

Council Policy

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PURPOSE

This Policy has been developed for the purpose of providing guidelines and identifying allowances payable to Members when travelling on Council business.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all elected members, Local Authority members, and Council committee members.

DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

Council business – Where the member is representing Council at a meeting, conference or training event

Incidentals - Expenses arising as a result of the travel being undertaken

Member – Any person that is an elected or appointed to Council, a Local Authority or a Council committee

Place of residence – The address at which the member is registered with the NT Electoral Commission

LEGISLATION AND REFERENCE

Document	Description
NT Local Government Act (including Regulations)	Details Council's legislative obligations
Australian Taxation Office	Details applicable rates payable for staff travel
Council Schedule of Allowances	At foot of this document
Travel distance and travel times	At foot of this document
Travel Requisition	Form used to claim meal allowances when travelling for council business
Personal Car Usage and Mileage Form	Form used to claim reimbursement for use of personal vehicle when travelling for Council business

POLICY STATEMENT

Arrangements for travel are made by the Governance Officer according to what is identified as being the most suitable and cost effective.

It is the Member's responsibility to complete the appropriate forms and submit them to the Governance Officer for authorisation and processing.

Where a Member is required to attend Council business in a location other than their usual place of residence the Council will nominate a suitable method of transport.

Where a Council meeting or back to back Council meetings is/are being held outside of a Councillor's usual place of residence, for 2 hours or less in duration, Councillors will dial-in to the meeting(s) and can use the Council Office at their location to do so, if desired. This will be the case, except in extraordinary circumstances, for the following meetings:

Council Policy

- Finance Committee
- Audit & Risk Committee

Cost Effectiveness

Members travelling on Council business should:

1. Exercise the same care in incurring expenses as a person travelling for personal reasons; and
2. Provide the Governance Officer with as much notice as possible if they require travel and/or accommodation.

Use of a Private Vehicle

Use of the Members personal vehicle is the preferred method for travel within the CDRC area. Members travelling in their own vehicle are paid a Mileage Allowance in accordance with the Travel Distance and Times table, at Appendix B.

Where more than one Member is travelling to Council business from the same location, Members are required to car pool.

Taking into consideration the current road conditions and safety, Council pays mileage based on the shortest distance identified on the Travel Distance and Times table, at Appendix B.

Mileage allowance is payable to and from the Member's usual place of residence, unless the Member is already in the location where the Council business is being conducted.

Air Transportation

Where air travel is required, the least expensive ticket is purchased unless otherwise determined by a Council resolution.

Airline tickets are not transferable. They cannot be exchanged for cash or used to offset other costs, including costs incurred by a third party.

Members may upgrade the class of travel at their own expense.

Ground Transportation

Ground transportation may be any of the following means of travel or a combination, according to cost effectiveness.

Council Vehicle

Where available, a Council vehicle and fuel may be provided for transport to and from the location of the Council business. Where a Council vehicle is provided, the Member is to provide evidence of a current and unrestricted drivers licence for that class of vehicle.

Co-ordinated Travel

Where cost savings are achievable, Members may be required to travel together or to use public transport.

Council Policy

Public Transport

Members may be required to travel on public transport.

Transfers

For transfers between airport and hotel:

1. Where possible and depending on time constraints, the airport / hotel bus should be used;
2. Upon presentation of receipts, Council reimburses the Member for taxis, coaches, and other transfer expenses; and
3. Car rental may be considered at the discretion of the CEO.

Accommodation

Where a Member travels on Council business to a place other than their usual place of residence and the business goes for more than one day, or they cannot safely drive to/from their usual place of residence before/after the meeting, accommodation is provided.

Council pays for accommodation to a standard that it deems appropriate, taking into consideration the location of the Council business. Council paid accommodation does not exceed four star single occupancy.

Any additional costs incurred as a result of extended stays, the attendance of partners and / or children and the cost of non-essential room extras are the responsibility of the Member.

In the exceptional event where a Member is required to book his or her own accommodation, reimbursement is in accordance with the Schedule of Allowances attached at Appendix A.

Members may choose to upgrade their accommodation at their own expense.

Travel Allowance / Meals

Where a Member is required to stay overnight in a location other than a community which is their usual place of residence, Council provides a Travel Allowance to cover the cost of meals and incidental costs associated with the business travel.

Where meals and items considered to be incidentals are provided as part of the Council business, Travel Allowance and incidentals are not payable.

Reimbursement for incidental expenses is based on the rate in the Schedule of Allowances and is applicable on days where the Member is away from their usual place of residence on Council business.

Breakfast is not claimable on the day of departure, except where a member is required to leave their usual place of residence before 6:30am.

Lunch allowance is paid on the first day of travel where it is a business requirement for travel to commence before 11:30am. Lunch allowance is paid for the final day of travel if it is a business requirement for travel to be completed after 2:00pm.

Dinner allowance is paid on the first day of travel if it is a business requirement for travel to commence before 5pm. Dinner is paid for the final day of travel if it is a business requirement for travel to be completed after 8pm.

Council Policy

Payment

50% of travel payments and allowances are paid prior to the first leg of travel. Remaining travel payments and allowances are paid once a signed meeting record of attendance submitted to Finance.

Allowances are paid to Members via the bank account of their choice. Payments are made at the next available pay run or earlier if possible.

Adjustments to Payments

Where a Member is overpaid an allowance or paid an allowance but does not attend the Council business, the Governance Officer makes arrangements for the overpayment to be deducted from the next payment to the Member.

The Governance team undertakes to advise the Member via e-mail in the event that a deduction is required.

If, following the trip, additional amounts are identified as payable, the Member should advise the Governance team via the appropriate form. The necessary adjustment is should be paid to the Member at the first available opportunity.

Non Attendance due to illness

If a Member does not attend Council business due to illness, a medical certificate is required to avoid reimbursement of incurred expenses.

REVIEW HISTORY

Date	Details
6 May 2016	New policy OC068/2016
31 May 2018	Reviewed and re-adopted by Council OC081/2018
13 August 2018	Reviewed and re-adopted by Council OC098/2018
27 September 2018	Add clause relating to meetings of two hour duration or less OC112/2018
29 July 2020	Reviewed and adopted by Council OC085/2020