



*Guardian of Public Trust*

June 12, 2023

**BRIEFING NOTE:**

Purpose: Decision

TO: Chair and Members of Commission

FROM: Bonnie Riddell, Policy & Research Analyst

**SUBJECT: Expense Policy Revisions**

**BRIEFING INTENT:**

- To bring the Commission's current Expense & Travel Reimbursement policy into alignment with the City's policies & procedures.
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**BACKGROUND:**

- As per the City of Edmonton's Bylaw #14040 (Edmonton Police Commission Bylaw) expense reimbursement is outlined as follows:  
*EXPENSE AND HOSTING -*  
*12 The Commission shall:*  
*(a) reimburse employees for expenses in accordance with approved City directives and procedures for City employees; and*  
*(b) establish a policy that will define hosting requirements and provide for the reimbursement of member expenses in line with the responsibilities of serving as Commissioners.*
- Commission policy # 5.6.2 – *Expenses and Travel Reimbursement* was last reviewed and revised in January 2019 and the City of Edmonton has since updated their business expense and vehicle reimbursement policies (September 2022 and June 2021)

## Preliminary Analysis:

### Overview:

- The EPC's current policy on expenses requires several substantive changes to be in alignment with City policies and bylaw. The first of these is the kilometre rate and how that is being reimbursed to Commissioners. The following few bullets outline the reason for those changes.
- City of Edmonton's updated procedure on private vehicle reimbursement no longer addresses a flat rate mileage allowance, but rather their policy states that employees will be reimbursed based on the total number of kilometres driven for business purposes. Their policy also states that they will use the National Joint Council's (NJC) rates which are updated quarterly.
- The NJC's rate as of April 1, 2023 for Alberta is set at 52.0 cents/km (taxes included) <https://www.njc-cnm.gc.ca/directive/d10/v238/s658/en>
- Our current reimbursement rate is 55.0 cents/km based on their directive for October 1, 2022.
- The rate does fluctuate and will require ongoing monitoring to ensure the most current rate is being applied to travel expense claims.
- Some examples of these rate fluctuations are as follows:
  - October 1, 2021 – 51.0 cents/km
  - January 1, 2022 – 51.5 cents/km
  - July 1, 2022 – 53.0 cents/km
  - Oct. 1, 2022 – 55.0 cents/km (where we are currently paying out at)
  - January 1, 2023 – 54.0 cents/km
  - April 1, 2023 – 52.0 cents/km (most current rate)
- Another change is in the area of hosting expenses and EPC's policy has been revised to reflect the City's policy on employee business expenses that states the following:
  - *Alcohol consumption is considered a personal expense and is not eligible for reimbursement. Alcohol may be provided at City events provided that the cost of alcohol is borne by the attendee of the event. In cases where alcohol is provided, where the arrangements ensure the alcohol is provided in a responsible manner (e.g., food must always be served). Alcohol consumption is considered a personal expense and is not eligible for reimbursement and cannot be paid for with City funds.*
  - Under the City of Edmonton previous expense guidelines alcohol consumption was still considered a personal expense, however, exceptions could be made with prior approval. This exception no longer exists under the new City procedure.
- The new City's directive also no longer addresses tipping and gratuities as it had in the older version. The question for the Commission to consider is if they still wish to have a guideline in our policy to address or remove it altogether?

- The Commission also had a procedure around the reporting of expenses (Procedure 1 d) for the Chief, Internal Auditor, PCD/Legal Counsel, and ED. Currently the practice has been to only report Commissioner and ED hosting and travel expenses on the Bi-Annual Report to the Community. Policy has been revised to reflect this practice.

**Recommendations:**

- 1) Approve revisions to EPC policy # 5.6.2 – *Expenses and Travel Reimbursement* and repeal Appendix A – *Intra-Provincial Flat Rate Mileage Allowance*.

<b>Effective:</b> Nov. 20, 2007	<b>Revised:</b> September 17, 2015 October 27, 2016 October 18, 2018 January 17, 2019
<b>Repealed:</b>	

## 5.6.2 EXPENSES AND TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

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The Edmonton Police Commission (Commission) is accountable to the City of Edmonton Council (City Council) and to the community for the expenditure of its budget, allocated to the Commission as part of the larger budget for policing in Edmonton.

The use of public funds by the Commission for expenses occurred while discharging their duties as a commissioner must be able to withstand public scrutiny as well as any internal or external audit.

Commissioners and Commission staff are expected to demonstrate both stewardship and accountability when incurring and approving business expenses.

### **Definitions:**

**FULL DAY OF TRAVEL:** ~~Is defined as a departure time from the City of Edmonton at 9:00 am, or earlier, and a return time after 5:30 pm, the day that business travel occurs.~~ When a commissioner or employee departs from their residence or work location before 7:30 am and returns to their residence or place of work after 5:30 pm when travelling. Full day of travel is relevant for claiming per diem meals.

**HOSTING:** ~~Is a broad term used to refer to the expenditure of funds for providing hospitality to other agencies, employee and member recognition, business associates locally or while travelling.~~ Means providing meals and/or non-alcoholic refreshments at authorized Commission functions attended by external parties and/or employees.

**MEAL PER DIEM ALLOWANCE:** While in travel status, Commissioners and employees may claim the maximum Full Day Of Travel meal per diem (daily) allowance of \$65. This maximum **includes** tips/gratuities and taxes (PST/GST/HST). **NOTE:** Assumes that travelers are required to be at the airport two hours prior to departure.

**REIMBURSEMENT RATE:** The per kilometer rate at which business travel will be reimbursed. The reimbursement rate is based on a formula established by the City of Edmonton ~~through their *Private Vehicle Reimbursement* policy which sets the rate based on the National Joint Council (NJC) per-kilometre allowance published on their website.~~

## Guidelines:

1. Commission members and staff members will be reimbursed for costs related to Commission approved business. This includes attendance at events where a commissioner or commissioners are attending on behalf of the Commission and/or an event which the Commission is sponsoring. All claims must be supported by receipts.
2. Where Commission approval has not been received for attendance at a particular event, or is otherwise not captured by this policy, then prior approval by the Commission Chair is required for a specific activity in order to receive reimbursement. Approval and reimbursement will not normally be granted for the following events:
  - a. Social events, unless a clear connection can be made to an EPC policy for community engagement;
  - b. EPS social events (i.e. golf tournament or EPS half marathon) unless a clear opportunity is present that exposes EPC to a broader employee audience;
  - c. Retirement parties, except for the Chief or Deputies or equivalent;
  - d. Holiday parties; and,
  - e. External recognition events.
3. The Commission shall reimburse employees for expenses in accordance with approved City directives and procedures for City employees as stated in Part III, Section 12a) of the Edmonton Police Commission Bylaw (Bylaw 14040).
4. Expenses incurred by additional individual(s) accompanying a commissioner (i.e. guest, spouse, partner, etc.) are not reimbursable.
5. A Commission member or staff member will be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses to workshops, seminars, conferences, and other business meetings outside the City of Edmonton.
6. All accommodations and air travel should be selected based on being reasonable and practical and cost, using professional judgment. Airlines and fare class cannot be chosen based on personal frequent flyer program incentives and/or personal preference.
7. The Commission encourages using staff resources to make all travel arrangements (transportation, accommodation, and other) to take advantage of cost savings. ~~Normally, travel arrangements will be made on behalf of Commission members by Commission staff;~~ however, on occasions when Commission members make their own arrangements reimbursement will be provided in accordance with this policy.
8. Commissioners and staff members who use their private vehicle in the performance of their duties will be reimbursed for travel within City of Edmonton at an established rate

as set by the City of Edmonton in their Administrative Procedure – Private Vehicle Reimbursement (A1413U).

9. The per diem allowances for meals can be claimed when a receipt is not available. The total per diem amount claimed shall not exceed \$65 for a full day of travel. **NOTE:** When meals are included in travel events (e.g. conference fees, airfare) the per diem for the meal(s) included is not reimbursed.

MEAL	ALLOWANCE	GUIDELINES
Breakfast	\$15	Departure from Edmonton must be before 9 am <u>or</u> Arrival in Edmonton must be after 9 am.
Lunch	\$20	Departure from Edmonton must be before 1 pm <u>or</u> Arrival in Edmonton must be after 1 pm.
Dinner	\$30	Departure from Edmonton must be before 5:30 pm <u>or</u> Arrival in Edmonton must be after 5:30 pm.

~~10. The purchase of alcohol cannot be expensed with the exception of Commission approved hosting events such as, the Citizen Awards and Joint EPC/EPs Open House.~~

11. Tipping for services while on Commission business or hosting is limited to a maximum of ~~15~~ 18%. Should a flat rate be applied automatically to a bill that is greater than ~~15~~ 18%, then the reimbursement is allowable. The per diem guideline for meals includes tipping and taxes.

12. A Commissioner wishing to combine a business trip with personal travel may do so at their own expense and effort. The Commissioner is expected to pay for any expense not related to their business travel.

~~13. Other travel expenses such as car rental, parking, luggage charges, ground transportation, and seat selection are all eligible for reimbursement.~~

~~14. Incidental expenses such as, but not limited to, coin laundry, public transit, meter parking, can be reimbursed \$10 per full day of travel.~~

~~15. Expenses such as alcoholic beverages, airport lounge access, additional car rental insurance, flight cancellation insurance, additional medical insurance, and passport fees are not eligible for reimbursement.~~

16. Commission members will not be reimbursed for maintaining a home office or other normal everyday costs of being a member of the Edmonton Police Commission.

## Procedures:

### 1. EXPENSE ACCOUNTS

- a) The Executive Director (ED) will review and approve the expense claims of Chair of the Commission, Commission members, the Chief of Police (Chief), and Commission staff.
- b) Claims submitted by the ED will be reviewed and approved by the Chair of the Commission.
- c) Applications for reimbursements for the Chief exceeding \$10,000 shall be submitted to the Chair for approval in advance.
- d) Applications for reimbursements for the ED exceeding \$5,000 shall be submitted to the Chair for approval in advance.
- e) Commission members, ~~Police Chief, Chief Internal Auditor, Public Complaint Director, Legal Counsel~~ and ED expense claims will be reported ~~quarterly~~ **bi-annually** as part of the Commission financial reporting. Commissioner training attendance and associated costs will also be reported.

### 2. HOSTING EXPENSES

- a) The Commission shall set a hosting budget each year.
- b) Hosting budgets may be used for official or semi-official functions such as presentations to a retiring Commissioner or staff member **or a business meal**.
- c) **Alcohol consumption is considered a personal expense and is not eligible for reimbursement. Alcohol may be provided at Commission sanctioned events provided that the cost of the alcohol is borne by the attendee of the event.**
- d) Requests for reimbursement must document the purpose of the meeting and the individuals being hosted. A detailed receipt is required with each submission for reimbursement and the preferred method of payment is through a commissioner's credit card.

### 3. TRAVEL

- a) All air travel will be economy class. Circumstances to be considered for an upgrade include business travel time (including layovers) in excess of five hours one-way, international travel or to accommodate flight availability impact on work commitments.
- ~~b) Travel to and from the Edmonton International Airport is reimbursed at a flat rate of \$20.00 each way plus parking as per City of Edmonton Administrative Procedure – Employee Business Expenses – Local And Out Of Town – A14151 (NOTE: No longer addressed by COE policy – recommend reimbursing the actual fare)~~
- ~~c) Mileage for intra-provincial vehicle travel shall be reimbursed, at a flat rate, as per the Intra-Provincial Travel Flat Rate Mileage Allowance (Appendix A)~~
- d) Commissioners and staff who use their vehicle for business travel must provide proof of a valid Alberta operator's license, **a valid vehicle registration certificate**, and must have a minimum of \$1,000,000 of public liability and property damage insurance.

- e) For travel within the City of Edmonton by Commissioners who do not use a personal vehicle, a bus pass will be reimbursed.
- f) For travel outside the City of Edmonton, the cost of taxi or bus will be covered on the basis of receipts.
- g) Commission members and staff members will be reimbursed for parking expenses while on Commission business, including reimbursement for local parking.
- ~~h) Commissioners and staff may claim an incidental allowance of \$10 for each full day of travel. Incidental expenses include, but are not limited to, coin laundry, public transit, dry cleaning, meter parking. (Moved to guideline)~~
- i) The Commission will not reimburse any parking tickets, speeding tickets or other fines/costs incurred while driving a personal vehicle for business purposes. Additionally, any costs associated with the maintenance, fuel, vehicle breakdown, or damage incurred while driving a personal vehicle for business purposes are contemplated in the standard mileage rate and will not be reimbursed.

#### 4. ACCOMODATION

- a) Reimbursement for accommodations is limited to a standard single occupancy rate in a business class hotel, or whatever class of available accommodation is the most reasonable and efficient.
- b) Commission members are responsible for providing final accommodation receipts for expense reimbursement.
- c) If a spouse or partner accompanies the Commission member or a staff member, the spouse's or partner's expenses will be paid by the Commission member or the staff member.
- d) Barring extraordinary circumstances, the Commission will not reimburse costs incurred for "no show" at hotels or car rental agencies. It is the responsibility of the Commissioner or staff member to contact the hotel or car rental agency in the event of a change in travel arrangements.
- e) Commissioners or staff choosing to stay with friends or relatives while away on business travel can be reimbursed \$50 for each night. No receipt is required.

#### References:

1. *City of Edmonton Bylaw 14040 – Edmonton Police Commission Bylaw*
- ~~2. *City of Edmonton Administrative Directive and Procedure – Employee Business Expenses – Local & Out Of Town (A14151)*~~
3. *City of Edmonton Administrative Policy A1206 Financial Administrative & Control – Procedure – Employee Business Expenses*
4. *City of Edmonton Private Vehicle Reimbursement Procedure*
- ~~5. *City of Edmonton Administrative Directive and Procedure – Private Vehicle Reimbursement (A1413U)*~~



6. *Edmonton Police Commission Policy 5.5.2 – Expenditure Approval and Signing Authorities*
- ~~7. *Edmonton Police Commission Policy 5.7 – Expenses and Travel Reimbursement – Appendix A – Intra-Provincial Travel Flat Rate Mileage Allowance*~~