



**Home  
Construction  
Regulatory  
Authority**

# **Travel, Meal & Hospitality Expense Policy**

## 1.0 Purpose and Scope:

This policy sets out the principles, accountability framework and rules for reimbursing all travel, meal and hospitality expenses while undertaking business on behalf of the Home Construction Regulatory Authority (the Corporation).

This policy applies to:

- **Claimants:** Board members, appointees, committee and sub-committee members, advisory committee members, employees, contract personnel (including from temporary help agencies) and external persons (including those retained by the Corporation) that request the reimbursement of travel, meal and hospitality expenses incurred on behalf of the Corporation; and
- **Approvers:** Those with responsibility for approval of travel and expense reimbursement including the Board as a whole, or those directors of the Board with delegated approval authority, and the Chief Executive Officer / Registrar, and those personnel with delegated approval authority.

## 2.0 Principles:

- The Corporation is accountable for the funds received under the ***New Home Construction Licensing Act***, used to reimburse travel, meal and hospitality expenses. These expenses support the Corporation's business objectives and are used prudently and responsibly.
- The Corporation is transparent to all stakeholders. The rules for incurring and reimbursing travel, meal and hospitality expenses are clear, easily understood, and available to the public. Plans for travel, meals, accommodation and hospitality are necessary and are by economical means, with due regard for health and safety.
- Legitimate authorized expenses incurred during the course of the Corporation's business are reimbursed.

## 3.0 Accountability Framework

General:

- Prior written approval of the Chief Executive Officer / Registrar is required for hospitality events where alcohol will be served.
- Discretion to approve or not approve an expense can be exercised by Chief Executive Officer / Registrar, senior management or the board Chair.

- Original, itemized receipts<sup>1</sup> must be submitted with all claims (credit card slips are not sufficient). If there is not an itemized receipt, then a satisfactory written explanation must be submitted, and the expense may or may not be approved.
- Disbursement of funds to provide reimbursement for expense claims must follow HCRA's Delegation of Financial Authority, which stipulates that CEO (or his/her delegate) or Chair approval is required to process the payment.

#### Staff:

- Appropriate approvals must be obtained in writing from direct manager before travelling or incurring expenses. If no prior approval was obtained, then a satisfactory written explanation must be provided with the claim.
- Expense claims submitted by staff must be Director approved, and Director expense claims must be approved by the CEO. Expense claims cannot be self-approved.

#### Board:

- One other board member other than the Chair and the Chief Executive Officer/Registrar of the HCRA are responsible for approving the expense claims of the Chair. In the absence of a Chief Executive Officer/Registrar, the Chair's expense claims will be approved by two members of the Board of Directors, neither of whom are the Chair.

## 4.0 Mandatory Requirements:

- Other options for meetings should be considered before travel is approved, including audio, video or web conferences.
- Alcohol may not be claimed and will not be reimbursed as part of a travel or meal expense.
- Hospitality<sup>2</sup> may be extended to people who are not engaged in work for the Corporation, if it can facilitate the Corporation's core business, and when it is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy or protocol.
- Social events for the Corporation's employees, such as luncheons, picnics, farewell functions and celebrations are not reimbursable. Food and beverages served at these events must be contributed by staff.
- Consultants and other contractors will not be reimbursed for any hospitality, incidental or food expenses. However, where the contract between the Corporation and a consultant (or contractor) provides for reimbursement of reasonable expenses for travel by air, rail or car or for hotel accommodation, the Corporation shall reimburse these expenses in accordance with this policy, provided that they are approved in advance.
- Claims must be submitted within 60 (sixty) days of the end of the quarter in which the expense was incurred. Failure to do so could result in disqualification for reimbursement.

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<sup>1</sup> Original document identifying the vendor with the date and amount of each expense item paid by the claimant.

<sup>2</sup> The provision of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation and other amenities.

- Overpayments are to be considered a debt owing to the Corporation which must be reimbursed.
- Good record-keeping practices must be maintained for verification and audit purposes.

## 5.0 Eligible Reimbursable Expenses:

The Corporation will reimburse direct out-of-pocket expenses for business purposes. Expenses for a personal nature are not eligible for reimbursement.

Eligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Use of privately-owned vehicle or business purposes (see Appendix B for reimbursable rates);
- Meals when travelling for business (see Appendix B for reimbursable rates);
- Food/Refreshments for business meetings hosted by the Corporation;
- Transportation and accommodation when travelling for business purposes (see Appendix B for reimbursable rates); and
- Parking, taxi fare or public transportation when away from the workplace.

Non-eligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Personal items, personal entertainment, personal care;
- Recreational items related to accommodation costs (mini-bar, video rental);
- Traffic, towing and parking violations;
- Travel costs for a regular commute between home and the Corporation;
- Vehicle insurance on a privately-owned vehicle while on the Corporation's business;
- Expenses incurred on behalf of family or friends; and
- Expenses not directly tied to conducting the business of the Corporation.

## 6.0 Reimbursement Records:

Records must be maintained for verification and audit purposes. Expense claims must include original or scanned itemized receipts (credit card slips are not sufficient). In the absence of an itemized receipt, a written explanation of why the receipt is unavailable must be submitted and a description itemizing and confirming the expense must be provided. Overpayment is considered to be a debt owing to the Corporation and must be repaid.

Expenses for business meals require receipts and must adhere to the amounts allowed. The expense form is completed on a monthly basis and submitted to the interim Executive Director for processing.

## Appendix A: Approvals Required for Travel

	Travel Destination		
	Ontario	Canada and United States	Outside Canada and United States
<b>The Corporation Chair</b>	N/A	The Corporation's Board of Directors	The Corporation's Board of Directors
<b>The Corporation's Board Members</b>	The Corporation's Chair	The Corporation's Chair	The Corporation's Chair
<b>Chief Executive Officer / Registrar</b>	N/A	The Corporation's Chair	The Corporation's Chair
<b>Advisory Committee members</b>	Secretary / Treasurer	The Corporation's Chair	The Corporation's Chair
<b>The Corporation's Staff</b>	Chief Executive Officer / Registrar	Chief Executive Officer / Registrar	The Corporation's Chair

## Appendix B: Reimbursement Rates for Eligible Business Expenses

### Meals

Expenses incurred for meals (including taxes and gratuities) are reimbursed up to the following daily limits:

Breakfast.....\$10.00

Lunch.....\$12.50

Dinner.....\$22.50

In limited and exceptional circumstances (e.g. health considerations; limited options available) where a meal expense is higher than the meal reimbursement rate, the actual cost of the meal may be reimbursed. In these situations, the claim for meal reimbursement must be accompanied by an original itemized receipt and a written rationale for exceeding the rate.

### Transportation

The reimbursement rate for the use of a privately-owned vehicle is \$0.40 per kilometre. Adequate vehicle insurance, including business use coverage must be in place, but will not be reimbursed by the Corporation.

The Corporation will reimburse economy class air and train travel. Ground transportation to and from the airport or train station will also be covered.

Vehicle rentals must be based on the most economical size of vehicle for the required task and number of occupants. The cost of Third-Party Automobile, Property Damage and Personal Injury Liability insurance will also be reimbursed.

Parking, tolls for bridges, ferries and highways will also be reimbursed.

### Accommodation

The Corporation will reimburse single accommodation in a standard room of an economy class hotel.

Reasonable calls to home on a nightly basis, and internet connection costs, will also be covered.

### Managerial Discretion

Approvers have the discretion to depart from these rates if the expense is consistent with the principles, accountability framework and mandatory requirements outlined in this policy, and the rationale is duly documented on the expense claim.