



# Staff Report

## Human Resources

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**Report To:** Committee of the Whole  
**Meeting Date:** June 25, 2018  
**Report Number:** FAF.18.100  
**Subject:** Travel, Business and Mileage Expense Policy  
**Prepared by:** Jennifer Moreau, Director of Human Resources

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### A. Recommendations

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THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.18.100, entitled "Travel, Business and Mileage Expense Policy"; and

AND THAT Council approve the new Corporate Policy POL.COR.18.XX "Travel, Business and Mileage Expense Policy POL.COR.18.XX" for non-union staff;

AND THAT Council rescinds POL.COR.13.27 "Conference, Seminar and Meeting Attendance and Expenses".

### B. Overview

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This Staff Report provides Council with an updated policy for travel, business and mileage expenses for non-union staff. This report asks Council to rescind a similar policy titled POL.COR.13.27 Conference, Seminar and Meeting Attendance and Expenses.

### C. Background

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The Town developed a policy in 2013 that addressed expenses related to conferences, seminars and meeting attendance and the expenses related to these events. This policy has not been reviewed this term of Council and is due for review and updating.

### D. Analysis

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Changes to the policy include (changes to the policy are highlighted in yellow in Attachment #2):

- Rescinding and titling the new policy to better reflect all matters covered in the policy. The previous policy lacked any mention of Travel in the title which made it difficult for staff to find the policy.
- The policy statement and purpose sections of the policy have been updated to include statements reflecting fiscal responsibility.

- It states that all out of province and out of country travel is required to have a fulsome budget and expense estimate developed and submitted to the appropriate Director and the CAO prior to approval of registration.
- Travel time to and from is not considered paid work time unless it is part of the employees regularly scheduled hours of work.
- Expense reports must be submitted within thirty days, the previous policy was ten days, which is not always reasonable.
- If staff are travelling to the same conference there is an expectation that staff will travel together.
- The amounts for meal expenses have been increased to reflect the changes to costs of meals from 2013 to 2018. Clarification on acceptable tipping amounts has now been added to the policy.
- Guidelines for parking and tolls has been added to the policy.
- The mileage rate has now been set to the Canada Revenue Agency – Automobile Allowance Rate.
- The transportation section has been expanded and expenses such as seat upgrades will not be allowable expenses.
- Clarification that add-on's to conferences for social events such as golf are generally not allowable expenses.
- A section on expenses that are not approved has been added.

When updating the policy, staff researched other municipalities current Travel, Business and Mileage Expense policies to ensure we were meeting municipal standards. The following municipalities were benchmarked:

- Town of Richmond Hill
- Town of Penetanguishene
- Town of Midland
- Town of New Tecumseth
- City of Barrie
- Township of King
- Simcoe County
- Grey County
- City of Orillia
- Town of Innisfil
- Town of Caledon
- Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury

## **E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan**

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**Goal #4: Promote a Culture of Organizational & Operational Excellence**

Objective #1 To Be an Employer of Choice

Objective #2 Improve Internal Communications Across our Organization

Objective #4 To Be a Financially Responsible Organization

Objective #5 Constantly Identify Opportunities to Improve Efficiencies and Effectiveness

## **F. Environmental Impacts**

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Not applicable.

## **G. Financial Impact**

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Having policies in place helps to ensure clarity and consistency in the interpretation and implementation of allowable expenditures and the use of corporate resources.

## **H. In Consultation With**

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- Ruth Prince, Director Finance & IT Services
- Michael Benner, Director Planning & Development Services
- Reg Russwurm, Director Infrastructure & Public Works
- Shawn Everitt, Interim Chief Administrative Officer
- Rob Collins, Director Enforcement and Fire Services

## **I. Attached**

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1. POL.COR.13.27 Conference, Seminar and Meeting Attendance & Expenses
2. POL.COR.18.XX Travel, Business and Mileage Expense Policy

Respectfully submitted,

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Jennifer Moreau  
Director of Human Resources

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## TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

### POLICY & PROCEDURES

Subject Title: Conference, Seminar and Meeting Attendance and Expenses

Corporate Policy (Approved by Council)

Policy Ref. No.: POL.COR.13.27

Administrative Policy (Approved by CAO)

By-law No.: n/a

Department Policy: (Approved by Mgr.)

Name of Dept.: Human Resources

Date Approved: December 16, 2013

Staff Report: CAO.13.13

#### Purpose

To establish rules and procedures with respect to authorized conferences, seminars and meetings.

#### Application

This policy applies to all employees and any Town committee outside of Council.

#### Policy Statement

1. **Attendance** (Subject to budget funding):
  - i) Each Department Head may attend up to three municipal professional development conferences or seminars which are relevant to his/her employment with the Town. Provided that if any such conference or seminar is held in a location outside of Canada attendance shall first be specially approved by CAO.
  - ii) Other staff may be delegated to attend a municipal conference or seminar which is relevant to his/her employment with the Town. Provided that if any such conference or seminar is held in a location outside of the province, attendance shall first be specially approved by the Department Head. If the attendance is outside of Canada then it shall be approved by CAO.
  - iii) The expenses allowable for each such attendance shall include the registration fee, hotel accommodation, transportation and meals.
  - iv) The attendee shall complete a request for attendance estimating his/her expenses. The Chief Administrative Officer is required to have his/her request approved by the Mayor. A Department Head is required to have his/her

request approved by the Chief Administrative Officer. A member of Staff or Committee Member is required to have his/her request for attendance approved by their Department Head or designate.

- v) The Treasurer is authorized to pay such expenses to or on behalf of the attendee either in advance or in arrears subject to the final accounting and submission of such receipts and vouchers as the Treasurer may require. Final accounting of expenditures including receipts should be submitted to Finance no later than ten (10) working days upon return excluding P-Cards.
- vi) Provided that where attendance at a one day seminar or meeting out of town is authorized, the attendee shall be reimbursed for actual out-of-pocket expense, registration fees and applicable mileage only. The attendee shall not be reimbursed for hotel accommodation except for special circumstances as determined by the individual authorizing the attendance.

## **2. Expenses**

### **a) Hotel Accommodation:**

The attendee will be reimbursed for the conference or seminar rate for the hotel for the night prior to the start of the conference or seminar and for each night following including the night of the last day of the conference or seminar.

### **b) Transportation:**

The most economical class of transportation must be determined, documented and used. This includes car-pooling, rental car, Town vehicles, airplanes or what is reasonably available.

In the case of airfares, attempts must be made, by checking in advance to obtain a discount fare. Rates should be obtained for both a stay over Saturday night and with no stay over Saturday night. The attendee will be reimbursed for the lower of the cost of the airfare with no stay over Saturday night or the cost of the airfare for the stay over Saturday night plus the additional cost of hotel accommodation.

The attendee will be reimbursed for only the cost of the ground transportation to and from the airports.

The attendee will be reimbursed for the cost of cancellation insurance.

In the case of driving, the attendee will be reimbursed for the lower of the airfare cost as determined above plus ground transportation costs or the costs of reimbursing the attendee for the applicable mileage allowance and hotel parking.

## **3. Eligible Expenses Guidelines**

The attendee will be allowed eligible expenses to cover meals and expenses not covered by the registration fee. The eligible expense rates apply to each day of

the conference or seminar as well as for the day of the travel prior to and immediately after the conference or seminar if applicable. The expense rate includes a provision for breakfast, lunch, dinner as well as miscellaneous expenses (dry cleaning, telephone, internet charges, etc.)

If no meals are provided and the session is more than one week in length (six working days), actual daily expenses up to a maximum of the daily per diem will be reimbursed as per set eligible expenses (see below).

If the conference or seminar takes place in Canada the eligible expenses will be paid in Canadian dollars. If the conference or seminar takes place in the United States the eligible expense will be reimbursed at the exchange rate when the expense was incurred or the prevailing exchange rate, if incurred date not known.

Eligible Expenses (excludes alcohol):

Breakfast	\$15.00
Lunch	\$20.00
Supper	\$40.00

Any exceptions in eligible expenses must be approved by the Department Head and/or CAO.

### **Consequences of Non-Compliance**

Failure to adhere to the requirements outlined in this Policy may lead to progressive disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### **Review Cycle**

This policy will be reviewed once every term of council by the SMT. Any substantive changes to this policy will require Council approval.



# Policy

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POL.COR.18.00

## Travel, Business and Mileage Expense Policy

**Policy Type:** Corporate Policy (Approved by Council)  
**Date Approved:** Month, 00, 2018  
**Department:** Human Resources  
**Staff Report:** FAF.18.100  
**By-Law No.:** 2018-

### Policy Statement

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To establish rules and procedures with respect to authorized conferences, seminars and meetings. Travel, business and local mileage expenditures are to be based on sound judgment and proper regard for economy.

### Purpose

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The purpose of this policy is to address the methods and procedures by which staff of the Town of The Blue Mountains (the Town) will be governed when attending to business related to the Town. This includes attending meetings, conferences, conventions and seminars either within the Town limits or beyond and provides for those expenses for which reimbursement will be paid.

### Application

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This policy applies to all staff members of the Town.

### Definitions

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None

### Procedures

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#### 1. Professional Development Attendance (Subject to budget funding):

Each Department Head may attend up to three municipal professional development conferences or seminars which are relevant to his/her employment with the Town. Provided that if any such conference or seminar is held in a location outside of Canada attendance shall

first be specially approved by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Any professional development and expenses of the CAO will be approved by the Mayor.

Other staff may be delegated to attend a municipal conference or seminar which is relevant to his/her employment with the Town. Provided that if any such conference or seminar is held in a location outside of the province, attendance shall first be specially approved by the Department Head. If the attendance is outside of Canada then it shall be approved by the CAO. Travel outside of North America will not be considered for approval. Staff members requesting out of province and out of Country conferences or seminars will provide their Director/CAO with an estimate of the total cost for approval prior to registering.

The expenses allowable for each such attendance shall include the registration fee, hotel accommodation, miscellaneous expenses, transportation and meals.

Travel time to and from seminars and conferences outside of the staff members regularly scheduled work day is not considered paid work time.

Final accounting of expenditures including receipts related to this policy shall be submitted to the Finance department no later than thirty (30) working days upon return excluding P-Cards.

Government rates shall be obtained for all purchases when applicable.

## **2. Purchasing:**

All staff who are issued Town Purchasing Cards (P-cards) shall use the Town P-card for all purchases related to travel and business expenses. Please refer to the P-card policy for further detail regarding allowable purchases. Original receipts shall be retained for P-card reconciliation. Staff who do not have a Town issued P-card will be reimbursed for all allowable expenses by submitting a detailed expense report to the Finance Department.

## **3. Accommodation:**

Only accommodation not included as part of registration at a conference or course is to be submitted, limited to the number of days of the event. Department Head approval must be approved for any overnight accommodations.

Staff are expected to research and find hotel accommodation that is the best rate for the local area. The attendee will be reimbursed for the conference or seminar rate for the hotel for the night prior to the start of the conference or seminar and for each night following, excluding the night of the last day of the conference or seminar. Only if the conference is out of province or out of country will consideration of including the night of the last day of the conference or seminar be granted.

#### **4. Transportation:**

The most economical class of transportation must be determined, documented and used. This includes car-pooling, rental car, Town vehicles, airplanes, train or what is reasonably available. **Where more than one staff member is travelling to the same conference or training, the Town expects staff to car-pool.** Staff who submit multiple requests for mileage who have travelled to the same conference will not be reimbursed unless extenuating circumstances have led to the inability to car-pool. An example of an extenuating circumstance would be that the individual is required to stay at the conference longer than other Town delegates.

Air or train travel is an accepted method of travel, except where the use of a car is more practical or economical.

**In the case of airfares, the Town will only approve purchase of tickets at economy class level. Seat upgrades will be considered a personal purchase and shall not be submitted as an expense. Airfare will only be considered when the rate of mileage exceeds the cost of airfare or the amount of time to travel by car is not efficient.**

The Town recommends the purchase of trip cancellation insurance for travel via rail or air.

The use of taxis should be confined to short trips in situations where it is not suitable, safe or reasonable to use local public or hotel/airport shuttle transportation. The points of departure and destination as well as the nature of the trip must be indicated on receipts or travel claim.

For staff using public transportation (bus, subway, GO Train) to get to a meeting, seminar, conference etc., which is on the public transportation route, fees for tickets will be reimbursed. Claims for reimbursement shall be accompanied by the original receipt or ticket with the cost of transportation.

#### **5. Eligible Expenses Guidelines**

The attendee will be permitted eligible expenses to cover meals and expenses not covered by the registration fee. The eligible expense rates apply to each day of the conference or seminar as well as for the day of the travel prior to and immediately after the conference or seminar if applicable. The expense rate includes a provision for breakfast, lunch, dinner as well as miscellaneous expenses. Miscellaneous costs will include the actual charges for items such as parking and internet. Staff issued Smart Phones are required to use their business phones for all local and long-distance calls.

If the conference or seminar takes place in Canada, the eligible expenses will be paid in Canadian dollars. If the conference or seminar takes place in the United States the eligible expense will be reimbursed at the exchange rate when the expense was incurred or the prevailing exchange rate, if incurred date not known.

**Meal Expenses (excludes alcohol):**

Breakfast	\$20.00
Lunch	\$25.00
Supper	\$50.00

The amounts above do not include an amount for tipping or applicable taxes. The Town will reimburse tips up to a maximum 15%. Any amount tipped over the 15% shall be repaid by the staff member.

Any exceptions in eligible expenses must be approved by the Department Head and/or CAO.

**Parking**

Staff will be reimbursed for parking expenses related to travel on corporate business. There is no maximum on the per incident parking expense that can be claimed, however, staff members are expected to use their discretion and choose the most cost-effective parking available to them at the time. The use of Valet Parking is discouraged unless the rate for Valet Parking is less than general parking.

**Tolls**

Toll charges for Highway 407 (and other applicable Toll Highways) will be reimbursed for business trips. Reimbursement will be limited to the trip toll charges and service fees associated on the trip and will exclude any amounts related to the purchase of a transponder or service charge associated with the transponder. Claims for reimbursement shall be accompanied by the toll billing statement and confirmation of the business-related purposes of the trip.

**Miscellaneous Expenses**

Other expenses such as internet costs are considered approved expenses.

**Mileage**

Staff shall be reimbursed for mileage for business use of their personal vehicle at the rate established by the Canada Revenue Agency – Automobile Allowance Rates.

Mileage shall be calculated based on the lesser of kilometers from Town Hall (or normal Town work location) to the destination or kilometers from home to the destination.

Where the mileage submitted differs significantly from customary mileage amounts without reason or explanation, a service such as [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com) or [www.googlemaps.ca](http://www.googlemaps.ca) will be utilized by the Finance Department to calculate a normal rate.

## 6. Expenses Not Approved

- Extended travel time and related expenses are at the traveler's own expense;
- An expense for a spouse or companion will not be approved, staff are permitted to bring spouses and companions however they must cover those expenses as a personal expense and not a business expense;
- Town staff will not be reimbursed for alcoholic beverages under any circumstances and shall not utilize their P-card for the purchase of alcoholic beverages;
- Town staff will not be reimbursed for the cost of a fine;
- Town staff will not be reimbursed for additional add on's to conferences such as golf tournament or social or networking events not covered in the base registration fees, the CAO may approve this type of expense if the event aligns with the strategic priorities of the Town; and
- Staff will **not** be paid for costs incurred when travelling to and from their home to their normal workplace.

## Exclusions

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There are no exclusions to this policy.

## References and Related Policies

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- POL.13.23 Corporate Vehicle Policy
- POL.13.24 Progressive Discipline Policy
- FIS.09.10 Payment Card (P-card) Policy
- Canada Revenue Agency Annual Automobile Allowance <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/businesses/topics/payroll/benefits-allowances/automobile/automobile-motor-vehicle-allowances/automobile-allowance-rates.html>

## Consequences of Non-Compliance

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Failure to adhere to the requirements outlined in this Policy may lead to progressive disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

## **Review Cycle**

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This policy will be reviewed once every term of council by the SMT. Any substantive changes to this policy will require Council approval.

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