

Human Resources Manual (Section 22)

22. Travel, Meals and Hospitality

22.1 Travel, Meal & Hospitality Procedure

The following principles will govern travel expense reimbursement practice at the Agency.

Expenses must be:

- Work related
- Modest and appropriate
- Strike a balance between economy, health & safety and efficiency of operations

The Agency assumes no obligation to reimburse expenses which do not comply with this procedure. In the event of an overpayment of expense claims, such overpayment will be recovered promptly from the payee. Employees, foster parents and volunteers are obliged to familiarize themselves with this procedure and to seek clarification from their managers if required. Managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with this procedure and for taking remedial action if required.

22.2 Process

Prior to incurring an expense that will be submitted for reimbursement, consideration should always be made as to possible less costly alternatives such as video conferencing or teleconferencing as a replacement to travel.

22.3 Non-Reimbursable Expenses

Expenses of a personal nature will not be reimbursed. Such expenses include but are not limited to:

- Recreational purposes (e.g.: video rentals, mini bars)
- Personal items
- Traffic/parking violations
- Alcoholic drinks, unless part of hospitality
- Expenses incurred on behalf of friends/family

22.4 Receipts

Employees must scan and attached receipts in their I-expense claim submissions. Original receipts must be kept by the employee for each fiscal year (April to March), and until financial audit completion (end of June). See creating an i-expense on the Agency HUB under CPIN.

Foster Parents and volunteers must submit original receipts with all expense claims. Clearly indicating on the receipt details of client name and date\month submitted on expense form.

Credit card, debit card or interact slips by themselves are not sufficient to support a claim for reimbursement. The detailed invoice\receipt must be provided.

In the event of missing receipts, an exception to this procedure may be made at the individual discretion of the manager or supervisor and only with appropriate documentation from the claimant that a receipt has been misplaced. (document exception in notes section of approval by supervisor)

Original receipts plus credit card slips, if applicable, obtained via the use of agency credit cards must in all cases be submitted to accounting for reconciliation to the credit card statement.

Travel expense claims records will be retained in the same format and for the same time as all agency accounts payable claims.

22.5 Time Limit for Claims

The Agency assumes no obligation to pay expenses submitted more than 90 days after the month they are incurred except for the fiscal year end (March 31st) where the time limit is 30 days. Exceptions will only be at the

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discretion of a Director or Executive Director who must indicate the reason for variance from procedure on the claim form (see below re: "exemptions").

22.6 Verification

Managers having responsibility for approving expense claims are responsible for monitoring compliance with this procedure. Expense approval limits are as defined in the agency's designated signing authority procedure.

22.7 Guidance on Exceptions

Requests for reimbursement should not be rejected solely because they arose from mistakes or misinterpretations of the requirements of this procedure. Decisions whether to approve exceptional reimbursement must be reviewed on a case by case basis and approved by a Senior Director or the Executive Director. A decision to make an exception to a claim will be guided by the following principles:

- Trust – use discretion and latitude to act in a fair and reasonable manner
- Flexibility – management decisions respect the duty to accommodate, respond to persons' needs and interests and to consider unforeseen circumstances
- Stewardship – to ensure consistent, fair and equitable application of this procedure considering all circumstances while maintaining the shared responsibility of wise and prudent use of agency resources

Where a Director decides to exercise discretion in making an exception and to ensure a proper record for audit purposes, the rationale for the exception must be documented and accompany the expense claim.

22.8 Travel Advances

In general, the Agency does not extend travel advances. Where travel is expected to be of a longer duration (more than two days) a cash advance may be provided at the discretion of a Director. Travel advances from petty cash or in amounts lower than \$100.00 will not be provided. Exceptions may be made from time to time.

22.9 Loyalty Programs

Staff may participate in loyalty programs (i.e.: frequent travel programs) provided they select the most cost-effective means of travel.

22.10 Approval for Travel

- Normal travel related to a direct service or other Agency business and within the agency's area of jurisdiction does not require prior approval – such claims are approved after incurrence. Normal agency expense guidelines will govern reimbursement claims. This applies to travel within the agency's "geographical jurisdiction".
- For purposes of this procedure "geographical jurisdiction" is defined as Simcoe County-Muskoka District.
- Travel outside the agency's jurisdiction and outside Ontario requires prior approval from an employee's immediate supervisor except for regular agency business such as visiting CIC's or meetings at OACAS. Normal agency expense guidelines will govern reimbursement claims. Supervisors will monitor out of jurisdiction travel.
- Travel outside of Canada requires prior approval from the Executive Director. A detailed proposed cost of travel will be inherent in the approval process but in no circumstance, will expenses of a personal nature be reimbursed by the Agency.
- A proposal for travel outside of Ontario and Canada must include a written rationale to demonstrate that the travel is critical to the organization's priorities; and documentation to demonstrate that the requested travel arrangements (i.e.: transportation mode, accommodation, etc.) are cost-effective, including a detailed itemization of all expenses that will need to be incurred.
- Where possible carpooling should be used when more than one person is going to the same location.

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22.11 Medical/Health Insurance

Employees will not be reimbursed for the cost of privately arranged medical/health insurance for travel outside Ontario, since coverage in the event of illness, injury or death is provided through the agency health insurance plan.

22.12 Vehicle Insurance

Only employees with valid drivers' licenses are authorized to drive their own, agency owned or other rental vehicles while on agency business.

Personal vehicles used for agency business must be insured at the vehicle owner's expense for personal motor vehicle liability. Coverage should be equal to or greater than the minimum liability specified in the Insurance Act. Drivers must satisfy themselves whether their motor vehicle insurance coverage should include business use of their vehicles. The agency will reimburse up to \$150.00/year with clear documentation from insurer of the amount the addition of business has cost the insurer. The agency does not reimburse costs of collision and liability coverage. Submission for reimbursement must be done through staff i-expenses.

The agency assumes no financial responsibility for privately owned vehicles other than paying the kilometric rate when used for agency business. The agency is not responsible for reimbursing deductible amounts related to insurance coverage except in the case of deliberate damage by a client (see below). Those driving a personal vehicle on agency business cannot make claim to the agency for damages because of a collision.

Accidents must be reported immediately to local law enforcement authorities, the rental car agency (if applicable), the automobile insurance company (if using a personal vehicle) and the person's immediate supervisor.

22.13 Vandalism and accidental damage to employee's, volunteer's and foster parent's cars resulting from actions by clients while conducting agency business.

The Society will pay the deductible up to \$300 for claims submitted under the employees "comprehensive" automobile insurance coverage if the claim results from either accidental or willful damage resulting from actions by clients while the employee, volunteer or foster parent is conducting agency business. Damage to windshields is not covered unless the damage is caused by vandalism.

Claims will **not** be considered unless the following conditions have been met:

The Society must be notified in writing of the claim within 3 business days of the damage. Notification should be forwarded to the Director of Corporate Services with a copy to the direct supervisor. The notification should outline the circumstances surrounding the damage and the approximate total cost of repair. All claims should first be submitted to the employee's insurance company. If the employee decides not to submit the claim to their insurance company or if they have chosen not to carry comprehensive coverage, the following must be submitted with the request for payment:

- proof of insurance coverage regardless if comprehensive coverage is included.
- a copy of the police report, if the damage has been caused by a willful act.
- a copy of the repair invoice.

Payment will only be made once the repairs are completed.

22.14 Car Rental

The size of the rental car is not to exceed a mid-size car. Upgrades to full size cars are permitted if the rate charged does not exceed mid-size car rental rates. Exceptions are to be documented and approved in writing. In no case, will luxury or sports car rentals be reimbursed. The rental car must be refueled before returning it, to avoid higher gasoline charges imposed by the rental car agency.

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Employees may choose to use the 407 ETR route for time sensitive travel, schedules meetings etc. ETR Mileage charges will be reimbursed by the agency either to the rental car company or to the employee. Appropriate documentation must be provided with the expense claim.

For any single day trip where the round-trip distance is to exceed 300 kms, reimbursement for personal vehicle use will be limited to 300 kms at the prevailing rate per kilometer. Employees are advised to rent cars to avoid assumption of personal cost for unpaid mileage. Rental cars are to be arranged through the agency's preferred vendor. Under unusual situations an exception can be made but must be documented by the employee's supervisor and accompany the claim.

22.15 Kilometer Reimbursements Rates for Personal Vehicle Use

Rates of reimbursement are pursuant to the agency's [Collective Agreement](#) for all staff, including those who are not members of the Union.

Expense claims are to be submitted on the agency approved form and must include the:

- Case name / number or Purpose of Expense
- Specific starting address
- Specific ending address (or institution name)
- Km's travelled
- Date of travel

Travel is normally reimbursed from the employee's permanent location to their destination. Should the employee travel on agency business directly from home or to home after agency business the mileage claimed should be the lesser of the distance to or from home or permanent work location. Travel from home to employee's permanent location of work is not reimbursable.

22.16 Taxi travel

Where practical, local public transit/hotel shuttles must be used. Receipts for reimbursement will be required. If they are not available, this should be documented on your submission.

Where other means of travel are not available or practical, taxi travel will be reimbursed only with receipts.

22.17 Rail and Air Transportation

Travel by rail (coach class) is permitted when this is the most practical and economical way to travel. A receipt is required.

Travel by air is permitted when this is the most practical and economical way to travel. The standard is economy class. Travel in fare classes above economy class will only be reimbursed at the economy class rate. A receipt is required.

22.18 Other Travel Expenses

Reimbursement for hotel accommodation in the Agency's geographical jurisdiction area will not normally be made. Exceptional or emergency situations may arise where personnel who reside out of town are required to remain in the agency's jurisdiction overnight to perform agency business and these may be approved at the Manager's discretion.

For any overnight accommodation, manager approval must be secured prior to the expenditure. Staff are encouraged to share accommodations where practical.

Reimbursement will be made for the equivalent cost of single accommodation in a standard room. Staff who use suites, executive floors or concierge levels will be reimbursed for the equivalent cost of single room accommodation at the same location. An exception can be made where the hotel only offers suites and the cost is consistent with a standard room in the area.

Private stays with family and friends are encouraged. A maximum of \$30.00 per night for gratuitous lodging is allowed. No receipt is required.

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For extended stays out of the Simcoe County-Muskoka District at a single location, long term accommodation must be approved on the approval of a Director or Executive Director, to take advantage of lower weekly or monthly rates. This may include the rental of a housekeeping facility.

22.19 Other out of pocket Expenses

Reasonable gratuities for meals, hotel room services and taxis will be reimbursed. Likewise, reasonable expenses related to parking meters, bus tickets and subway tokens will be reimbursed. Receipts are not necessary to support reimbursement of these expenses.

22.20 Calls to Home

Reimbursement will be made for reasonable costs for necessary personal calls home for each night away. Wherever possible, agency cell phones should be used to minimize cost.

22.21 Additional Business Expenses

While travelling on agency business, additional business expenses may be incurred not otherwise specifically contemplated in this procedure. Such reasonable expenses such as business calls, air/rail phones, computer access charges, photocopying, fax expenses will be reimbursed with receipts.

22.22 Meal Expenses

Reasonable and appropriate meal expenses will be reimbursed subject to an employee's Manager or Director approval, when employees are required to be away from his or her work location over a normal meal period.

Examples:

- If a worker spends an entire day (8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) out of the Simcoe\Muskoka jurisdiction, the worker may claim the amount spent on lunch, as per current allowances.
- If a worker is away for 2 days including travel, lunch and dinner on day one and breakfast and lunch on day two would be allowable.

Original, itemized receipts must be provided. Reimbursement must not exceed the amount spent, (including taxes and gratuities) as validated by a receipt.

Reimbursement of actual meal expenses that exceed the rates set out in this procedure may be approved by managers if the reimbursement is consistent with the procedure statement on page 1 of this document. Every claim for reimbursement must be accompanied by scanned receipt (in the case of employees) or an original receipt (for foster parents and volunteers) and a written explanation with sufficient detail when the meal rate is exceeded.

Reimbursement of meal costs in no case will include cost of alcoholic beverages.

No reimbursement will be made for meals consumed at home prior to departure or on return, or for meals included in the cost of transportation, accommodation, seminars and/or conferences.

Meal Rates

Meal rates for all staff are as outlined in the current [collective agreement](#).

22.23 Meal Expenses – Clients

We believe it is not wise to encourage the expectation that workers will always take a client (child or adult) out for a meal/snack when visiting and we do not encourage this practice. However, we recognize that there are circumstances where workers may purchase meals/coffee for clients. In cases where this is authorized by the Manager these expenses will be reimbursed within the same limits as Meal Expenses, above. If a worker has a doubt about whether an expense is appropriate, they should consult their Manager PRIOR to making the expenditures.

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In every case where a worker takes a client for a meal, the claim for expense must be substantiated with a detailed receipt, client's name (or case number), and rationale for the purpose.

22.24 Meal Expenses - Overtime

Where an employee is working past normal working hours on approved overtime beyond three hours past their normal scheduled hours of work, a meal allowance subject to the above limits will be reimbursed. Receipts will be required in all cases.

22.25 Credit Cards, Debit Cards and Interact Cards

Credit card purchases must be substantiated by detailed receipts provided to accounting for reconciliation of the credit card statement. A credit card slip is not deemed sufficient detail.

22.26 Hospitality

Hospitality is the provision of food, beverages, accommodation, transportation or other amenities at agency expense to persons who are not engaged in work for the agency, where it is for incentive and appreciation. An exception may be made for staff where expenditures are made for incentive or appreciation. Hospitality expenses made to staff should have prior approval of a Director or Executive Director.

Hospitality should be extended in an economical, consistent and appropriate way when it will facilitate agency business or is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy. Hospitality expenditures should be consistent with the status of the guest(s), the number of persons attending and the business purpose to be achieved.

Where hospitality events are extended by the agency and where guests include vendors or prospective vendors to the agency, managers are responsible for obtaining prior approval to ensure that the hospitality provided does not give, or is not perceived to give, preferential treatment to any vendor.

Acceptance of hospitality from vendors, current or prospective, may constitute a conflict of interest and may therefore be disallowed. Managers are responsible to ensure that employees are aware of their conflict of interest obligations.

Hosts must ensure that hospitality expense records include:

- The circumstances of the event (business purpose)
- The form of hospitality
- Cost supported by receipts
- Name and location of establishment
- Names, titles and companies of attendees
- Approvals by appropriate individuals in the agency

22.27 Recipients of Hospitality

Gifts of appreciation may be accepted if token in nature, valued at up to \$30.00. Gifts valued above \$30.00 must be justified and approved by the Manager or Director of the recipient. In all cases where hospitality is provided to agency staff or board members, conflict of interest guidelines will prevail in determining whether such hospitality should be reasonably accepted. If in doubt, a worker should consult with his/her manager.

22.28 Responsibility of Claimants

In arranging travel, all claims must:

- Obtain prior approvals where required
- Use service providers designated by the agency where appropriate
- Request and accept lowest common carrier fare

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- Use a corporate charge card to prepay hotel accommodations where possible
- Supply an itinerary to and notify their manager of any changes so that travelers may be contacted in an emergency
- Cancel hotel bookings to avoid no-show charges
- Submit all expense claims on a timely basis – expenses filed later than 90 days' post incurrence or 30 days after agencies fiscal year end (March 31st) will no longer be the agency's responsibility
- Provide explanations for unusual expenses
- Provide original receipts for all expense claims
- Provide descriptions for all expenses claimed

22.29 Responsibility of Approvers

- Ensure that expenses are consistent with this procedure
- Determine and authorize when business travel is necessary
- Ensure that travel arrangements are consistent with this procedure
- Consult with the employee to ensure travel arrangements accommodate both their needs and interests and the agency's travel policies
- Ensure that appropriate receipts are provided to support expense claims
- Ensure that unusual items are appropriately explained or proof is given for prior approval
- Ensure the rationale for an exception is documented and accompanies the expense claim
- Ensure that all workers are aware of conflict of interest guidelines

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List of referenced documents

Ref. #	Document Number and Hyperlink	Referenced Document
1	Board Policies	SMCYFS Board Policies
2		Truth & Reconciliation Report Recommendations, 2005
3		Dancing on Live Embers, T. Lopez, B. Thomas, 2006
4		A Knowledge Review on Disproportionality and Disparity and Organizational Change. S. Shahsiah, J. Ying Yee & H. Wong, 2012
5	PR-OEA-004	Internal Documentation Management Procedure
6	Eng. Ver	French Language Services Act of Ontario (FLS Act ENGLISH Version)
7	French. Ver	French Language Services Act of Ontario (FLS Act – FRENCH Version)
9	F.L.S.C.	French Language Services Commissioner - http://csfontario.ca
10	Perf. Mgmt	HUB Page – Performance Management
11	Cupe Page	HUB Page - CUPE
12		Agency's Supervision Manual
13		Non-Union Employee Handbook
14		Agency's Collective Agreement
15		Employment Standards Act
16		Code of Ethics
17		Anti-Oppression Framework for Child Welfare in Ontario
18		Provincial Truth & Reconciliation Report
19		Other Leaves of Absence – Info from the Ministry of Labour
20		Short Term Disability Management policy
21	PR-HRO-003	Short Term Disability/Sick Leave Procedure (Simcoe)
22		Sick Leave Planning and Management (Muskoka)
23	FM-HRO-039	Consent to the Release of Employment Reference Information
24	FM-HRO-106	Employee/Student Exit Checklist
25	FM-HRO-115	Probationary Review
26	FM-HRO-117	Performance Improvement Plan
27	FM-HRO-121	Hiring Requisition
28	FM-HRO-122	Simcoe County Children's Aid Society Exit Interview
29	FM-HRO-123	Appendix A Difficult Conversations

Revision/Approval Record

Rev. #	Date of Revision	Summary of revision	Author	Approved by
Rev.00	Sep-2016	Approved for implementation	Tracy Johnson / HR Director	Tracy Johnson / HR Director
Rev.01	Jan-2018	Revised – Added sections: Anti-Oppression, Social Funds, Supervision, Travel, Meals, Hospitality, / Vandalism, French Language Services, Job Descriptions, Job Evaluation, Salary placement	Tracy Johnson / HR Director	Tracy Johnson / HR Director
Rev.02	Feb. 2018	Revised – Added sections: Section 4 – Accessibility, Section 28 – Service Sick Leave Replacement Procedure	Tracy Johnson / HR Director	Tracy Johnson / HR Director