



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:** _____