

# ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR TRAVEL AND OTHER REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Office of Administration	Office of the Vice-President, Administration
Approval Authority:	President and the Executive Team
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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 These Administrative Procedures are intended to govern the reimbursement of expenses from all funds administered by the University, subject to the availability of such funds for reasonable expenses incurred while on approved University business, including expenses of a business nature incurred with respect to guests.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 These Administrative Procedures apply to any person in the organization making an expense claim, including the following:
- faculty
  - staff
  - appointees
  - board members
  - consultants and contractors engaged by the organization who provide consulting or other services
- 2.2 Certain granting agencies have established guidelines concerning expenses eligible for reimbursement. In the event of inconsistencies between such guidelines and these Administrative Procedures, the guidelines with the greater restrictions will apply.
- 2.3 Claims for reimbursement of expenses, unless provided otherwise through Collective Agreement, should be submitted within sixty days following the date on which such expenditure was incurred or fifteen days after end of trip. Staff members who will be away from the local area for extended periods of time should make some arrangement on campus for this processing during their absence.

### **3. Definitions in these Administrative Procedures:**

- 3.1 The following definitions are outlined in the Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive and apply to these Administrative Procedures.

“Accountability” means the University is accountable for public funds used to reimburse travel, meal and hospitality expenses. All expenses support business objectives.

“Transparency” means the University is transparent to all stakeholders. The rules for incurring and reimbursing travel, meal and hospitality expenses are clear, easily understood, and available to the public.

“Value for Money” means the University dollars are used prudently and responsibly. Plans for travel, meals, accommodation and hospitality are necessary and economical with due regard for health and safety.

“Fairness” means legitimate authorized expenses incurred during the course of the business of the University are reimbursed.

“Hospitality” means the reasonable costs of meals or hospitality, when providing for a specific business purpose. Such hospitality might include social, athletic and cultural events. There must be *clear* documentation as to the business purpose of the hospitality (e.g. taking out a guest lecturer for a meal, or interviewing a potential faculty member), noting the names of the individuals or the group involved.

“Managerial Discretion” means the administrative authority to make decisions and choices with some degree of flexibility, while maintaining compliance with the Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive.

- 3.2 "University business" shall include teaching, research, administration, ancillary operations and any other funds administered by the University.
- 3.3 “Electronic Expense Submission” means expense report and associated supporting documentation being submitted for reimbursement through an approved electronic system as provided by the University.

### **4. Administrative Procedures Statement**

- 4.1 It is the policy of Laurentian University that all travel and other expense reimbursements for University purposes are legitimate expenditures incurred for the purposes of the operations of the University, are accounted for and are supported by relevant original receipts and documentation.

### **5. Responsibilities**

- 5.1. Responsibilities

#### 5.1.1 Responsibilities - General

All expense reimbursement claims from University funds, whether operating, restricted, capital or ancillary funds, require approval on a one up basis by the person to whom a claimant reports. It is both the claimant’s and approver’s responsibility to ensure that expenses reimbursed:

- a) have been incurred for legitimate university business purposes;
- b) are reasonable in the context of the university business activity;
- c) are in accordance with these Administrative Procedures, with applicable granting agency guidelines, or with the terms of the specific award, **whichever imposes greater restrictions.**

#### 5.1.2 Responsibilities - Claimant

- a) It is the claimant's responsibility to only incur reasonable expenses and to claim a reimbursement of actual out-of-pocket expenses for legitimate university business as supported by original receipts. The Financial Services Office is responsible for the review of expense claims, but does not approve such claims. All Expenditures for which reimbursement is claimed must be supported by original receipts. For gas purchases only, credit card vouchers may be used instead of a receipt. For meals, credit card vouchers may be presented in addition to a cash register receipt when they reflect a gratuity. Please note that a credit card voucher alone is not sufficient for reimbursement of a meal. For electronic submission, an image of the expense receipt can be submitted with the electronic submission.
- b) It is the responsibility of the claimant to send the claim to the approver who has the authority under the fund or project. For example, any claims on a research project should be approved by the Principle Investigator (PI) and in the case of the PI, by the research office. Operational expense claims should follow the authority levels as provided within the organization chart of the University.

#### 5.1.3 Responsibilities - Approvers

Approvers are accountable for their decisions, which should be:

- subject to good judgment and knowledge of the situation;
- exercised in appropriate circumstances;
- comply with the principles and mandatory requirements set out in the Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive and the expense rules; and
- ensure that expenses are approved for which they have authority.

When a situation arises and discretion needs to be exercised, approvers should consider whether the request is:

- able to stand up to scrutiny by the auditors and members of the public;
- properly explained and documented;
- fair and equitable;
- reasonable; and
- appropriate.

## 5.2 The University Corporate Travel Card

The Scotiabank Travel Visa Card is available because cash advances have been discontinued for University business travel (other than in exceptional circumstances and when specially arranged with the Accounting Services Office, for example, when travel is to a remote area or when team travel is involved).

The Scotiabank Travel Visa Card is available to all full-time appointed academic and administrative staff members who travel sufficiently to warrant its use. If you would like to obtain information regarding the Scotiabank Travel Visa Card, please contact France Girard at ext. 3046 or by email [fgirard@laurentian.ca](mailto:fgirard@laurentian.ca) Staff members using their Scotia Bank Visa Card or another credit card to purchase airline tickets in advance may submit the credit card charge form issued by the travel agency to support their claim for reimbursement of expenses. The boarding pass or the printed copy of the electronic boarding pass must be submitted to the Treasury Office within fifteen days of the end of any trip.

Reimbursement of expenditures will only be made directly to claimants. The University accepts no responsibility for amounts billed directly to the University.

### 5.3 Incidentals

The specific nature of expenditures must be identified. Amounts designated "Sundry or Miscellaneous" on an expense claim will not be reimbursed.

### 5.4 Alcohol

Under the normal course of business, alcohol should not constitute a reimbursable expense. Alcohol can be claimed and will be reimbursed as part of a travel or meal expense if it is considered University Business. Approval of the expense would normally include a member of the Executive Team and would follow the responsibilities guidelines under section 6.1.3.

Alcohol is permitted at a University Sponsored Hospitality Event. The event and use of alcohol must be approved in writing by a member of the Executive Team.

### 5.5 Hospitality

#### 5.5.1 Hospitality - General

Reasonable costs of meals or hospitality, when providing for a specific business purpose, are reimbursable. Such hospitality might include social, athletic, and cultural events. There must be *clear* documentation as to the business purpose of the hospitality (e.g. taking out a guest lecturer for a meal, or interviewing a potential faculty member), noting the names of the individuals, or the group, involved.

#### 5.5.2 Entertainment of Guests

Entertainment of guests should be limited to the cost of meals and beverages furnished in a hotel dining room or restaurant of an equivalent quality.

Entertainment of a different variety, i.e. golf, tennis, athletic events, theatre productions, etc. require the prior approval of the department head.

Any University employee hosting a business lunch, dinner or other entertainment event should limit the employees and other participants attending to only those who can be expected to contribute directly to the accomplishment of the business purpose.

#### 5.5.3 Entertainment of Fellow Employees

Normally the cost of entertaining fellow employees is not reimbursable, except in unusual / special circumstances. Such circumstances would include time limitation (extended work day), the nature and sensitivity of matters to be discussed and employee promotion or job performance (job well done). A full explanation of the business purpose must be given on the expense report and one-up authorization should be received prior to the special circumstance.

#### 5.5.4 Home Entertainment

Upon approval of the department head, an employee may entertain business guests in one's home if it serves a specific business purpose. Entertainment of fellow employees will be considered personal and not reimbursable.

#### 5.5.5 Hospitality Expense Reporting

Hospitality expenses (i.e. meals and entertainment) must be paid by the most senior university person in attendance when other University employees are present.

### 5.6 Expenses for Consultants and other Contractors

5.6.1 In no circumstances can hospitality, incidental or food expenses be considered allowable expenses for consultants and contractors under the rules or in any contract between an organization and a consultant or contractor. Therefore, they cannot claim or be reimbursed for such expenses, including:

- meals, snacks and beverages
- gratuities
- laundry or dry cleaning
- valet services
- dependent care
- home management
- personal telephone calls

Reimbursement for allowable expenses can be claimed and reimbursed only when the contract specifically provides for it.

### 5.7 Signatures (Hard copy or Electronic)

6.7.1 Depending on the reimbursement method used, the authorization for the transaction requires either a hard copy signature or an electronic signature.

6.7.2 The completed paper Travel and Business Expense Report or the Requisition, with the claimant's signature and declaration, must be submitted with receipts attached. Electronic submission will automatically track the claimant's identification and submission and confirm that claimant is in agreement that the expenses meet the requirements of these regulations.

### 5.8 Final Approval

6.8.1 Electronic signature is acceptable for expense claims submitted electronically by the claimant. If the claim is submitted on paper format, then the final approver's signature is required.

## 5.9 Procedures

### 5.9.1 For Travel Expenses

#### 5.9.1.1 Forms Required

The names of the forms required for reimbursements are outlined on Appendix C.

#### 5.9.1.2 Authorization and Approval

- Claims for reimbursement of travel expenses must be approved by the next reporting level of authority before payment will be made. In the case of Faculty, the Supervisor is the Dean.
- Any exception to these regulations must be approved by the Executive Director, Financial Services (e.g. specific arrangements for group travel under specified conditions).
- Approvers are prohibited from approving their own expenses. Expenses for a group can only be claimed by the most senior person present – expenses cannot be claimed by an individual that are incurred by his/her approver.
- Approvers must be required in the expense rules to provide approval only for expenses that were necessarily incurred in the performance of University's business; and provide approval only for claims that include all appropriate documentation.

#### 5.9.1.3 Documentation

- Expenses should be itemized and recorded on a daily basis for the duration of any trip.
- Only original receipts are required to support a paper claim or a picture copy of the original receipt if submitted electronically. Cancelled cheques, credit card statements or charge slips, photocopies or carbon copies are not acceptable. An exception has been made in the case of gasoline for which a credit card voucher is accepted.
- For air travel, a copy of the airline reservation is required. Where an academic or administrative staff member uses the "Scotiabank Travel Visa Card" to purchase an airline ticket in advance and submits a claim for reimbursement prior to completion of travel, the credit card charge

form issued by the travel agency may be used to support the claim for reimbursement of expenses. This type of transaction will be recorded as an advance pending submission of the carbon copy of the airline ticket after the trip has been completed.

- A staff member who has been reimbursed by the University for airline tickets purchased in advance and who is subsequently required to cancel the trip is to submit to Accounts Payable a personal cheque payable to the University for the amount originally claimed along with the credit card refund notice issued by the travel agent. Please identify on the back of the cheque the account number to be credited.
- Credit balances on Scotiabank Visa accounts arising from such cancellations will be refunded by the Scotiabank upon request of the cardholder.
- A staff member may elect to use a personal credit card in the payment of expenses if this is the most convenient means of doing so. However, the annual card fee or any service charge related to the use of a personal credit card is the sole responsibility of the staff member and is not reimbursable by the University.

#### 5.9.1.4 Eligible Expenses

Travel should be by the most direct route and economical means of transportation. Expenses incurred due to unnecessary stopovers will be at the staff member's personal expense.

Purchase Orders are not to be used to purchase airline tickets or for renting vehicles. These are to be charged to the staff member's Scotiabank Visa card or personal credit card and submitted on a "Travel & Business Expense Reimbursement Report" form. Any exceptions to the above must be approved by the Purchasing Department.

For Air Travel, the most economical fare tariff should be obtained. Excess baggage charges will be allowed only where, in the opinion of the approval authority, such additional charges are incurred for the specific purpose of the trip. The staff member is responsible for obtaining refunds for all unused portions of airline tickets.

If you use your personal vehicle while on University business, the following apply:

The vehicle must be insured at the vehicle owner's expense for personal motor vehicle liability. It is the driver/owner's responsibility to ensure that the motor vehicle insurance includes coverage for business use of the vehicle.

The University will not reimburse the costs of insurance coverage for business use, physical damage or liability.

- The University is not responsible for reimbursing deductible amounts related to insurance coverage. In the event of an accident, you will not be permitted to make a claim to the University for any resulting damages.
- Mileage allowance will be granted for short journeys where this constitutes the most economical or efficient means of transportation. If the claimant request mileage instead of a vehicle rental, which would be the most economical method of transportation, the approver must state the reason for approving mileage instead of the cost of renting.
- Where, due to the distance involved, air fare would be more economical, the maximum allowance claimable will be equivalent to that fare.
- Mileage allowance will be granted for only one automobile where persons travelling together could reasonably be expected to travel in one automobile.
- The kilometre rate set out in Appendix A is inclusive of insurance (any deductible costs), storage, maintenance, fuel, repair, towing, and charges in connection with traffic violations. However, specific charges for parking, bridge, ferry and highway tolls while on University business will be reimbursed.
- When flying is the least expensive mode of travel the staff member is permitted to claim mileage to and from the airport and the related parking cost.
- The Purchasing Department has negotiated an automobile rental agreement for all Laurentian University employees. In most instances, it is less expensive to lease a vehicle than provide reimbursement on personally owned vehicles. An individual will be asked to substantiate the use of their own vehicle in lieu of utilizing a rental vehicle. Failure to provide adequate support for the use of a personal vehicle will reduce the actual claim to the equivalent value of a rental.

#### 5.9.1.5 Car Rental and Insurance

- Reimbursements will include the rental, gasoline and collision waiver charges required to be paid to rental agents.
- When renting vehicles from any commercial car rental agency the Collision Damage Waiver does not have to be paid. This coverage is provided by Laurentian University's insurance program.
- The coverage provides up to \$25,000 protection for physical damage to vehicles leased to the University and driven by University employees or students. There is a \$250 deductible for both collision and comprehensive losses.

- This coverage provides insurance only when leasing vehicles for terms of 30 days or less. If a vehicle is leased for more than 30 days (or if a shorter lease is extended to a total of more than 30 days), you must notify Purchasing who will ensure the proper documents are filed with our insurer.
- It is imperative that Laurentian University's name appears on the rental contract even if the staff member will be paying for the rental with a credit card. In this situation you must list "Laurentian University c/o your name" on the lease.
- For further details regarding Laurentian's insurance policy, please contact the Risk Manager, Security, Risk and Parking Office..

#### 5.9.1.6 Taxis

A taxi may be used by a staff member where this represents an economical means of transportation. The starting point and destination of the trip must be indicated. An airline bus or limousine should normally be used for transportation to or from an airport or other transportation terminal.

#### 5.9.1.7 Railway

Railway charges shall not exceed Club Car accommodation for day travel, or standard lower berth or roomette for overnight travel.

#### 5.9.1.8 Meals and Incidentals

A staff member may claim the actual cost of meals up to the fixed daily allowance. Detailed receipts supporting the meals and incidentals must be included when submitting an expense claim, except as provided by Collective Agreement for meals for professional allowance charges.

Due to unusual circumstances (location of meeting, etc), the maximum allowance may not be sufficient. The actual cost of meals can be submitted for payment as long as the approver is a member of the Executive Team.

#### 5.9.1.9 Accommodation

If a staff member is required to spend more than one continuous month in a single location, appropriate arrangements for suitable rental or board and lodging accommodation at weekly or monthly rates should be made prior to or as soon as possible after the start of the travel period.

When accompanied by a spouse, the staff member is to reduce double room hotel accommodation rates accordingly.

Purchase Orders are not to be used to book or pay for accommodations. These are to be charged to the staff member's Scotiabank Visa card or personal credit card and submitted on a "Travel & Business Expense

Reimbursement Report" form. Any exceptions to the above must be approved by the Purchasing Department.

#### 5.9.1.10 Other

Costs of obtaining passport, visa, or traveller's medical insurance are not allowable unless incurred for the sole purpose of the trip.

#### 5.9.1.11 Accountable Advances

- Cash advances are not allowed except in exceptional circumstances and when specially arranged through the Accounting Services Office. For example, when travel is to a remote area or when team travel is involved.
- The "Request for Accountable Advance" form must be completed, authorized in the same manner as other expense reimbursements, and forwarded to Accounting Services for approval. You should ensure sufficient time is provided for the approval process in order that any payment can be processed in the requested time.
- An "Accountable Advance Settlement Report" form (the bottom part of the "Request for Accountable Advance" form) must be submitted within fifteen days of the end of a trip. A "Travel & Business Expense Reimbursement Report" form duly completed must be attached; refer to Procedure for details.
- Payment of accounts due to Laurentian University must accompany this report. Reimbursements to employees will follow within 10 working days after submission of the report.

### 5.9.2 Procedures for Non-Travel Expenses (ie. supplies...)

#### 5.9.2.1 For the actual expense accounting, use the "Requisition for Reimbursement" form.

The University will not reimburse any expenditure made for attendance at a political fundraising event or to support any political party.

Claims for reimbursement of expenses must be approved by the individual responsible for the budget in question before payment will be made, with the exception of professional allowances that have to be approved by the Dean.

The following procedures apply for reimbursements of non-travel expenses:

- Complete the "Requisition for Reimbursement" form. This must be approved by the appropriate party and submitted to Accounting Services.

- Only original receipts will be acceptable to support a claim. Cancelled cheques, credit card statements or charge slips, photocopies or carbon copies are not acceptable.
- A staff member may elect to use a personal credit card in the payment of expenses if this is the most convenient means of doing so. However, the annual card fee or any service charge related to the use of a personal credit card is the sole responsibility of the staff member and is not reimbursable by the University.
- In the event that a personal credit card is used in payment of a reimbursable expense, an invoice or itemized receipt showing that payment has been made in full must be submitted with the expense claim.

## **6. Confidentiality**

- 6.1 Confidentiality is required in all procedures under these Administrative Procedures, unless the safety of members of our community is at risk or subject to the disclosure requirements under these Administrative Procedures and/or the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990* or any other applicable legislation.

## **7. Notice of Collection of Personal Information under these Administrative Procedures**

- 7.1 Any personal information about an individual collected in respect of these Administrative Procedures is pursuant to *The Laurentian University of Sudbury Act, 1960* and a by-law passed by the Board of Governors. Such information will only be used for the purposes and functions outlined in these Administrative Procedures. If you have any questions about the collection, use, and disclosure of this information please contact the senior administrator responsible for these Administrative Procedures.

## **8. Related Legislation, Policies, Procedures and other Documents**

- 8.1 *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*  
 8.2 *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010*  
 8.3 *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990*  
 8.4 *Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1990*  
 8.5 *Ontarians with Disability Act, 2001*  
 8.6 Collective Agreements  
 8.7 Broader Public Sector (BPS) Procurement Directive, (2011)  
 8.8 Broader Public Sector (BPS) Expenses Directive, (2011)  
 8.9 Policy on Purchasing  
 8.10 Policy on Expense Reimbursement

## **9. History of Revisions**

- 10.1 This version of the Administrative Procedures was adopted on January 27, 2015 by way of approval by the Laurentian University Executive Team, following revisions made to the previous Expense Reimbursement Policy approved by the Board of Governors on February 24, 2012.

## **10. Administrative Procedures Review**

11.1 These Administrative Procedures come into effect the date of their approval by the Executive Team of Laurentian University and will remain in effect until newly revised Administrative Procedures have been approved by the Executive Team.

## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A – Rates for Allowances**

#### **KILOMETER ALLOWANCE**

The kilometer rate will be calculated as per the Canada Revenue Agency rates as of July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

#### **DAILY MAXIMUM ALLOWANCE**

**Meals** - Receipts must be attached to the expense form. The daily maximum rate will be calculated as per the Canada Revenue Agency rates as of July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

Due to unusual circumstances (location of meeting, etc), the maximum allowance may not sufficient. The actual cost of meals can be submitted for payment as long as the approver is a member of the Executive Team.

Under the Faculty Collective Agreement, per diem meal allowances are permitted for expenditures to professional allowances.

**Accommodations** – Receipts must be attached to the expense form.

## **APPENDIX B – Car Rental**

Although Laurentian University receives unlimited kilometres on car rentals, it is imperative to note that this is for University approved business only. The agreement is for unlimited mileage within the province of Ontario and western Quebec. For all other destinations, and prior to your departure, please consult with the rental companies regarding kilometre caps. The intention of unlimited kilometres is to provide the University with an excellent rental value when travelling on University business.

## **APPENDIX C – Forms to Use for non electronic submission of expenses**

FORM	USAGE
Travel & Business Expense Reimbursement Report	When reporting on any travel related expenses. When reporting on an advance.
Request for Accountable Advance	When requesting an advance.
Accountable Advance Settlement Report	When reporting on an advance.
Requisition for Reimbursement	When requesting reimbursement for expenses other than travel related expenses.

All forms can be ordered from Laurentian University Press ("Travel & Business Expense Reimbursement Form" and "Requisition for Reimbursement") or can be downloaded from the Financial Services Website. If you have any questions, please contact France Girard of the Financial Services Office at extension 3046, or by email [fgirard@laurentian.ca](mailto:fgirard@laurentian.ca)