

OMVIC Policy No.: C7 - 2016

## **TRAVEL AND MEAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY**

Approved December 31, 2016

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the Expense Reimbursement Policy is:

- To set out rules and principles for the reimbursement of business expenses to ensure fair and reasonable practices; and
- To provide a framework of accountability to guide the effective oversight of OMVIC resources in the reimbursement of business related expenses

### **2. APPLICATION AND SCOPE**

This Policy applies to:

- Board members
- Committee members
- Employees
- Consultants and contractors engaged by OMVIC

### **3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

This policy is based on the following principles:

- OMVIC funds are used prudently and responsibly with a focus on accountability and transparency.
- Expenses for travel, meals and hospitality support OMVIC objectives.
- Plans for travel, meals, accommodation and hospitality are necessary and economical with due regard for health and safety.
- Legitimate authorized expenses incurred during the course of OMVIC business are reimbursed.
- Best practices are in place, including:
  - Prior approval to incur expenses is obtained.
  - Other options for meetings are always considered before travel is approved including audio or video conferencing.
  - Corporate credit cards, where provided, are used for authorized business travel and business related expenses.

#### 4. Mandatory Requirements

The following general rules apply for reimbursement of employee travel and incidental expenses:

Claimants must:

- Obtain all appropriate approvals before incurring expenses; if no prior approval was obtained, then a written explanation must be submitted with the claim.
- Submit scanned copies of original, itemized receipts with all claims (credit card slips are not sufficient). If there is not an itemized receipt, a written explanation must be submitted to explain why the receipt is unavailable and a description itemizing and confirming the expenses must be provided.
- Submit claims for expenses before leaving positions with OMVIC.

Approvers must:

- Provide approval only for expenses that were necessarily incurred in the performance of OMVIC business;
- Provide approval only for claims that include all appropriate documentation (e.g., original itemized receipts); and
- Not approve their own expenses.

Note: in the event of an overpayment to a claimant, it is considered a debt owing to OMVIC and must be repaid.

In addition:

- a. All expenses, with the exception of mileage, are supported by original, itemized receipts.
- b. When traveling on OMVIC business, employees should consider the most economical and direct route.
- c. Commuting to and from home to your normal place of work is not regarded as traveling on official OMVIC business.
- d. All expenses must be submitted on the prescribed form, with supporting receipts, to your Manager for approval. Credit card slips may not be sufficient.
- e. Whenever possible, an employee's original or scanned e-copy of his/her signature must be on expense claim forms. In the absence of a signature, some other evidence that the particular claim is submitted by that employee may suffice, e.g. an accompanying email that identifies the claim by date and amount. The employee's signature signifies that the claim is being submitted in accordance with OMVIC's expense policies.

- f. All expense claims must be approved by the claimant's Manager. In the absence of a Manager's signature, some other evidence that the particular claim is approved by the Manager or by the Director of Corporate Services may suffice, e.g. an accompanying email that identifies the claim by date and amount.
- g. Expense claim forms are reviewed by the Financial Services Officer for mathematical accuracy and compliance with this Policy. If any non-compliance is identified it must be brought to the attention of the Manager in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services prior to processing.
- h. Expense reimbursements are processed every second Thursday. Approved claim forms should therefore be submitted to the Finance Department no later than 11:00 a.m. Tuesday.
- i. Special cheque runs to accommodate individual employee needs will not normally be made.
- j. Finance Department will not accept expense claim forms directly from employees. Any claim that has not been signed by the employee and has not been approved by the Manager will be returned.
- k. Written approval is required **before** any arrangements are made for the following:
  - International travel
  - Hospitality events involving alcohol.
  - Expenses over \$2,500 for Senior Managers (not including capital purchases such as computers which require prior approval from the Executive Director)

The following chart identifies the level of approvals:

Role	Travel and Hospitality in Ontario	Travel and Hospitality in Canada and continental USA	International Travel and Hospitality
Executive Director	N/A	N/A	President/Chair of the Board
Senior Managers	Executive Director	Executive Director	Executive Director
Employees	Senior Manager	Executive Director	Executive Director
Consultants	Senior Manager	Executive Director	Executive Director

- l. Good record-keeping practices must be maintained for verification and audit purposes.

## 5. Hotel Accommodation

In the normal conduct of business, reimbursement for overnight accommodation within your office area will be neither authorized nor approved. However, in emergency or unusual situations exceptions will be considered. For example:

- You are required to remain close to your office for extended periods in excess of (your) standard working hours.
- Your services are deemed necessary

Prior approval by Executive Director is required. Without prior approval, a claim will not be reimbursed.

Employees traveling on OMVIC business use single accommodation, standard rooms in economy class hotels for overnight stays, wherever practical. The Executive Director may, at his/her discretion, authorize an upgrade. Proof of such authorization is required for reimbursement of the hotel bill.

In the normal course, travel requiring overnight stay must be approved by your Manager in advance. Senior Managers may waive this requirement at their discretion for field staff or those who travel regularly outside a 200 km distance from their offices. Advance reservations should be made wherever practicable. Hotel charges may be billed directly to OMVIC.

It is your responsibility to cancel a hotel reservation when necessary. Promptness in canceling is essential to avoiding unneeded charges. Charges resulting from failure to cancel a reservation will usually not be reimbursed, unless you can show that such failure resulted from circumstances beyond your control.

OMVIC will pay the cost of the room, parking, internet access and any necessary telephone calls, plus applicable taxes. Individuals are responsible for all other expenses. For extended stays at a single location, accommodation must be arranged with prior approval. This will take advantage of lower weekly or monthly rates.

Private stays with friends or family are acceptable, and a cash payment or gift may be provided to the friends or family:

- A maximum of \$75 per night is allowed for accommodation including any meals with friends or family, in lieu of commercial accommodation. Instead of a receipt, you must submit a written explanation describing the purpose of the trip, identifying the host and the number of days you stayed.
- The \$75 value may be given in the form of a small gift (which must be accompanied by a receipt) or by cash or cheque.

You may be reimbursed for reasonable gratuities for porter, hotel room services, and taxis. Keep a record of gratuities paid.

Examples of reasonable amounts for gratuities include:

- 10%-15% on a restaurant meal
- 10% on a taxi fare
- \$2-\$5 for housekeeping for up to two nights in a hotel, up to \$10 for a longer stay
- \$2-\$5 per bag for a porter

## 6. Meals

Expenses incurred on meals while traveling on OMVIC business are reimbursed up to a daily maximum of \$90.00 per person following the meal limits of \$20 for breakfast, \$25 for lunch, \$45 for dinner excluding applicable taxes and maximum gratuity of 15%. The Executive Director may use his/her discretion if amount exceeds the daily meal allowance.

**Alcohol cannot be claimed and will not be reimbursed as part of a travel or meal expense.** Alcohol expenses may be reimbursed, at the discretion of the Executive Director or the Chair of the Board and prior approval must be received. Hospitality may include the consumption of alcohol at a meal or a reception with invitees as defined below, but only when there is a business case.

Given that hospitality extended to stakeholders may sometimes include the purchase of an alcoholic beverage and given that it is common business practice to include reasonable consumption of an alcoholic beverage, Senior Staff may claim reasonable costs of these products when extending hospitality to stakeholders provided prior approval has been obtained from the Executive Director.

Receipts are required to support expenses. Where applicable the most senior member of staff may pay the bill on behalf of a group of employees.

### *Procedure*

Actual receipts, not the credit card slip, are to be provided with the claim for meal expenses. Where a claim covers multiple persons, their names and the reason for the meal should be provided on the claim form. If receipts are not provided, the claim will not be processed.

## 7. Mileage

Employees using their personal vehicle on OMVIC business are paid mileage allowance of \$0.53 per kilometer (km) for the first 5,000 km driven each calendar year. Mileage will be reimbursed at a rate of \$0.47 per km for the next 30,000 km and \$0.40 per km for the balance that calendar year.

All such travel must be by the most direct route. Any exception must be justified as officially necessary and approved in advance by your Manager.

For field staff (i.e. Inspectors and Investigators who work from home offices), the maximum travel without pre-authorization is generally 200km radius from their home office (i.e. 400 km round trip). Managers may vary this limitation at their discretion.

### ***Procedure***

Claim mileage for the actual distance traveled on OMVIC business, using the Employee Expense Claim Form.

## **8. Other Travel Expenses**

OMVIC also pays directly or reimburses board members and staff for expenses outlined below relating to OMVIC business travel. In recognition of the fact that there are many meetings scheduled during the year and board members and senior staff are required to maintain a high rate of attendance, board members and senior managers may on occasion be required to claim reimbursement of travel expenses from outside their normal place of residence to attend board and committee meetings.

Make advance reservations for travel by air and train or for the use of a rental car whenever practicable. If travel is no longer required, cancel the reservation promptly to avoid any unnecessary charges.

### ***Parking***

Reimbursement is provided for necessary and reasonable expenditures for parking, as well as tolls for bridges, ferries and highways, when driving on OMVIC business. Parking costs incurred in the office area as part of a regular commute to work will not be reimbursed. There is no reimbursement for traffic or parking violations.

### ***Air Travel***

Air travel is permitted if it is the most practical and economical way to travel. All travel by air is economy class and by the most direct route and is authorized in advance by your Manager. Advance reservations should be made to take advantage of special fares. It is your responsibility to cancel a reservation when necessary. Promptness in canceling is essential to avoid any unnecessary charges. Charges resulting from failure to cancel a reservation will usually not be reimbursed, unless you can show that such failure resulted from circumstances beyond your control.

### ***Travel by Train***

Travel by train is permitted when it is the most practical and economical way to travel. All travel by train is economy class and by the most direct route and is authorized in advance by your Manager. Advance reservations should be made to take advantage of special fares. It is your responsibility to cancel a reservation when necessary. Promptness in canceling is essential to avoid unnecessary charges. Charges resulting from failure to cancel a reservation will usually not be reimbursed, unless you can show that such failure resulted from circumstances beyond your control.

### ***Rental Car***

Rental cars may be used when it is considered to be more advantageous to OMVIC than using any other means of transportation. Advance reservations for a compact car or a vehicle practical for the purpose should be made to take advantage of discount rates. It is your responsibility to cancel a reservation when necessary. Promptness in canceling is essential to avoid unnecessary charges. Charges resulting from failure to cancel a reservation will usually not be reimbursed, unless you can show that such failure resulted from circumstances beyond your control. To avoid higher gasoline charges, refuel a rental car before returning it.

### ***Travel by Taxi***

Prior approval to use a taxi should be obtained whenever possible.  
Taxis may be justified in cases where:

- group travel by cab is more economical than the total cost of having individuals travel separately by public transit or shuttle; or
- taking a cab allows you to meet an unusually tight schedule for meetings

Taxis may not be used to commute to work or home except under exceptional circumstances; for instance:

- weather, health or safety conditions indicate it is the best, appropriate option; or
- transport of work-related baggage or parcels is required.

In Toronto taxi chits are available from the Office Administrator.

### ***Local Buses and Streetcars***

Local public transportation including hotel/airport shuttles should be used wherever practical. Fares for use of local buses and streetcars are refundable. In Toronto, TTC tokens are available from the Office Administrator.