicle.
- Accommodation expenses approved in advance by the Manager.
- Meal expenses, on a reimbursement basis.
- Other miscellaneous expenses, i.e., business calls, photocopying costs, etc.) as authorized/ approved by the Manager.

Transportation

Travel from home to the employees' work location is not reimbursed, and staff are expected to make adequate travel plans to conserve travel expenses. Accordingly, an employee cannot claim mileage if the destination is on their way to work. On a day-to-day basis, this means that only kilometers over and above the equivalent of one round trip to their work location are eligible for reimbursement.

Exceptions: travel from home to work provision may be approved in writing by the direct supervisor/manager.

Use of Personal Vehicle:

- The Chief Executive Director will establish the standard reimbursement rate for mileage.
- Employees using their personal vehicles for CLOS&D must be insured at the owner's expense for personal motor vehicle liability. Coverage should be equal to or greater than $1 million and coverage maintained throughout the employee's employment with CLOS&D. Management reserves the right to amend coverage requirements from time to time. It is the responsibility of the employee to notify their insurance company of employment arrangements and to pay for any additional cost incurred for insurance coverage the insurance company may impose.
- Request to use CLOS&D vehicles must be exhausted before using a personal vehicle.

Direct Supports Approved Reimbursements:

- Activities/appointments that necessitate travel require prior authorization by a supervisor.
- The most direct route to the destination will be used.

Travel for CLOS&D business outside of direct support.

- The most economical mode of transit must be used and aligned with the trip's needs and approved by the Supervisor/Manager.
- Any travel on public carriers (air, train, bus, taxi) must be "economy class" or equivalent. Return tickets, reduced fares, special rates, or limited tickets will be used where possible.
- Personal vehicles may be used when it is the most economical method of travel. If another method of travel is more economical, reimbursement will be limited to the cost of the alternative, less expensive method. Use of a personal vehicle will be reimbursed at the rate set by the CLOS&D when the travel took place.

Expenses related to Workshops, Conferences and Meetings

Permission to attend workshops/conferences/meetings and eligibility for associated expenses reimbursement must have pre-approval by the employee supervisor.

Transportation:
When traveling for work-related matters outside of Grey and Bruce Counties, the preferred modes of transportation to be used, in order of preference, are:

1. Association-owned/leased vehicle, if available
2. Rental vehicle
3. Personal vehicle

Parking:
Parking fees are eligible for reimbursement; however, traffic violations, parking fines, or damage to personal vehicles are the staff's responsibility.

Accommodations:

- Pre-approval must be gained before booking accommodations by the approval authority
- Whenever possible, the Manager will book accommodations using the CLOS&D credit card.
- Accommodations must be secured at a reasonable rate.
- Employees are responsible for all additional room charges such as entertainment, laundry, and TV/movies. This list is not exhaustive.
- Business related expenses not otherwise mentioned above will be reimbursed, such as computer access, photocopying charges, word processing services, internet connections and facsimile charges provided the charges are reasonable and related to CLOS&D business.
- Where reservations are guaranteed, it is the traveler's responsibility to cancel them if necessary.
- Payment for reservations not canceled will be the employee's responsibility; the supervisor/manager may make exceptions.
- Detailed original receipts are required for reimbursement of accommodations.

Meals

Work-related meal expenses incurred during pre-approved travel are compensated as follows:

Meals with gratuities included, up to 15% will be reimbursed up to the maximum of:

Breakfast	$15.00
Lunch	$20.00
Dinner	$30.00

Taxes, in addition to these maximums
All meal claims require itemized receipts.

For a full day (8 hours or over) of meal claims, staff can allocate the daily total three-meal rate of $65.00 among meals provided receipts are available for all three meals.

Reimbursement will not be provided if meals are included in transportation, accommodation, seminar, or conference costs.

Alcohol expenses as part of travel or meal expenses are not eligible for reimbursement.

Ineligible Expenses

CLOS&D reserves the right to reject a claim for any expenses if it is considered unreasonable.

Expenses that are not eligible for reimbursement include but are not limited to:

- Damage to or loss of luggage or personal effects.
- Traffic fines or parking tickets.
- In-room movies at hotels.
- Personal long-distance telephone calls.
- Travel and other costs for family members or other non-employees.
- Personal expenses which are not required in connection with travel.
- Entertainment expenses-exceptions may be made at the CEO's discretion if the event is part of a convention.
- Reimbursement of airplane tickets purchased using the employee's frequent flyer or other points program.
- Additional life insurance.

Overpayments

- Related to travel reimbursement that constitutes a debt to CLOS&D must be repaid by the employee immediately.

Exceptions to the policy may occur due to extenuating circumstances, such as being storm-stayed out of town while traveling on agency business, agency vehicle breakdown, or issues related to supporting someone. The Manager has final approval on payment of expenses related to unusual circumstances.

Hospitality

For the purposes of this policy, hospitality is the provisions of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation, and other amenities at public expense to people who are not engaged in work for:

- CLOS&D,
- Other designated Broader Public Sector organizations or
- Any of the Ontario government ministries,

Hospitality can be extended to people other than Agency and government employees when it facilitates CLOS&D business or is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy.

The conditions under which hospitality will be extended will be reasonable, responsible, and at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer.

Hospitality may be appropriate and be extended by CLOS&D when:
a) Engaging in discussion of official public matters with or sponsoring formal conferences for:

- representatives from other governments,
- the broader public sector,
- business or industry,
- public interest groups, or
- any other group as approved.

b) honouring distinguished people for exceptional public service.
c) other hospitality functions are subject to the directives established by the Province of Ontario.

Consultants and Other Contractors contracted by CLOS&D

- Travel and accommodation are allowable expenses only when a provision exists in the contract.
- Hospitality, incidental, or food expenses can not be considered allowable expenses for consultants and contractors under the rules or in any contract between CLOS&D and a consultant or contractor.

Recognition Events

Employees and representatives (i.e. board members, volunteers, students) of CLOS&D make important contributions every day, and CLOS&D values all of their efforts. The desire to recognize the contributions of employees/representatives must also be balanced with the requirement for fiscal responsibility of public funds.

- A proposed budget for a recognition event must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for pre-approval.
- Tokens of appreciation may be extended to employees, volunteers and board members. The token gifts are recognition of business-related activity such as retirement, years of service, etc. A proposed budget for the tokens of appreciation must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for pre-approval.

Employees(claimant's) Responsibilities

- Obtain all appropriate approvals before incurring expenses.
- Submit original itemized receipts. Credit Card slips are insufficient.
- In the absence of an itemized receipt, submit a documented explanation of why the receipt is unavailable, and a description itemizing and confirming the expenses must be provided.
- Submit claims within 7 days after the month expense occurred.
- If employment ends, submit any claims before leaving CLOS&D.
- Expenses for a group can only be claimed by the most senior person present.

Approver's Responsibilities

Approvers are accountable for their decisions, which must be:

- Based on sound judgement and knowledge of the situation,
- Exercised in appropriate circumstances; and
- Compliance with the principles and requirements set in the directive.

Approver's are expected to ensure that expenses they approve are:

- Incurred in the performance of CLOS&D business and supported by appropriate documentation,
- Incurred in a manner consistent with the principles of this policy; and in compliance with the guidelines outlined within the policy,
- With the scope of the approver's approval authority outlined in the Approval Authority Schedule below; and not self-approved.

Total Expense Claim Amount	Claimant	Approver
$0.00 – up to but not including $300.00	Employee	Supervisor
$300.00- up to but not including $5,000.00	Employee	Manager
$5,000.00- up to but not including $40,000.00	Employee/Manager	Chief Executive Officer

Record Keeping

- Expense claims will be maintained in a secure location confidentially with the Finance Department files for 7 years.

Posting

- The Travel, Meals, and Hospitality Expense Policy will be posted on the CLOS&D website.

Policy Evaluation

- Barring unforeseen developments, the policy will be reviewed in Q2 2025.

Related Documents

- Ontario Broader Public Sector Accountability Act 2010 (Part IV- Expense Claims: Allowable Expenses)
- Ontario Travel, Meal, and Hospitality Expenses Directive

Forms

Community Living Owen Sound and District- Business Expense Form