



TRAVEL, MEALS, HOSPITALITY & CORPORATE EVENTS

Section:	Finance & Administration	Policy No:	3-140
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1. INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of this policy, the University of Ottawa Heart Institute (UOHI) and the Ottawa Heart Institute Research Corporation (OHIRC) are collectively referred to as “the Institute”.

2. POLICY

- 2.1 It is recognized that there will be situations when the Institute will be required to reimburse expenses incurred by individuals on behalf of the Institute, and as well, will expend funds on internal and external events.
- 2.2 The purpose of this policy is to:
 - set out rules and principles for the reimbursement of expenses to ensure fair and reasonable practices;
 - provide a framework of accountability to guide the effective oversight of public resources in the reimbursement of expenses and expenditures for corporate events; and
 - set the parameters for the public disclosure of information about expenses.

The Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, which covers all government funded institutions including the Heart Institute, contains rules and accountability standards on eligible expenses, perquisites, and processes that must be used for the procurement of goods and services. The rules set out in this Act are used as the guiding principles of this policy.

3. APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all members of the Institute's Boards of Directors and other appointees, all staff, consultants, physicians, researchers, volunteers, students, contractors and any other members of the Institute community who may become eligible for reimbursement of expenses by the Institute.

Note: Throughout this policy, individuals and organizations eligible for reimbursement under this policy will be referred to as “staff”.

4. DEFINITIONS

Business Expense: Reasonable expenses incurred by staff, Board members, medical staff and consultants and contractors, engaged to work at the Institute, in the course of performing their duties.

Business Travel: Travel required for Institute business and authorized by the appropriate level of authority.

Designated Broader Public Sector Organizations: Hospitals, school boards, colleges, universities, community care access centres, and children's aid societies

Local Business Travel: Travel within the Champlain LHIN.

Business Travel Expenses: Includes road, air and rail travel, costs of accommodation, car rental, mileage costs, meal allowances and other incidental costs as appropriately approved.

Hospitality: The provision of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation and other amenities at the Institute's expense to persons who are not engaged to work for designated Broader Public Sector organizations or any of the Ontario government ministries and agencies. Hospitality for purposes of this Policy does not include events contemplated under "Corporate Events" identified in section 5.7 below.

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, the amount, the date and indicating proof of payment.

Corporate Events: Include retirement parties, Institute Christmas/holiday parties, recognition events or other similar events which are funded by the Institute for the benefit of staff and other personnel.

5. REQUIREMENTS

5.1 General Principles

It is expected that expenses incurred will further the mission and mandate of the Institute and will ensure that taxpayer funds are used prudently and responsibly with a focus on accountability and transparency.

Expenses can only be claimed by the most senior person present – expenses cannot be claimed by an individual that are incurred by his/her approver (e.g. an employee cannot submit his/her Vice President's expenses for reimbursement even if they were at the same event).

Hospitality is only provided when the event involves people from outside the Institute. Functions involving only people who work for the Institute or within the Broader Public Sector are not considered hospitality functions.

Approval should be sought before arrangements are made.

Where sponsors or funding agencies (for trust and research accounts) have their own travel expense policies, the policies of these bodies will have precedence. If sponsors or funding agencies do not have travel expense policies or if certain matters are not included in their policies, then the Institute's policy will prevail.

5.2 Approval of Expenses

Approvers must:

- Provide approval only for expenses that were necessarily incurred in the performance of Institute business;
- Provide approval only for claims that include all appropriate documentation including original itemized receipts;
- Not approve their own expenses.

The Institute follows the rule that the approver of an expense claim must be "one up" meaning that the approver must be the claimant's immediate supervisor. In the case of Vice President's, this can be the CEO or the Vice President of Finance. In the case of the CEO and Board members, the approver will be the Chair of the Board of Directors for the organization under which the reimbursement claim is made.

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

5.3 Public Disclosure of Expenses

Information about expenses claimed by members of the Boards, the CEO, Vice Presidents and Senior Management will be posted on the Institute's website at www.ottawaheart.ca.

5.4 Eligible Travel Expenses

As a best practise, approvals for travel to be reimbursed by the Institute **must** be approved prior to making any arrangements. Where the travel will be reimbursed by an external agency and/or where the external agency is making the arrangements, no prior approvals from the Institute are required. Travel within Canada should be approved prior to making any arrangements. This can take the form of an email from a supervisor (or in the case of the CEO from, the Chair of the Board) attached to the claim. International travel **must** be pre-approved by the President and CEO or the CFO/VP, Finance and Administration before making arrangements. All transportation within North America must be economy fare.

Non-local travel should be booked through the Institute's appointed travel agency (Appendix A), unless a lower rate can be found. Staff must ensure that UOHI's travel agency is aware of all special rates found (conference or discount rate).

Where a number of staff members are attending the same function, shared travel should be considered and required where possible. The mode of transportation chosen – air, train, or car, should be that which enables staff to attend Institute business with the least cost to the Institute, consistent with the least amount of interruption to staff's regular business and personal schedules. Consideration should be taken as to the length of time away from the workplace. Travel with others (e.g. spouse), including meals and cancellation fees, are not covered and must be paid for by staff. When personal travel is combined with business travel, staff 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.

Travel expenses may include:

Travel Insurance - Depending on the nature of the trip, current benefit plans may not offer coverage, in which case insurance may be purchased. Staff must contact HR to determine what coverage exists before making arrangements.

Travel by Vehicle - When road transportation is the most practical and economical way to travel, the order of preference should be:

- (i) rental vehicle when a rental vehicle is more economical than use of a personal vehicle; or
- (ii) personal vehicle when a personal vehicle is more economical than use of a rental vehicle.

Rental Vehicles - Rental of a compact or mid-sized vehicle is encouraged. Consideration may be given for a car rental upgrade based on the number of passengers, weather conditions and other safety reasons. However, all luxury and sports car rentals are prohibited.

Collision and Liability Insurance - For short-term rentals (less than one month) in Canada and in the US only, no supplementary collision insurance is necessary since this is covered under the Institute's insurance policy.

Personal Vehicles - Personal vehicles used on Institute 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 (currently \$200,000 under the Insurance Act, R.S.O 1990, Chapter I.8). Drivers must satisfy themselves whether their motor vehicle insurance coverage should include business use of their vehicles. The Institute will not reimburse costs of collision and liability coverage.

The Institute assumes no financial responsibility for privately owned vehicles other than paying the kilometric rate when used for Institute business. Those driving a personal vehicle on Institute business cannot make claims to UOHI for damages as a result of a collision.

Staff using personal vehicles for Institute business will be reimbursed in accordance with the approved kilometre allowance, outlined in Appendix A. (This excludes travel between UOHI & TOH Campuses during operating hours of the inter-campus shuttle bus.)

This allowance is to cover the costs of fuel, depreciation, maintenance and insurance.

Receipts for parking lot charges and applicable bridge or highway tolls can be submitted for reimbursement.

Travel by Train - It is expected that staff will choose the most economical and direct form of transportation by train. Every effort should be made to book in advance to ensure availability of economy class seats and to obtain the lowest fares.

Travel by Air - Staff may travel by air for trips that are beyond reasonable driving distance. Prior approval for all travel by air must be obtained and documented in writing. All transportation within North America must be **economy/coach** fare. Outside North America (on flights with a duration of more than 6 hours), flights may be upgraded with the approval of the Vice President of Finance. Staff will 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.

Taxis - Reimbursable where reasonable and must include original receipts.

Accommodation costs – The Institute will reimburse for **standard quality hotel** room expenses. Staff is responsible for all room charges and must review the hotel bill carefully to ensure all charges are correct. A detailed copy of the hotel bill must be submitted with request for reimbursement.

Incidental expenses such as laundry/dry cleaning service, special facility charges (e.g. fitness clubs) toiletries and in-room videos will not be reimbursed. An allowance will be provided when accommodation is obtained from a relative or friend, see “Appendix A”.

Long Distance Business and Personal Calls - Discretion will be used in the frequency and length. Reimbursement will be made for reasonable costs for necessary personal calls home for each night away. Wherever possible, the most cost-effective method should be used (e.g. Institute-issued cell phones, blackberry, or calling cards) in order to minimize costs.

Office Equipment Business Expenses - While travelling on Institute 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 charges incurred are reasonable and related to Institute expenses. The Institute expects discretion to be applied with any expenses incurred and reserves the right to limit reimbursement to reasonable costs.

Meals – The Institute will reimburse for reasonable and actual meal expenses, subject to approval by the claimant’s Manager/Supervisor. Original, itemized receipts (credit/debit card slips are not sufficient) must be provided with claim. For meals on hotel bills itemized receipts for the meals must be provided – the hotel bill alone is not sufficient. Hotels can provide this information upon request. Reimbursement for meal expenses incurred is subject to the maximum rates set out in Appendix A. These rates include taxes and gratuities. The rates are not an allowance. They are for individual meals – you must have eaten the meal to be able to submit a claim for reimbursement. When more than one meal is claimed for any day, meal expenses must not exceed the daily meal allowance maximum, as outlined in Appendix A.

Business Travel Where Meals are Included - No reimbursement shall 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.

Multiple Staff Attending One Event - Where a number of employees are at an Institute event (e.g. conference, etc) and 1 employee pays for the whole group, it must be the most senior (Manager, Director, Vice-President) employee in the group and this person is then responsible for submitting the receipt for reimbursement according to Institute policy, including listing who was in the group for whom the expense was incurred. However, in the alternative, employees may submit their own receipts for reimbursement of their own expenses and the senior employee is not required to pay for the group in that event.

Alcoholic Beverages - Costs incurred for alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable and staff is expected to request a separate invoice for any alcoholic beverages consumed with their meals. .

5.5 Business Meals and Other Expenses

The Institute will reimburse for reasonable meal expenses resulting from business meetings with persons who are not engaged to work for designated broader public sector organizations. It is recommended that business meetings should be first considered on Institute premises rather than at restaurants.

The Institute will not reimburse business meal expenses when the only participants are employees of the Institute or designated broader public sector organizations. The Institute will reimburse employees for business meals when volunteers and Board of Governors are included.

Alcoholic Beverages

The Institute will not reimburse the cost of alcoholic beverages at business meetings without prior approval from the President and CEO or VP, Finance and Administration.

5.6 Eligible Hospitality Expenses

Hospitality should be extended in an economical, consistent and appropriate way when it will facilitate Institute business or is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy. Where hospitality events are extended by the Institute, and where the guests include vendors (current or prospective), staff is responsible for obtaining prior approval to ensure that the event does not give, or is not perceived to give, preferential treatment to any vendor.

Hospitality may be extended on behalf of the Institute on the following occasions:

1. When discussions on official matters are held with persons who are not Institute staff, including interviews with persons who are being considered for recruitment, members of industry, public interest groups, seminars, or during special events such as public openings;
2. When persons visiting Canada as members of universities, national or international organizations are involved in activities relating to those of the Institute;
3. When the Institute sponsors formal conferences, and other universities or external bodies are represented;
4. When a person who is not an Institute employee renders a service without remuneration;
5. When a prestigious ceremony (e.g. sod-breaking, laying of a cornerstone, inauguration or opening) takes place, attended by dignitaries and guests; and
6. When other special events are held to enhance the Institute's public image, as approved by the CEO.

The following limitations are applied in regard to hospitality to Institute staff:

1. Hospitality such as beverages, meals, tours or other entertainment is only to be provided to staff members who act as hosts to guests of the Institute. This responsibility is normally assumed by the President, and the Vice Presidents. Other staff hosting guests must be approved by their immediate supervisor;
2. Hospitality may be extended on behalf of the Institute when staff participate in meetings to plan program-oriented work, in technical advisory committee meetings, or in departmental conferences; or when staff attend functions at which there are guests who are not staff with the understanding that the number of staff must not exceed the number needed to conduct Institute business;

The Institute will not reimburse the cost of alcoholic beverages at any Institute event without the approval of the President and CEO or VP, Finance and Administration. In circumstances where alcohol is approved, appropriate measures are to be taken to ensure a reasonable limit is placed on the quantity and cost of alcohol.

5.7 Eligible Corporate Events

The Institute will decide annually in the operating plan as approved by the Board, the number, timing and budget for staff events. This amount may be based on a per staff member amount and shall be reasonable in the circumstances. If, in addition to an annual major holiday reception, individual departments and/or units/teams wish to hold their own holiday event and/or other social events during the year for their staff, the costs **will not be reimbursed and must** be covered by staff. These activities should take place during a time so as not to disrupt regular operations of the Institute. To the extent possible (space permitting) all internal corporate events **must** be held on site and use UOHI catering (Tickers) to provide refreshments.

Non-alcoholic beverages may be offered to staff required to work through "breaks" otherwise called "coffee breaks", when justified by their supervisors. Such hospitality should be restricted to occasions of a formal nature where the dispersal of participants during a break period is not desirable. Managerial discretion and due regard for economy should be used in identifying such occasions and in ensuring that hospitality is not offered during meetings of close colleagues working together on a regular basis.

Refreshments, meals, or both may be offered to staff members who participate in work sessions extending over meal hours or beyond normal working hours.

Expenses related to planning or business meetings (retreats) held off-site for Institute staff must be pre-approved by the Vice President responsible for the area involved or the Vice President of Finance.

Recognition events, such as service milestones and retirement events should be designed to recognize, reinforce and promote positive behaviours. Corporate events in this regard will be coordinated with Human Resources and Communications.

Alcoholic beverages served at any corporate event must be pre-approved by the President and CEO or VP, Finance and Administration.

5.8 Ineligible Expenses

The Institute will not reimburse the following expenses:

- Personal expenses including dry cleaning, toiletries and in-room videos
- Costs for alcohol (see section on Alcohol)
- Recreational purposes (e.g. video rentals, mini-bars, special facilities charges, entertainment not directly related to Institute business, etc.) Expenses incurred for a spouse or companion accompanying staff on a trip
- Expenses that are unsupported or with no appropriate receipts
- Costs for passports or visas unless required for Institute travel
- Credit card interest and late payment fees
- Unlawful conduct
- Traffic and parking violations incurred while driving on Institute business
- Upgrades to tickets or change fees unless valid reasons are provided
- Expenses that are incurred on behalf of another organization – these should be billed directly and collected directly from the other organization.
- Costs for political fundraising events
- Expenses incurred due to the presence of friends or family members, unless part of hospitality
- Hotel expenses incurred because of failure to cancel reservations

Consultants and Other Contractors

Consultants and other contractors are not considered staff, and therefore are not covered by the Institute's business expense policies.

Consultants and other contractors will seek reimbursement only for expenses explicitly agreed to in the detailed contract. The Institute will not reimburse contractors or consultants for any expenses related to hospitality, meals, snacks or beverages, gratuities, laundry or dry cleaning and personal phone calls. Contracts must specify that these expenses cannot be claimed and will not be reimbursed. Contracts must also specify what costs are allowed to be claimed by consultants.

5.9 Documentation and Submission of Claims

An expense reimbursement form plus **original itemized receipts** must be submitted for reimbursement. The claim must provide the business purpose for each expense claimed. If reimbursement is sought for expenses incurred on behalf of others (meals purchased for others) the names and titles of those individuals should be included. Travel advances will be

deducted from any claims submitted and any over payment of amounts to the individual will be considered a debt to the Institute.

The form must be signed by the individual requesting reimbursement and their immediate supervisor. Claims in excess of \$2,000 must also be approved by the Vice President for the area. Claims must be submitted within ninety (90) days of the date the expense was incurred.

5.10 Travel Advances

Generally travel advances are not provided to staff. In exceptional situations they can be provided and are subject to the approval of the Vice President of Finance.

6. ALCOHOL

Costs incurred for alcoholic beverages are not generally reimbursable. Staff members who choose to consume alcoholic beverages while traveling should request a separate bill for the alcohol. Alcohol may be provided at hospitality events but will be subject to limitations and to the prior approval of the CEO.

Appendix A

a) **UOHI Travel Agency** – to book travel corporately

Worldwide Travel One
1-800-263-2482

The [UOHI Corporate Travel Request Form](#) is available on Institute's Infoweb

b) **Personal Automobile Allowance**

\$0.45 /Kilometre effective June 19, 2008. This rate should also be used for refund of callback/travel for unionized employees to a maximum of \$22.50 one way.

c) **Meal Allowance (including gratuities)**

Equivalent to a maximum of \$80.00 Canadian per day with maximums per meal as outlined below. The same amount will prevail after the conversion of the currency when traveling outside Canada.

The maximum rate for meal reimbursement is as follows:

Breakfast: \$15.00
Lunch: \$25.00
Dinner: \$40.00

d) **Accommodation from a relative or friend**

Per day \$25.00