

## TRAVEL POLICY

Subject: Travel, Subsistence & Expenses Ref: Council/Administration Code: 15

Date Approved: January 16, 2024 Motion No: 005/16/01/24 Replaces: 066/08/02/22

The County of Northern Lights recognizes that Councillors, Committee Members-At-Large (M-A-L) and Staff will be required to travel in the course of conducting business on behalf of the County.

It is further recognized that reasonable costs associated with business travel should be assumed by the County.

The County of Northern Lights has established criteria that specifies how travel is to be approved and what expenses are eligible for reimbursement.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Elected Official

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Administrative Officer

## Procedure:

1. This policy will apply to Council, Committee M-A-L, staff and other individuals travelling for the benefit/business of the County of Northern Lights (candidates being interviewed – See Hiring Policy)
2. Councillors/M-A-L/Staff shall make travel arrangements in the most economical means whenever possible.
  - Virtual options should be considered whenever possible
  - Every effort should be taken to use a County vehicle for travelling and to avoid having a number of Councillors/MAL/Staff traveling to the same location in multiple vehicles. (sign-out book at front desk)
  - Carpooling should also be considered when there is more than one person attending the same activity/event.
3. Mileage for Elected Officials and Committee M-A-L is considered a part of the 'entitled benefits' received while conducting "Per Diem" business on behalf of the County and will be claimed on the monthly submitted County Expense Claim Form.
4. County business travel for Elected Officials will also include Inter-Municipal and/or Joint Municipal Socials.
5. County business travel for County Staff must be pre-approved by the responsible supervisor, in writing. (email)
6. Accountable advances may be obtained if authorized by the CAO.
7. Payment for County business travel expenses must be claimed by submitting an expense claim form. All supporting receipts must be attached. If attending a conference or training session, a copy of the itinerary or schedule must also be attached. A statutory declaration may be required in the event a receipt is lost or misplaced. This will be at the discretion of the Director of Finance.
8. The completed County Personal Expense Claim form must be signed by the traveler and provided to their respective expenditure officer for authorization.
9. Expense claims will be processed once monthly at a minimum, however wherever possible will be expedited in order to provide payment as soon as possible.

### 10. Meals

Councillors/M-A-L/Staff that are on duty County business travel can claim, without receipts, the following amounts for meal expenses:

<b>Breakfast:</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
<b>Lunch:</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>
<b>Supper:</b>	<b><u>\$30.00</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75.00</b>

These amounts can only be claimed if a meal is not provided as part of the meeting, conference or training session.

No claim for breakfast will be permitted for day trips unless the time of departure is earlier than 6:30am.

No claim for supper can be made unless the time of return is later than 6:30pm.

Lunch can only be claimed if the traveler is on approved duty travel outside the County of Northern Lights boundaries.

Councillors/M-A-L/Staff that are on County business travel may claim the actual cost of meal if supported with a receipt. The reimbursement will include GST and up to 15% of the cost of the meal may be claimed as a tip. The County of Northern Lights will not reimburse the cost of any alcoholic beverages that were consumed by the traveler.

Using a combination of meal rates and receipts to claim different meal expenses is acceptable, but the practice is discouraged.

## **11. Accommodations**

Councillors/M-A-L/Staff on County business may claim reimbursement for reasonable overnight accommodations if the event is more than one day or if a stop is necessary. If staying at a host hotel/accommodations, "Government rates" or "conference rates" should be used to keep costs reasonable. Expense claims for accommodations must be supported by receipt. If circumstances beyond the one's control results in the cancellation of a trip, every effort must be made to cancel reservations for accommodation. Any charges subsequent to cancellation may be claimed and will not be unreasonably denied.

Only the room charge, parking and associated room taxes, tourism levies and GST will be considered eligible expenses.

Private overnight accommodation may be claimed without a receipt at a rate of \$25.00 per night.

## **12. Personal Vehicle Transportation**

Councillors/M-A-L/Staff may claim a per km rate for the use of their personal vehicle, provided that the travel is required for County business purposes and it is for the sole benefit of the County. They will be reimbursed at the current rate set periodically by the Canada Revenue Agency. Should the traveller opt to utilize a personal vehicle, a per km rate of 50% of the amount prescribed by the Canada Revenue Agency may be claimed.

The Councillors/MAL/Staff on County business may claim the distance from home or their regular place of work, to the location of the meeting, conference or training session, whichever is less. The same would apply to the return trip.

**13. Air Transportation**

When traveling within or outside the province, Councillors/M-A-L/Staff will receive reimbursement for the actual cost of airfare upon submission of supporting receipts which includes the residual portion of the airline ticket and boarding pass. The County will not reimburse the cost of flying if the class of ticket exceeds economy class. There is no reimbursement for cancellation insurance and it should not be requested. If circumstances beyond the one's control results in the cancellation of a trip or alteration of a flight schedule, these charges may be claimed and will not be unreasonably denied.

**14. Taxi/Ride sharing Fares**

Taxi fares can be claimed without receipt up to a maximum of \$8.00 per trip provided the point of departure, the destination, and the purpose of the trip is identified on the travel claim. Taxi fares exceeding \$8.00 must have a supporting receipt.