



Newfoundland &
Labrador

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

DIRECTIVE

Directive Number: 2011-001

Effective Date: March 31, 2011	Commission Minute: CM 2011-004
Subject: Professional Development Policy for Constituency Assistants	Reference: HOAMC Meeting: March 23, 2011 Agenda Item: Tab # 2
Issued To: All Members of the House of Assembly; Comptroller General; Directors of Government Accounting, Professional Services and Internal Audit, Financial Systems Control, and Corporate Services; Office of the Auditor General; Office Managers of Government Caucus, Official Opposition Caucus, NDP Caucus; Assistant Deputy Clerk, Executive Council; Director of Operations, Office of the Premier.	Contact: Marlene Lambe Chief Financial Officer 729 – 2923

BACKGROUND

The Tuition Assistance Program for the House of Assembly and Statutory Offices, approved in June 2008, applies to Constituency Assistants who have been employed for two or more years. Paragraph 24(f) of the *Members' Resources and Allowances Rules* (the *Rules*) also permits a Member's Office Operations allowance to be used to cover the cost of professional development for Constituency Assistants.

At its November 17, 2010 meeting, the Commission were requested to provide clarification on the relationship between that program and the application of paragraph 24(f), and directed the Clerk to develop parameters regarding the appropriate use of staff professional development under paragraph 24(f) of the *Rules*. **CM 2010-061 refers.**

At its March 23, 2011 meeting, the Commission adopted the attached Professional Development Policy for Constituency Assistants dated March 2011.

DIRECTIVE

Pursuant to subparagraph 20(6)(b)(ii) of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, the Commission approved the Professional Development Policy for Constituency Assistants, dated March 2011.

William MacKenzie
Clerk of the House of Assembly



House of Assembly

**Professional Development Policy for
Constituency Assistants**

March 2011

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1.0 Approval

Under the authority of subparagraph 20(6)(b)(ii) of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, the House of Assembly Management Commission establishes this professional development policy for Constituency Assistants.

2.0 Purpose

This policy provides clarification of professional development under paragraph 24(f) of the *Members' Resources and Allowances Rules* (the *Rules*).

3.0 General

Constituency Assistants are eligible to be reimbursed for professional development expenses under the *Members' Resources and Allowances Rules*.

3.1 Principles

In considering and approving professional development of Constituency Assistants, the Members of the House of Assembly must ensure compliance with the *Rules* and this policy.

4.0 Process

Constituency Assistants may be reimbursed for professional development under paragraph 24(f) of the *Rules* which states:

24. A member may claim against the office operations and supplies allowance for reimbursement to cover operational costs of operating a constituency office including,

(f) staff professional development;

Professional development expenses eligible for reimbursement under this section of the *Rules* will include courses, training, seminars, and conferences, which, in the view of the Member, are required for the effective and efficient operations of his/her constituency office.

Professional development may include, but is not limited to, tuition-based courses at post-secondary institutions; courses related to technology, management skills, interpersonal skills, organizational skills, financial management, oral and written communications; courses related to current key issues of the constituency; and, other relevant learning or development opportunities. Learning is not limited to classroom

learning and may include learning methods such as e-learning, distance education, webinars or other recognized learning methods.

4.1 Approval Process

Professional development assistance will be provided based on the degree of course relevance/practicality related to the operations of the Member's constituency office; the ability of the constituency office to effectively address operational requirements should the Constituency Assistant be absent as a result of the professional development activity; demonstrated success by the Constituency Assistant in past educational experiences; and the level of assistance being requested.

Approvals for professional development assistance are limited to the fiscal capability of the Member under paragraph 24(f) of the *Rules*.

4.2 Applications for Reimbursement of Expenses

4.2.1 Professional Development requested by Constituency Assistant

- Constituency Assistants wishing to request reimbursement for professional development expenses are required to complete and submit an application form (see attached) to the Member for his/her approval.
- The completed application form must be submitted in advance of course registration to allow for due consideration. A copy of the completed form will be returned to the employee indicating approval or non-approval.
- Constituency Assistants will be reimbursed 50% of registration costs and other related educational expenses (e.g. books, laboratory fees, other learning and supportive materials).
- Evidence of a passing grade is required prior to reimbursement.
- Constituency Assistants should refer to the Canada Revenue Agency's *Employers' Guide: Taxable Benefits*, available at www.cra.gc.ca to determine whether the reimbursement of professional development expenses is a taxable benefit.

4.2.2 Professional Development directed by the Member

- Constituency Assistants will not be required to complete an application form.
- Constituency Assistants will be reimbursed 100% of registration costs and other related educational expenses (e.g. books, laboratory fees, other learning and supportive materials).

5.0 References

Members Resources and Allowances Rules – Paragraph 24(f)

Application for Professional Development Assistance

Name of Constituency Assistant: _____

Constituency Office: _____

I hereby request professional development assistance as outlined below. I understand that if my employment with the Legislature terminates (voluntarily or involuntarily) prior to successful course completion, the approved assistance will not be provided.

Course Title: _____

Program of Study (If applicable): _____

Educational Institution/Training Provider: _____

Course Duration (start/end dates): _____

Please provide details of current request:

Please provide reason for the request. Describe how the course selection is relevant to you and/or the operations of your constituency office.

I agree to the terms/conditions as outlined in the Professional Development Policy for Constituency Assistants, March 2011.

Constituency Assistant: _____ Date: _____

Member: _____ Date: _____