

 Middlesex Hospital Alliance Strathroy Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Four Counties Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Procedure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Standard <input type="checkbox"/>	
Subject: Travel and Expense Policy					
Owner: President and CEO		Reviewer(s): Senior Leadership Council		Approver: President and CEO	
Cross Reference:					

BACKGROUND:

Employees, volunteers, physicians or Board members may be required or authorized to travel to various locations for reasons of Hospital business, including attendance at meetings, training sessions and conferences. A number of employees regularly or occasionally drive between the two MHA Hospital sites or report to the other site (non-employer site) for work reasons. The purpose of this policy is to provide standard guidelines for staff members of both sites who travel or who authorize travel expenditures as well as other personal expenses relating to educational, hospitality and corporate events.

POLICY STATEMENT:

An employee, who is required or authorized to travel or provide hospitality on behalf of the Hospital, shall be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses which are necessarily incurred in the performance of these duties, provided that the amounts claimed are reasonable under the circumstances. If expenses are anticipated to be high or unusual, prior approval would be beneficial; otherwise, the Chief Financial Officer will adjudicate whether an expense meets the criteria of reasonable.

All references to “employees” in this policy shall also apply to physicians, volunteers and Board members who are required or authorized to travel or provide hospitality on behalf of the Hospital.

For unionized employees, the collective agreement will prevail over any aspects of this policy which are in conflict with the collective agreement.

DEFINITIONS:

Home Hospital - The Hospital with which the individual has the employment, volunteer or other relationship. Individuals who have a relationship with both Hospitals should consider Home Hospital as referring to the MHA Hospital for which the travel is being conducted.

Authorization- The approval of an expense reimbursement and business travel claim by the appropriate person with adequate signing authority. Generally, authorization requires the immediate supervisor’s approval as long as the expense claim amount is within their signing limit. No individual shall approve his/her own expenses, or that of a subordinate that has paid for travel, meals, etc. expensed to the supervisor’s benefit.

The occasion will occur in where all of the approving parties will be attending the same event with food and beverages. When this occurs, it will be noted on the MHA Expense Reimbursement or Education

Reimbursement Form and regardless of the claimant, will be authorized by the President & CEO or designate.

Business Expenses – Reasonable expense incurred by staff in the course of performing their duties.

Business Travel – Travel required for hospital business and authorized by the appropriate level of authority.

Hospitality – The provision of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation and other amenities at hospital expense to persons who are not employed by hospital.

Consultants – Persons providing services to the hospital on an independent contractor basis, and who are not employees of the hospital.

Personal Vehicle – A vehicle owned, borrowed or rented/leased personally by a member of staff.

Receipt – An original document, or carbon or certified copy, with the details of the expenditure, taxes, gratuities, the total amount, the date and indicating proof of payment. If original not available a explanation must be provided.

REIMBURSEMENT PRINCIPLES:

- Employees should be reimbursed for reasonable and actual expenses incurred by them when on hospital business.
- Reimbursable expenses should support program objectives of the hospital.
- Expenses should be reimbursed providing they are supported with original receipts and/or documentation.
- Expense reports that do not comply with policies and procedures may be returned to the employee and not processed until corrected. Alternatively, employees must submit a written explanation for any travel expenses claimed which are not within the parameters of this policy. Such claims will be approved at the discretion of the Chief Financial Officer and, where necessary the Chief Executive Officer unless the employee has received prior written approval by a member of senior management. The approving manager and Accounts Payable staff should ensure that the same expenses are not claimed by more than one employee.
- Expense reports should be submitted in a timely manner utilizing the MHA Expense Reimbursement Form or the MHA Education Reimbursement Form.

PERSONAL BUSINESS EXPENSES:

Travel and Transportation

- The mode of transportation chosen – air, train, or car, should be that which enables the member to attend to hospital business with the least cost to the hospital, consistent with the least amount of interruption to the member's regular business and personal schedules. Consideration should be taken as to the length of time away from the workplace.
- Basic economy/coach fares will be paid by the hospital. If the claimant will be completing work related business during the majority of the trip, the hospital will pay for the upgrade to business class. Business class with prior approval will also be considered when choosing a travel time that allows you to reduce expenditures on meals or accommodation requirements. Otherwise, any upgrades would be the responsibility of the claimant.
- Travel with others (i.e. spouse), including meals and cancellation fees, are not covered and must be paid for by the employee.

- When personal travel is combined with business travel, the staff member will be reimbursed for only the business portion of the trip at the lowest available fare. Personal travel does not include travel to or from home when travelling for business.
- Where a number of employees are attending the same function, shared travel should be considered and required where possible.
- In the event that travel is cancelled, any travel expenses that have been reimbursed to the employee by the vendor, including but not limited to the cost of train or flight tickets, must be reimbursed to the hospital within thirty (30) days of such cancellation. There may be a reduced amount returned by the vendor due to administrative charges or monetary exchange

Personal Vehicles

- When road transportation is the most practical and economical way to travel, consideration should be given to the use of personal rental vehicles.
- Personal vehicles used on hospital business must be insured at the vehicle owner's expense for personal motor vehicle liability specified in the Insurance Act. Drivers must satisfy themselves whether their motor vehicle insurance coverage should include business use of their vehicles. The hospital will not reimburse costs of collision and liability coverage. Employees are covered by their own insurance policy when they are driving personal vehicles on company business and are involved in an accident. The usual recommended minimum amount of personal liability coverage is \$1,000,000. The Hospital's insurance would respond to a claim in excess of the employee's personal automobile insurance coverage.
- For great clarity, the hospital assumes no financial responsibility for privately owned vehicles other than paying the kilometric rate when used for hospital business. Those driving a personal vehicle on hospital business cannot make claims to the hospital for damages as a result of a collision.
- When employees use their own vehicles for hospital business, reimbursement will be in accordance with the approved kilometer allowance. This allowance is to cover the costs of fuel, depreciation, maintenance and insurance.
- Receipts for parking lot charges and applicable bridge, ferry or highway tolls should be submitted with expense reports.

Mileage Reimbursement Rates

- Effective September 1 , 2024 \$0.60/kilometer
- Set rates for Common Destinations based on average distance and return trip:
 - SMGH to FCHS and return \$ 50.00
 - SMGH to London and return \$ 45.00
 - SMGH to Toronto and return \$280.00
 - FCHS to SMGH and return \$ 50.00
 - FCHS to London and return \$ 85.00

Travel between MHA Hospitals

Mileage will be paid at the prevailing MHA approved allowance/rate

Travel from an MHA Hospital to another location

Mileage will be paid at the set rate for the particular destination if one exists or, if not, at the prevailing MHA approved mileage rate for the distance traveled

Home to other MHA Hospital (non-Home Hospital)

Mileage will be paid at the prevailing MHA approved mileage rate for the distance traveled that is in excess of the distance between the employee's residence to his/her home hospital site, but will not exceed the prevailing MHA approved allowance/rate for travel between the MHA Hospitals.

Home to a non-MHA location

Mileage will be paid at the prevailing MHA mileage rate for the distance traveled that is in excess of the distance between the employee's residence to his/her Home Hospital.

Rental Vehicles

- Rental vehicles are encouraged when more economical than the use of a personal vehicle
- Compact or midsize vehicles are appropriate but consideration may be given for a car rental upgrade based on the number of passengers, weather and/or road conditions and other safety reasons.
- Collision and liability insurance offered by the car rental companies must be purchased as our insurance company does not cover liability. Rental cars must be refueled before returning to avoid extra charges.
- Receipts for gasoline purchases, parking lot charges and applicable bridge or highway tolls must be submitted with expense reports. **If not available please provide** explanation as to why.

Taxis

- The use of taxis by employees should be reasonable and may include:
 - Situations requiring transportation between stations or airports and the hospital, staff member's home or hotel accommodations.
 - Travel between neighboring hospitals maybe eligible to use a prearranged taxi chit program. Details are available from your supervisor.
 - Situations at the discretion of a staff member's supervisor.

Train

- Wherever possible, travel arrangements should be made in advance to ensure availability of economy class seats and the best price.
- Employee discounts for Via Rail:
 - When booking online, MHA employees receive a 10% discount (as affiliates of HMMS). The key piece of information is that employees need to set up a username and password at <http://www.viarail.ca> and sign in to their account prior to booking the trip. Prior to confirming the trip details (the second last step of the booking process), they should select "Corporate Rate" and enter the discount code: **710596**. The fare will be recalculated and the employee can proceed with payment. "Corporate Rate" and enter the discount code: **710596**.

Air

- Employees may travel by air for trips that are beyond reasonable driving distance. Reasonable driving distance variables could include trip designation, work and meeting schedules and expected weather conditions. Prior approval for all travel by air must be obtained from the Manager
- Employees should travel economy class for all domestic and international travel unless pre-approved by the Manager.
- It should be hospital policy to obtain maximum savings on air travel expenses within reasonable limits. Every effort should be made to book in advance to take advantage of discounted fares and to obtain the lowest fares compatible with necessary travel requirements.
- The original ticket/E-ticket must be attached to the expense report for each segment of travel.
- Flight cancellation insurance is a reimbursable expense.

Out of Province Travel

- Travel outside of Ontario but within Canada or Continental United States must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer **or designate**
- Medical insurance for out of province travel is eligible for reimbursement if the employee does not have such coverage under an existing benefit plan.

Business Meals (includes meals when travelling for business)

- Employees are reimbursed for reasonable meal expenses, subject to approval by the claimant's manager, if the expenditure is incurred when the claimant is away from his or her place of work on hospital business. In exceptional circumstances, staff may also be reimbursed for reasonable meal expenses when the claimant is required to work during or through normal meal periods.
- Meals will be reimbursed according to the actual expenditure to a maximum of \$80 CDN per day (with a guideline of \$15 breakfast, \$25 for lunch and \$40 for dinner) which includes taxes.
- Reasonable gratuities will be reimbursed and should not exceed 15%
- Original, itemized receipts must be provided with claims for reimbursement of actual meal expenses. If original receipt is not available please submit a reason in writing. Reimbursement must not exceed the amount actually spent (including taxes and gratuities) as validated by a receipt accompanying the claim.
- Meal costs documented on hotel accommodation invoices require receipts for the purposes of recovering tax refunds
- No reimbursement shall be made for meals included in the cost of transportation, accommodation, seminars and/or conferences.
- When a staff member is authorized to pay for meals of others, expense reports must include a brief explanation of the event and a list of those in attendance. The highest ranking member of staff should pay for the meal expenditures.
- Costs incurred for alcoholic beverages are not generally reimbursable and employees are encouraged to ask the restaurant for a separate invoice when having alcohol with their meals. However, under certain circumstances such as special events or meals (business and/or travel), alcohol may be approved by the Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate) or Board Chair (or their delegate).

Accommodations

- Employees should use the most economical accommodation available (generally a standard quality hotel room) that is convenient to the event being attended. Reimbursement for suites, executive floors, or concierge levels is at the discretion and approval of the President & CEO.
- Employees are responsible for all room charges and must review the hotel bill carefully to ensure all charges are correct. A copy of the hotel bill must be attached to the expense report.
- Generally staff should not be reimbursed for entertainment, laundry service, pay TV or movies, or special facility charges i.e. fitness club. However, under certain circumstances, including but not limited to long-term business trips, the hospital may choose to reimburse some or all of these costs. Costs should always remain reasonable.
- Long distance business and personal calls are reimbursed, however discretion should be used in the frequency and length. Reimbursement will be made for reasonable costs for necessary personal calls home for each night away.
- Standard tips and gratuities are reimbursable, but should be documented on the expense report.
- While travelling on hospital business, additional business expenses not otherwise covered will be reimbursed, such as computer access charges, photocopying, word processing services, facsimile transmissions, internet connections, rental and transportation of necessary office equipment, provided

the charges incurred are reasonable and related to hospital business. These expenses must be separated from the accommodation charges when completing the expense form.

- The Hospital expects that discretion shall be applied with respect to any expense incurred and reserves the right to limit reimbursement to reasonable costs. Normally, no accommodation costs shall be assumed by the hospital for functions held within one hundred kilometers of Strathroy or Newbury.

Non Reimbursable Expenses

Generally, expenses of a personal nature should not be reimbursed. Such expenses include but are not limited to expenses for:

- Expenses resulting from unlawful conduct
- Traffic and parking violations incurred while driving on Hospital business.
- Recreational purposes (e.g. video rentals, mini-bars, special facilities charges, entertainment not directly related to hospital business, etc.).
- Personal items not required to conduct hospital business.
- Memberships to clubs such as airline clubs
- Social events that do not constitute hospitality.
- Alcoholic drinks.
- Expenses incurred due to the presence of friends or family members, unless part of hospitality.
- Hotel expenses incurred because of failure to cancel reservation.
- Credit card fees and late payment charges.
- Additional ancillary charges such as premiums for failure to refill fuel in a rental car.

Consultant Expenses

- Consultants are not considered employees and therefore are not covered by the Travel and Expenses Policy.
- Consultants should seek reimbursement only for expenses explicitly agreed to by the consultant and the hospital in the consultants' contract.

Expense Reimbursement Form

- All travel and expense claims must be submitted on the MHA Expense Reimbursement Form or MHA Education Reimbursement Form available on the MHA Insider under Tools **in a timely manner** and must:
 - Be supported by original receipts (exception is a vehicle mileage claim) with full explanation of the expense.
 - Be signed by the employee and authorized by their manager.
 - Indicate a complete cost centre account number and MHA split (if applicable)
 - Be in compliance with Hospital policies and standards.
 - Forwarded to the attention of HMMS Accounts Payable via Materials Management
- All other reimbursements without a supported vendor invoice or travel claim must be submitted using a Cheque Requisition available on the MHA Insider under Tools.
- Personal credit cards maybe used for payment of travelling expenses but credit card slips or statements are not accepted in place of original receipts. Receipts are required in order for the hospitals to claim reimbursement of HST paid. Hospital procurement cards may also be available.
- U.S. and other foreign currency expenses should be reported in Canadian dollars. If the Canadian dollar amount is not provided, HMMS Accounts Payable will return the claim for revision and approval.
- All payments made under this policy, excluding payments from petty cash, will be made by direct deposit (EFT) wherever possible. Employees who travel on Hospital business are required to submit

POLICY IS UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED, PLEASE REFER TO POLICY MANAGER FOR MOST UP TO DATE

an authorization form and a void cheque to Accounts Payable in advance of making a claim. Staff not setup for EFT will be reimbursed by cheque on the last Friday of the month following entry of the claim by Accounts Payable.

- Remittances by EFT will be made the next payment day following entry of the claim by HMMS Accounts Payable. First time employee payments must be set up in the HMMS master file which requires 48 hours notice.

Hospitality

- Hospitality is the provision of food, beverages, accommodation, transportation or other amenities at the hospital's expense to persons who are not engaged in work for the hospital.
- Hospitality should be extended in an economical manner when it will facilitate hospital business or is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy.
- Hospitality may be extended on behalf of the hospital when:
 - Engaging representatives of other hospitals, the government, the broader public sector, industry, public interest groups or union representatives in discussion on hospital matters.
 - Sponsoring formal conferences for representatives of health service provider organizations, or for government business or labour groups.
- Hospitality expenditure of a material nature requires prior approval of the Chief Executive Officer. The decision to provide alcohol resides with the CEO and should be limited to meals, receptions and meetings.
- Employees should ensure that they avoid the appearance of impropriety or favoritism when accepting hospitality from vendors (current or prospective). Employees attendance on behalf of a hospital at various third party events, including but not limited to sporting events, entertainment, dinners or speaking engagements, must not violate the hospital's conflict of interest obligations, nor should such attendance *appear* to violate those obligations.

Corporate Events

- The hospital supports recognition events such as service milestones and "Hats Off" achievements which are designed to recognize, reinforce or promote positive behaviors and performance.
- Recognition events may be formal (ceremony) or informal (presentation) and are usually coordinated by the Human Resources Department.
- Food and beverages are usually associated with corporate events and require prior approval by the CEO or designate Recognition gifts are administered by the Human Resources Department according to the hospitals policies.

PROCEDURE

a) Submitting an Expense Reimbursement Form or Education Reimbursement Form

Claimants must:

- Submit a separate expense form for each travel event claim
- Submit all reimbursable personal business expenses to HMMS using the approved online Expense Reimbursement Form or Education Reimbursement form
- Complete all requested areas of the expense form in full
- Submit original, itemized receipts taped to an 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper with all claims (credit card slips are not sufficient).
- If there is not an itemized receipt, a written explanation must be submitted to explain why the receipt is unavailable and a description itemizing and confirming the expenses must be provided;

- Submit claims by the end of the quarter following the quarter in which the expense was incurred;

Employees are required to repay any overpayments as it is considered a debt owing to the organization

- Ensure the printed hard copy Expense Reimbursement Form or Education Reimbursement Form is signed by the staff requesting reimbursement and the approving manager. The total must be within the approving manager's authorization limit. Refer to MHA Signing Authority Matrix.

b) Processing an Expense Reimbursement form or Education Reimbursement Form

- Expense Reimbursement Forms are processed through HMMS and reimbursed either by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit) or by cheque (issued monthly). [Click here for a link to the EFT request form](#)
- Expenses will be reimbursed only if they are supported with original receipts and/or documentation,
 - Where receipts are unavailable (e.g. parking meters, etc.), it is the responsibility of the approving manager to validate the reasonability and appropriateness of the expense. Credit card slips or statements will not be accepted in place of original, detailed receipts.

c) Expensing Meals

- Provide original, itemized receipts with the Expense Reimbursement form for actual meal expense. Reasonable gratuities will be reimbursed.
 - When employees are authorized to pay for meals of others, include a brief explanation of the event and a list of those in attendance on the Expense Reimbursement form.
 - If no original receipts are available, provide explanation and clearly state "no alcohol" if that is the case.
 - When meal charges appear on a hotel bill, these expenses must be separated from the accommodation charges when completing the Expense reimbursement form.