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| Selkirk College Policies and Procedures | | Title and number | 9400 Reimbursement of College Business Expenses – Travel | |
| | | Replaces | R9090.1 | |
| | | Effective | | Next review : |
| Executive Responsibility | Administrative Responsibility | Recommended by Policy Review Committee | | |
| Vice President Administration/Finance | Director of Finance | Recommended/Approved by Education Council | | |
| | | Approved by President | | |

1. Purpose

This policy fulfills the following purposes:

- (1) to promote economy and efficiency in the use of travel funds, and to ensure effective travel management and administration;
- (2) to establish standards to ensure:
 - travel expenses are appropriate, reasonable and necessary to fulfill the mandate of the College,
 - employees are reimbursed for appropriate out-of-pocket expenses, and
 - accountability for travel claim requests and approvals.
- (3) to ensure Selkirk College funds are reported in accordance with legislation and regulations of the federal and provincial governments.

2. Scope / Limits

This policy applies to all Selkirk College employees travelling on College business and also extends to other individuals associated with the College and/or working on behalf of the College, including contractors and Advisory Committee members.

3. Principles

This policy is guided by the College’s Strategic Plan and Directions and the principles of accountability, quality, service and respect through the:

- effective and efficient use of College resources,
- appropriate and responsible processes for approval of travel expense reimbursement,
- effective and timely reimbursement for appropriate expenses incurred by employees in the undertaking of their responsibilities, and
- appropriate financial control and accounting of travel costs to the College.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Employees are responsible for:

- obtaining expense authority approval to travel before expenses are incurred,

- certifying that their travel expense claims are correct, complete and comply with policy, and
- submitting the expense claim within stated time frames.

Expense authority officers (Managers, Deans, Directors, Vice-Presidents, President) are responsible for:

- approving travel and insuring that there sufficient funds in the budget before expenses are incurred, and
- certifying that travel expense claims
 - are for business purposes only,
 - are reasonable and comply with this policy, and
 - include only travel-related goods and services that have been received.
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5. Alternatives to Travel

In order to save on costs and to mitigate the production of greenhouse gas emissions, alternatives to travel should be considered wherever practical. Video conferencing, teleconferencing and other methods are to be used where feasible and reasonable. In addition to achieving cost savings, use of these alternatives will showcase Selkirk College’s dedication to sustainability and to embracing technology and processes in creating innovative solutions to common problems.

6. Travel Approval

All travel, except by members of the Management Committee, must be pre-approved by the employee’s approving manager (Manager/Dean/Director/Vice President or President). To obtain approval, the employee must complete an “Expense Claim and Advance /Authority to Travel” form.

1. When making travel plans, employees should consider the most cost-effective, safe and appropriate transportation and accommodation.
2. When approving travel, the approving manager will consider budget availability, the most effective and appropriate forms of transportation, and a reasonable level of accommodation required by the employee.
3. When an employee chooses to use his/her own vehicle, he/she will only be reimbursed for the lesser amount of the cost of commercial air travel and mileage. When the preferred method of transportation is by motor vehicle, a rented vehicle should be used if practical and safe. In winter, renting a car should only be considered if the vehicle is equipped with snow tires. When driving is chosen over flying, meal, accommodation, travel time or any other expenses will not be reimbursed beyond what would have been incurred if flying. Employees are encouraged to car pool. In these cases, only the owner or operator of the vehicle may claim mileage.
4. Selkirk College employees are eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses when:
 - an “Expense Claim and Advance /Authority to Travel” form is submitted and trip approval is obtained from the approving manager before travel expenses are incurred (except for members of Management Committee),
 - claims are reported and comply with established rates and allowances, and

- for accommodation and meal per diems, employees are away from their home campus for a minimum of one night and are outside of Selkirk College's geographical region (150-km driving radius from Castlegar). See section 12 for exceptions.

Clarification of the application of this policy will be provided by the Director of Finance.

7. Advancement of Funds/Travel Advance

An approved "Expense Claim and Advance /Authority to Travel" form is to be submitted to Finance at least two weeks in advance of the departure date. Even if no monetary advance is requested, the completed form must be submitted as proof of the approval to travel. A travel itinerary must be submitted. Any outstanding travel advances must be accounted for and cleared before any further advances will be approved.

8. Reporting Statement/Expense Form

The statement of travel expenses is to be submitted within five (5) working days of the employee's return from travel, along with supporting **original** receipts and an itinerary (including meeting/conference dates) if it was not already submitted with the advance request. If more than one employee is on the trip, then each employee is to submit his/her own expense statement. There will be no reimbursement without supporting documentation (i.e. original detailed receipts).

9. Claim or Refund

Reimbursements will be made for approved expenditures up to 10% above the amount advanced. When claims are submitted that exceed the original advance request by 10%, additional approval from the appropriate approving manager is required. Where the employee does not use the full amount of funds advanced, the balance is to be submitted to Selkirk College along with the statement of travel expenses within five (5) working days of the employee's return from travel. Employees who fail to clear travel advances may be subject to disciplinary action.

10. Combining Personal and Business Travel

When combining College business and personal travel, employees will only be reimbursed for those expenses that would have been incurred if the personal travel had not taken place. Additional expenses incurred for an employee's spouse or family members will not be reimbursed. This includes additional room charges at hotels.

11. Airfare

The most economical airfare for air travel considering operational requirements is required. It is recommended that a travel agent be used when travelling outside of North America. The travel agent should directly bill the College for his/her services.

The College will not reimburse cancellation insurance.

12. Accommodation

Within British Columbia, the provincial government negotiates a provincial government rate for hotels/motels. Employees will only be reimbursed for accommodation billed at the government rate (if available) or less.

1. Proof of accommodation costs, consisting of an original copy of a credit card receipt and a hotel folio showing a zero balance, are to be attached to the travel expense claim form.
2. The use of a kitchen unit in a hotel/motel may be claimed as part of the meal allowance. If the difference in cost between a standard room and a kitchen unit is less than \$55 per day, a claim for meals may be made. The additional cost for the kitchen unit and the meal allowance claimed may not exceed the daily allowable per diem rate.
3. Travelling employees are responsible for cancelling hotel reservations in time to avoid "no show" charges; the College pays these charges where the employee has no control over the circumstance and is not at fault.
4. Employees will be reimbursed their actual expenses for commercial accommodations authorized by the College provided that the employee stays at establishments that provide government rates or that have an agreement in place with the College.
5. An employee who makes private overnight arrangements shall be reimbursed at the private accommodation rate determined by the College (see Travel Rates document available from Finance).
6. Overnight accommodation will be approved if travelling outside the College's geographical region, which is defined as a 150-km driving radius from Castlegar and includes areas such as Nakusp, Kaslo, Midway, and Creston.
7. Accommodation costs may be approved in extension areas (Kaslo, Nakusp, Grand Forks) to accommodate early morning or late evening meetings. This would also include employees travelling from the extension areas to Castlegar, Trail or Nelson. Justification on the reimbursement expense form is required.
8. In any instance where safe travel is a concern, an employee will be reimbursed for accommodation costs. Justification on the reimbursement expense form is required.

13. Meals / Per Diem Allowances

1. Employees who are travelling outside the College's geographical region are entitled to claim meal or per diem allowances not exceeding specified limits which include incidental expenses. If an employee is travelling within the geographical region and returning home the same day, a meal allowance will not be granted. The rate will be determined by the College (see Travel Rates document available from Finance).
2. Partial travel days will be reimbursed as follows:
 - On the date of departure to destination:
 - breakfast will not be reimbursed,
 - lunch may be claimed if departure was before 12:00 noon.
 - On the date of return to region:
 - breakfast will be reimbursed,

- lunch may be claimed if arrival was after 12:00 noon,
- dinner may be claimed if arrival was after 6:00 pm.

Employees are expected to return to the College region on the earliest available option; additional expenses incurred due to later returns will not be reimbursed.

3. Where a meal is provided without charge or is paid for from College funds, no claim for that meal can be made.
4. Claiming a meal or per diem is preferred over the use of a College credit or purchasing card.
5. Employment contracts will override this section of the policy where a meal rate is paid due to claimed overtime.

14. Out-of-Province/Country Travel

1. Out-of-province and out-of-country travel, including plans to combine personal travel, requires prior approval of the President.
2. For out-of-province and out-of-country accommodation, a reasonable amount must be established considering business requirements. Employees will be reimbursed for all reasonable commercial accommodation expenses for the travel location up to those rates established by the federal government through their standing offer arrangements for accommodation or the contract-defined rates, whichever is appropriate.

(http://www.njc-cnm.gc.ca/directive/app_d.php?lang=eng)

3. For travel in the U.S., the meal/per diem allowance will be the Canadian amount claimed for College employees as stated above. Meals received without charge or paid for from College funds cannot be claimed.

For all other international travel, meal/per diem rates (including incidentals) will be reviewed by Finance and based on the current federal Foreign Affairs Department rates (http://www.njc-cnm.gc.ca/directive/app_d.php?lang=eng). Meals received without charge or paid for from College funds cannot be claimed.

4. For partial days or for situations where meals are received without charge or paid with other College funds, the related individual meals must be deducted from the full day rates calculated above (using the federal Foreign Affairs Department rates).
5. Employees must verify with Human Resources regarding any additional insurance requirements.
6. When travelling for professional development (PD), meals will only be paid at Canadian rates.
7. It is recommended that a travel agent be used when travelling to destinations outside of North America. The travel agent should directly bill the College for his/her services.

15. Miscellaneous Travel Expenses

Employees are entitled to claim miscellaneous travel expenses only if they are incurred for:

- airport improvement and security fees, NAV CANADA fees and applicable fuel charges,
- bus/taxi/limousine services,
- vehicle rental (see below) and related fuel charges,
- parking charges, and
- business phone calls.

16. Travel Expenses and Accommodations for Non-employees, Personnel Recruitment

Upon approval by the Director of Human Resources, the College will reimburse travel and accommodation expenses for candidates being interviewed, at the lesser of the prevailing rates or the actual expenses.

17. Travel Expenses and Accommodations for Guest, Lecturers and Other Non-Employees

The College will reimburse approved travel and accommodation expenses for guests, lecturers and other non-employees at the prevailing rates upon the submission of a completed Travel Advance Request/Expense Report form supported with receipts.

Prior approval must be given by the appropriate Dean, Director or Executive.

18. Rental of Vehicles

When planning travel, consideration should be given to the most economical means of travel. Car rental may be more economical than the use of a private vehicle. In winter, renting a car should only be considered if the vehicle is equipped with snow tires.

The College is able to make use of the reduced rental rates negotiated in the Provincial Government's Corporate Supply Arrangements (CSAs) for rental vehicles. These agreements are renegotiated annually, and the list of approved rental agencies and Corporate ID Numbers may be found on the CSA website (<http://pss.gov.bc.ca/csa/csa.html>). Note that CSAs are for business use only.

In all cases:

- check the CSA website for approved vendors before you rent a vehicle.
- provide the appropriate Corporate ID Number when requesting a vehicle; the rental outlet is not responsible for the provision of this number.
- do not accept or demand an alternate or special rate even if it appears more cost effective.
- do not purchase the personal accident coverage or any additional coverage offered by the rental company (CDW, LDW or PAI), as work-related accidents are covered by WorkSafeBC. Other rules apply when renting a vehicle out of province and out of country. Confirm these conditions with the Finance Department.

- Obtain prior approval for the rental as part of the travel advance request/expense report process. Rentals are subject to PST, GST and PVRT tax of approximately \$1.50 per day.

The College is under no obligation to reimburse employees for any damages that result from the employees' failure to follow the insurance coverage guidelines.

19. Use of Privately Owned Vehicles

Employees are responsible for the insurance of their personal vehicles. If personal vehicles are used on College business and the usage exceeds six days per calendar month, the employee must have the appropriate insurance classification. Claims for accidents with proper insurance classification will not be honoured by ICBC. Contact your autoplan agent for further information.

If a personal vehicle is used for College business to any extent (including driving between campuses), it would be advisable to carry a minimum of \$2,000,000 of liability insurance. College insurance policies do not provide coverage for the employee's use of their vehicle on College business.

20. Mileage Reimbursement

1. Employees are encouraged to utilize alternatives to travel but when travel is required, carpooling and public transportation are suggested.
2. When an employee uses his/her own motor vehicle to travel on College business in the performance of his/her duties, the employee shall be reimbursed for the distance travelled at a specified rate in accordance with this policy (see Travel Rates document available from Finance). This mileage reimbursement is intended to cover all operating and ownership costs.
3. For employees receiving a car allowance, mileage will not be reimbursed for travel between Trail, Nelson, and Castlegar. All other travel will be reimbursed at the specified rate in accordance with this policy (see Travel Rates document available from Finance).
4. The College does not reimburse for distance travelled from an employee's residence to their assigned place of work.
5. Irregular travel occurs when an employee reports to a location on College business on an unscheduled or irregular basis, whether or not the location is a Selkirk College campus. Reimbursement for irregular travel is non-taxable and will be paid by accounts payable.
6. Regular travel occurs when an employee reports to a specific location(s) on College business on a regular basis. An employee can have more than one regular place of employment in the course of a year, and those can change from time to time. Reimbursement for regular travel is considered a taxable benefit by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and will be paid through payroll and reported annually on the employee's T4 Statement of Remuneration Paid.
7. Reimbursable mileage will be calculated as the distance traveled from the employee's residence to/from their assigned place of work (home campus), less the distance of their normal commute to their assigned place of work. For example, if an employee resides

in Nelson, assigned place of work is Castlegar, and travels to Nakusp, the mileage reimbursement would be determined as follows:

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| Total distance traveled – Nelson to/from Nakusp | 298 km |
| Less normal commute – Nelson to/from Castlegar | <u>92 km</u> |
| Distance submitted for reimbursement = | 206 km |

8. Out-of-College-Region Travel: Mileage reimbursement will only be provided if it is the most economical mode of transportation as per section 6, above. If an employee travels from their home or from a Selkirk campus to a location outside of the College region on College business, the reimbursement will be for the distance traveled from their residence to/from the out-of-region destination, less the distance of the normal commute to their assigned place of work. For example, if an employee resides in Nelson, works in Castlegar, and travels to Kelowna, the mileage reimbursement would be determined as follows:

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| Total distance traveled – Nelson to/from Kelowna | 690 km |
| Less normal commute – Nelson to/from Castlegar | <u>92 km</u> |
| Distance submitted for reimbursement = | 598 km |

If additional travel is incurred while in Kelowna, that mileage may also be included as vicinity travel as the employee is in travel status.

9. Reimbursable amounts are paid to the driver only. Passengers travelling in the motor vehicle may not claim mileage or the cost of equivalent public transportation.
10. Reimbursable costs are calculated by applying the kilometer rate to the actual driving distance by using the most direct route. For ease of calculation, regular distance calculations are provided by Finance.
11. Mileage reimbursement cannot be claimed when using a College vehicle.
12. The Mileage Expense Reimbursement form/log must be completed in full and attached to all mileage reimbursement claims. Mileage reimbursement claims will not be processed and paid without a fully completed kilometer log being attached.

Supporting Forms are available from the Finance Department

Travel Approval/Travel Advance/Expense Form

Taxable Benefit flow chart

Distance calculations

Travel Rates

Mileage Expense Reimbursement form

Other Relevant Policies

Reimbursement of College Business Expenses – Business Meetings, Gifts & Flowers, Gratuities