

Corporate Policy

Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses

Policy Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements for The Ottawa Hospital (TOH or 'hospital') to establish expense rules where expenses are reimbursed from public funds. Expense reimbursements will be provided for authorized Business Travel and other expenses incurred as a result of performing duties for the hospital. Business Travel and other expenses should not exceed the amount allocated in department budget and should always be the most economical choice. This policy covers all disbursements made by or for TOH as defined below.

Scope: This policy applies to Staff, Board of Governors, medical staff, consultants and contractors of The Ottawa Hospital, Eastern Ontario Regional Laboratory Association (EORLA), and The Ottawa Hospital Research Institute (OHRI).

Includes all related Special Fund accounts (previously known as Trust Fund accounts)

Definitions:

Authorization: The approval of an expense reimbursement and Business Travel claim by the appropriate person with adequate signing authority.

Business Expenses: Reasonable expenses incurred by Staff, Board members, medical staff, and consultants and contractors, engaged to work at the hospital, in the course of performing their duties.

Business Travel: Travel required for hospital business and authorized by the appropriate level of authority.

Business Travel Expenses: Includes road, air and rail transportation costs, hotel costs, personal and rental vehicle costs, mileage costs, meals and other incidental costs as approved by the Departmental Director or Vice-President and are within the operating budget.

Designated Broader Public Sector Organizations: Hospitals, school boards, colleges, universities, community care access centers, and children's aid societies.

Hospitality: The provision of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation and other amenities at the hospital's expense to persons who are not engaged to work for Designated Broader Public Sector Organizations or any of the Ontario government ministries and agencies.

Local Business Travel: Travel within the Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN).

Personal Vehicle: A vehicle owned, borrowed, rented or leased personally by a member of Staff.

Receipt: An original document, or carbon or electronic scanned copy, with the details of the expenditure, the amount, and the date, and indicating proof of payment.

Staff: All individuals in any of the following relationships to TOH: permanent or temporary, full-time, part-time, casual or contract employees, trainees and volunteers, including but not limited to physicians, residents, interns, researchers, students, and any other individuals who perform work or supply services at TOH.

Policy Statement(s):

1. Authorization

Any travel outside Canada must be pre-approved by the Staff's respective Vice-President and by the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or the Executive Vice President (EVP) and Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

2. Out-of-Country Health Benefits

Before travelling, Staff should contact the Department of Human Resources to determine their current TOH benefit coverage. If Staff is not covered through regular hospital benefits, insurance should be purchased through TOH's travel agency.

3. Travel Agency

Non-local travel should be booked through TOH's appointed travel agency (**Appendix A**), unless a lower rate can be found. Staff must ensure that TOH's travel agency is aware of all special rates found (e.g. conference or discount rate).

TOH will not reimburse Business Travel Expenses incurred through other travel agencies unless written confirmation is received from TOH's appointed travel agency, that the rate is more economical than booking through TOH's designated travel agency.

4. Travel and Transportation

Where a number of Staff members are attending the same function, shared travel should be considered and required where possible.

All travel must be approved before booking through TOH's appointed travel agency by completing the Pre-Approval Travel Requisition form located on the TOH's intranet SharePoint page.

The mode of transportation chosen - air, train or car - should be that which enables Staff to attend hospital business with the least cost to the hospital and consistent with the least amount of interruption to Staff's regular business and personal schedules. The length of time away from the workplace should be considered.

Travel expenses incurred as a result of travelling with a non-TOH Staff (e.g. spouse), including meals and cancellation fees, are not covered and must be paid for by Staff.

When personal travel is combined with Business Travel, Staff will be reimbursed for only the business portion of the trip at the lowest available fare. Personal travel does not include travel to or from home when travelling for business (i.e. travelling to and from the airport).

i. **Travel by Vehicle** - When road transportation is the most practical and economical way to travel, the order of preference should be:

- i. Rental vehicle when a rental vehicle is more economical than use of a Personal Vehicle; or
- ii. Personal Vehicle when a Personal Vehicle is more economical than use of a rental vehicle.

- **Rental Vehicles:** Rental of a compact or mid-sized vehicle is encouraged. Consideration may be given for a car rental upgrade based on the number of passengers, weather conditions and other safety reasons. However, all luxury and sports car rentals are prohibited.
- **Collision and Liability Insurance:** For short-term rentals (less than one month) in Canada and in the US only, liability insurance coverage should be purchased from the car rental company. No supplementary collision insurance is necessary as this is covered under TOH's insurance policy.
- **Personal Vehicles:** Personal Vehicles used on hospital business must be insured at the vehicle owner's expense for personal motor vehicle liability. Coverage should be equal to or greater than the minimum liability specified in the Insurance Act. Drivers must decide whether their motor vehicle insurance coverage should include business use of their vehicles. The hospital will not reimburse costs of collision and liability coverage.

TOH assumes no financial responsibility for privately-owned vehicles other than paying the kilometric rate when used for hospital business. Those driving a Personal Vehicle on hospital business cannot make claims to TOH for damages as a result of a collision.

Staff using Personal Vehicles for hospital business will be reimbursed in accordance with the approved kilometre allowance, outlined in Appendix A. (This excludes travel between TOH campuses during operating hours of the inter-campus shuttle bus.)

This allowance is to cover the costs of fuel, depreciation, maintenance and any increased cost in car insurance related to using a Personal Vehicle for hospital business.

Parking charges related to Local Business Travel are not reimbursable for TOH Staff that receives an annual car allowance as part of their compensation package, with the sole exception of the Ottawa International Airport.

Receipts for parking lot charges and applicable bridge or highway tolls must be submitted with the expense claim.

ii. Travel by Train

Staff are expected to choose the most economical and direct form of transportation by train. Every effort should be made to book in advance to ensure availability of economy-class seats and to obtain the lowest fares.

iii. Travel by Air

Staff may travel by air for trips that are beyond reasonable driving distance. Prior approval by the TOH Finance Department for all travel by air must be obtained and documented in writing.

All transportation must be **economy/coach** fare.

Staff will obtain maximum savings on air travel expenses within reasonable limits. Every effort should be made to book in advance to take advantage of discounted fares and to obtain the lowest fares.

5. Accommodation Costs, Incidentals

TOH will reimburse for **standard quality hotel** room expenses. Staff is responsible for all room charges and must review the hotel bill carefully to ensure all charges are correct. A detailed copy of the hotel bill must be attached to the expense claim.

Incidental expenses such as laundry/dry cleaning service, special facility charges (e.g. fitness clubs) toiletries and in-room videos will not be reimbursed.

i. Accommodation from Relative/Friend:

An allowance (**Appendix A**) will be provided when accommodation is obtained from a relative or a friend.

6. Long-Distance Business and Personal Calls

Discretion will be used in the frequency and length. Reimbursement will be made for reasonable costs for necessary personal calls home for each night away.

Wherever possible, the most cost-effective method should be used (e.g. hospital-issued cell phones, blackberry, or calling cards) in order to minimize costs, including the purchase of cell phone roaming plans ahead of the planned travel.

7. Office Equipment Business Expenses

While travelling on hospital business, additional Business Expenses not otherwise covered will be reimbursed, such as:

- computer access charges,
- photocopying
- word processing services
- facsimile transmissions
- internet connections
- rental and transportation of necessary office equipment

provided that the charges incurred are reasonable and related to hospital expenses.

TOH expects Staff to use discretion with any expenses incurred and reserves the right to limit reimbursement to reasonable costs.

8. Meals While Travelling

TOH will reimburse for reasonable and actual meal expenses, subject to approval by the claimant's Manager or Supervisor.

Original, itemized Receipts (credit/debit card slips are not sufficient) must be provided with claim. Meal expenses must not exceed the daily meal allowance maximum, as outlined in **Appendix A**.

i. Business Travel Where Meals are Included

No reimbursement shall 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.

ii. Multiple Staff Attending One Event

Where a number of employees are at a hospital event (e.g. conference, etc.) and one employee pays for the whole group: that person must be the most senior (Manager, Director, Vice-President) employee in the group. This person is then responsible for submitting the Receipt for reimbursement according to hospital policy, including listing who was in the group for whom the expense was incurred.

However, employees may submit their own Receipts for reimbursement of their own expenses and the senior employee is not required to pay for the group in that event.

iii. Alcoholic Beverages

Costs incurred for alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable and Staff is encouraged to ask the restaurant for a separate invoice when having alcohol with their meals.

9. Business Meals and Other Expenses

TOH will reimburse for reasonable meal expenses resulting from business meetings with persons who are not engaged to work for Designated Broader Public Sector Organizations. It is recommended that business meetings should be first considered on hospital premises rather than at restaurants.

TOH will not reimburse **business meal** expenses when the only participants are employees of TOH or Designated Broader Public Sector Organizations. TOH will reimburse employees for business meals when volunteers and Board of Governors are included.

i. Alcoholic Beverages

TOH will not reimburse the cost of alcoholic beverages at business meetings without prior approval from the President and CEO or EVP and CFO.

10. Hospitality

Hospitality should be extended in an economical, consistent and appropriate way when it will facilitate hospital business or is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy.

Where hospitality events are extended by the hospital, and where the guests include vendors (current or prospective), Staff is responsible for obtaining prior VP and Chief Procurement Officer approval to ensure that the event does not give, or is not perceived to give, preferential treatment to any vendor.

i. Consultants and Contractors

In no circumstances can Hospitality, incidental or food expenses be considered allowable expenses for consultants and contractors. Consultants and contractors will not be reimbursed for such expenses including:

- Dependent care
- Home management
- Laundry and dry cleaning
- Meals, snacks and beverages
- Personal telephone calls
- Tips, pourboires, gratuities
- Valet's Services

TOH will not reimburse the cost of alcoholic beverages at any hospital event without the approval of the President and CEO or EVP and CFO. In circumstances where alcohol is approved, appropriate measures are to be taken to ensure a reasonable limit is placed on the quantity and cost of alcohol.

11. Corporate Events

Events must be located on hospital premises unless limited by room size.

Events held off hospital premises must have the President and CEO or EVP and CFO approval.

i. Alcoholic Beverages

Alcoholic beverages served at any corporate event must be pre-approved by the President and CEO or EVP and CFO.

12. Consultants and other Contractors

Consultants and other contractors are not considered Staff, and therefore are not covered by the hospital's Business Expense policies.

Consultants and other contractors will seek reimbursement only for expenses explicitly agreed to in the detailed contract and will not include ineligible expenses listed above in section 10(i).

13. Approval and Reimbursement of Expenses

Staff will submit an expense claim by completing an online iExpense claim with attached electronic scanned copies of all full-detailed Receipts attached to the online claim, and then obtaining appropriate electronic Authorization/approval.

TOH is required by legislation to ensure that all expense claims are supported by adequate documentation. All Staff submitting and all approvers approving expense reports must comply with this legislation and ensure that all electronically-scanned Receipts are attached to the claim in iExpense.

Claims must be submitted within sixty (60) days of the date the expense was incurred.

The Department of Financial Services will make every effort to reimburse, under normal circumstances, expense claims with all the required Receipts attached within five (5) working days after the iExpense claim is approved.

All expense report Receipts will be retained within the iExpense system for future reference.

i. Personal Expense

Certain personal expenses will not be reimbursed. Such expenses include but are not limited to expenses for:

- Any cannabis-related products
- Credit card fees and late payment charges
- Expenses incurred due to the presence of friends or family members, unless part of hospitality
- Hotel expenses incurred because of failure to cancel reservations
- Personal items not required to conduct hospital business
- Protective cases/covers for cell phones, iPads or computers

- Recreational purposes (e.g. video rentals, mini-bars, special facilities charges, entertainment not directly related to hospital business, etc.)
- Traffic and parking violations incurred while driving for hospital-related business
- Unlawful conduct

14. Cash Advances

TOH provides cash advances on an exceptional basis only. These must be approved by a Vice-President. Any cash advance received will be deducted from any expense claim made.

Appendix:

A: Travel Agency and Allowances

Related Documents:

- Benefits Plan – Travel Insurance
- Cheque Request
- Internal Catering Service
- Procurement Policy
- Signing Authority Policy
- Taxi Services

Related Legislation or Regulatory Requirements:

- [Broader Public Sector Accountability Act](#)

References:

None

Appendix A

Travel Agency and Allowances

1. The Ottawa Hospital Travel Agency

Uniglobe CBO Travel
325 Dalhousie Street, Suite 210
Ottawa, Ontario
K1N 7G2
613-789-7800

2. Personal Automobile Allowance

\$0.45 /kilometre effective April 1, 2019. **This rate should also be used for refund of callback/travel for unionized employees to a maximum of \$22.50 one way.**

3. Maximum Meal Allowance (including gratuities)

Equivalent to a maximum of \$80.00 Canadian per day. The same amount will prevail after the conversion of the currency when traveling outside Canada.

4. Accommodation from a relative or a friend

\$25.00 per day. The same amount will prevail after the conversion of the currency when traveling outside Canada.