



**House of Assembly**

**Conference Travel Policy**

**Members of the House of Assembly**

**June, 2009**

## **Table of Contents**

---

**1.0 Approval**

**2.0 Purpose**

**3.0 General**

**4.0 Policy**

**4.1 Modes of Travel**

**4.2 Meals**

**4.3 Accommodations**

**4.4 Entertainment**

**4.5 Other Eligible Expenses**

**4.6 Travel Other than by Air, Travel Interruptions and Extensions**

**4.7 Completing Travel Claim Expense Forms**

## **1.0 Approval**

Under the authority of subparagraph 20(6)(b)(ii) of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* (the Act), the House of Assembly Management Commission establishes this policy respecting travel to conferences by Members of the House of Assembly.

## **2.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish travel guidelines to assist Members of the House of Assembly when travelling to Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Public Accounts Committee and similar conferences.

## **3.0 General**

The budgetary allocation for conference travel is included in the Estimates document under the House Operations activity of the House of Assembly.

This policy is specific to the purpose outlined in Section 2 and does not relate to conference travel for Members as provided under the *Members' Resources and Allowances Rules*.

Members must complete an Official Journey Authorization prior to making any travel arrangements. All conference travel under this policy must be approved by the Clerk and the Speaker.

## **4.0 Policy**

This policy will be considered to be amended to reflect revisions to government policy for Ministerial travel as approved by the Executive Branch.

If an item is not covered under this policy, government policy for Ministerial Travel shall apply.

## **4.1 Modes of Travel**

### **4.1.1 Air Travel**

All air travel on scheduled flights will be economy class.

Where available and practical, Members should avail of special discounts and advanced booking discounts.

The purchase of cancellation insurance will not be reimbursed.

Airline change fees incurred, or cancelled flights, are eligible for reimbursement where:

- The conference concluded early, is cancelled, the date rescheduled, or location changed; or
- The Member is required to return home on an urgent matter.

Advance seat selections charges, to ensure availability of seats and attendance at a conference, are eligible for reimbursement with detailed original receipts.

### **4.1.2 Sea Travel**

Members traveling by sea may claim the following, with receipts:

- The cost of the standard passenger fare;
- The cost of cabin or berth accommodations, where required; and
- The cost of transportation of one vehicle, where required.

### **4.1.3 Travel in Private Vehicle**

The reimbursement rate for Members who use their private vehicles for travel to conferences is the same as for Constituency Business, that is, the quarterly reimbursement rate posted on the Public Service Secretariat website at [Automobile Reimbursement Rates for Using a Private Vehicle at Work.](#)

### **4.1.4 Travel in Rental Vehicle**

Members will normally be required to rent compact or sub-compact vehicles except where a larger vehicle is required. The prior approval of the Speaker is required for larger vehicle rentals.

Wherever possible, Members should take advantage of specials or discounts offering the lowest price.

Members will not be reimbursed for collision damage waivers and/or personal life insurance when renting vehicles for conference travel. Government retains responsibility for payment of physical damage claims on leased or rented vehicles.

#### **4.1.5 Use of Taxis**

Members may use taxis, limousines or airport buses for transportation to and from airports. Receipts are required for reimbursement of all such expenses.

#### **4.1.6 Toll Bridge, Ferry and Parking Fees**

Members travelling by private vehicle may claim parking fees for parking a vehicle in a parking garage or parking lot.

Members may claim for bridge, ferry and highway tolls, without receipts, where these tolls have been paid and a receipt is not normally issued. Where a receipt is issued, the receipt must be submitted with the travel claim.

### **4.2 Meals**

The Per Diem allowance for meals is based on the rates as approved by the Executive Branch for Ministerial Travel.

*Currently the amounts are:*

- *Newfoundland and Labrador - \$50 per day (\$10 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch, \$25 for dinner)*
- *Canada - \$55 per day (\$11 for breakfast, \$16.50 for lunch, \$27.50 for dinner)*
- *USA - \$55 (US) per day (\$11 for breakfast, \$16.50 for lunch, \$27.50 for dinner)*
- *International - \$60 per day (\$12 for breakfast, \$18 for lunch, \$30 for dinner)*

*Special per diem allowances for meals for foreign travel may be approved by the Speaker. In applying this policy, the Speaker may reference, as a guide, the Federal Treasury Board Travel Directive (Appendix D: Daily Meal Rates at Locations Abroad). These listed rates may be reimbursed without receipts.*

Where Members anticipate incurring meal costs that are higher than the established meal rates, they may be reimbursed the actual and reasonable expenses of the meal(s), based on receipts, provided prior approval of the Speaker is received.

Members may not claim the full per diem when a meal has been provided as part of the conference proceedings.

Members must claim a pro-rated meal allowances for part days that qualify under this policy.

### **4.3 Accommodations**

When overnight accommodations are required, Members may stay in suitable commercial accommodations or, where Members choose, in private accommodations. The type, standard and cost of commercial accommodations should be reflective of the location and period of time on travel status.

Members should seek favorable hotel rates when on travel status and take advantage of any special discounts or rates afforded to government employees/Members.

The Private Accommodations rates are the rates that have been approved by the Executive Branch for Ministerial travel.

*Currently the rates are:*

- *Island of Newfoundland - \$53*
- *Labrador - \$71*
- *Canada \$71*
- *United States of America - \$71 (US)*
- *International - \$84*

### **4.4 Entertainment**

Members are not permitted to claim entertainment expenses as part of conference expenses.

## **4.5 Other Eligible Expenses**

### **4.5.1 Incidental Expenses**

Members may claim \$5.00 per night for incidental expenses for every night on overnight travel.

### **4.5.2 Telephone Calls**

Members may claim (with receipts) the cost of one 5 minute long distance personal phone call for each night on overnight travel. The cost of this phone call may be submitted for payment either as part of a hotel bill or as part of the Member's personal phone bill.

While attending a conference, Members may claim (with detailed receipts) the cost of long distance or internet charges related to constituency business. Since these costs relate to constituency business, the amounts must be claimed on a separate claim under the Members' Resources and Allowances Rules and using the Member Expense Claim Form.

### **4.5.3 Passport and Related Expenses**

A Member will be reimbursed the cost of obtaining a passport and/or visa, where these documents are required for travel and are not currently owned by the Member.

A Member will be reimbursed the cost of certificates of health, inoculations, vaccinations and/or other medical procedures where these are required prior to traveling.

### **4.5.4 Foreign Currency**

A Member will be reimbursed, with receipts, the cost of converting Canadian dollars to other currencies and converting other currencies to Canadian dollars.

### **4.5.5 Excess Baggage**

A Member will be reimbursed the cost incurred in transporting personal effects or conference materials at excess baggage rates.

#### 4.6 Travel Other than by Air, Travel Interruptions and Extensions

A Member who travels to a conference may:

1. travel by mode(s) other than air (e.g. private vehicle), in circumstances where the member would normally travel by air;
2. interrupt the normal travel to stop at destinations enroute to the conference; and/or
3. leave for the conference destination at an earlier date or return home at a later date than required for attendance at the conference.

In these three circumstances, Members will be reimbursed only the actual cost of transportation to and from a conference, **up to** the quoted cost of a return airline ticket.

The quoted cost shall be the cost of travel if the Member travelled on the dates required for attendance at the conference. That is, the quote for travel to the conference should be for the date required to ensure the Member arrives in time for the start of the conference. The quote for travel to return home from the conference should be on a flight immediately (or within reasonable period) following the end of the conference.

Documentation providing support for the quoted cost must be attached to the claim.

Receipts and proof of payment will be required for all actual costs for the chosen mode (s) of travel, meals and accommodations up to the permitted limit.

Note: Members will be reimbursed the lesser of the actual cost of the trip OR the quoted cost of a direct return airline ticket and travel, meals and accommodations expenses associated with that ticket.

#### 4.7 Completing Travel Claim Expense Forms

Travel claims for conference travel under this policy must be submitted on a Member General Expense Claim form and state the purpose of the trip.

Claims for the use of Members' private vehicles must be documented on the Private Vehicle Usage Report and claimed on the Member General Expense Claim form.

Claims must be signed by the Member and approved by the Speaker.

Receipts and other supporting documentation (as applicable) must be attached to the claim form.