



ELM06 COUNCILLOR ACCOMMODATION, TRAVEL AND INCIDENTAL EXPENSES WHILST ON COUNCIL BUSINESS

Aim	<p>Members of Council are required to perform a number of functions in the fulfilment of their Councillor duties. The Shire also provides members with the opportunity to attend conferences, seminars and training courses to continuously improve their capacities.</p> <p>The Shire therefore provides members with suitable levels of allowances and equipment and reimburses members for reasonable levels of expenses incurred in the performance of the above duties and activities.</p>
Application	All Elected Members
Principles	<p>Strategic Community Plan 2017 – 2027 (Desktop Review 2019)</p> <p>Goal 05 Inspiring Governance Objective 3 Council leadership</p>

OBJECTIVE

1. To ensure that representatives of the Shire who are attending to legitimate and approved business on behalf of the Council are not financially disadvantaged as a result of attending to that business.
2. To provide flexibility for Elected Members required to travel on Council Business.
3. To ensure the funds of the Shire are properly and responsibly used by representatives of the Council when they incur expenses whilst on legitimate and approved Shire business, and that funds are accounted for in accordance with the relevant Regulations.



POLICY STATEMENT

In order for Elected Members to carry out their legislated roles and functions, to participate in training/conferences, and to consult with stakeholders and other Local Government representatives both within and outside the Shire of Ashburton, the Shire may reimburse relevant costs and pay agreed member allowances.

All Elected Members are encouraged to attend appropriate training in accordance with Policy ELM05.

Member Allowances

Under the LGA the Council is required to determine the amount of allowances that members are entitled to receive within prescribed limits (which are set out in the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, and complimented via WA State Administrative Tribunal determinations).

The amount of these allowances are to be reviewed each year by Council as part of the annual budget development process and the revised amount is to be set by a resolution of Council made by an absolute majority.

Allowances are to be paid quarterly in arrears if an elected member retires before the end of their term then they will be paid a daily rate up until the date they retire.

Reimbursement of Statutory Travel Expenses

Members may be entitled to reimbursement of expenses incurred in travelling in connection with their (Council endorsed where relevant) duties as Elected Members, including attendance at but not limited to the following:

- meetings (Council Meetings and Representative Meetings)
- briefings
- workshops
- presentations
- deputations
- ceremonies (i.e. Australia Day, Anzac Day and Citizenship)
- functions and receptions training and seminars
- on-site inspections.

The extent to which an elected member can be reimbursed for travel and accommodation costs incurred in any of the circumstances referred to in Regulation 32(1) of the LG Regulations is at the same rate applicable to the reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs in the same or similar circumstances under the Public Service Award 1992, travel costs incurred while driving a privately owned or leased vehicle under the Local Government Officers' (Western Australia) Interim Award 2011 as issued by the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission as at the date of the current determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal on Local Government Elected Council Members.



“Away from Home” Expenses

All accommodation requirements to be where-ever possible supported by an official Council purchase order and coordinated by the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate).

All reasonable away-from-home costs like accommodation, taxi fares, meals, refreshments (including non-alcoholic mini-bar purchases) and other minor relevant incidentals are to be reimbursed. Claims can include a reasonable range of expenses commonly associated with living away from home and liaising with external stakeholders, like a limited amount of alcoholic refreshments accompanied with an evening meal and in some circumstances costs like unforeseen/emergency clothes cleaning.

The Shire reserves the right to disallow excessive claims and invoice for reimbursement if required. Expenses like in-room movies and otherwise personal costs like grooming, will not be reimbursed. Reasonably avoidable costs like clothes washing or meal costs where they are otherwise provided by the accommodation package or the training/conference will also not be reimbursed.

Extended Stay

Any Elected Member wishing to remain at a destination for extra days before or after their Council activities has concluded, does so at their own expense (including not being covered by the Shire’s insurance policies). Shire costs should not exceed what would otherwise have applied, like for example, any return flights booked must be of equivalent or lesser value of the day they would have travelled (if it is higher, the Elected Member must meet the difference in those costs).

Note: Any extension to accommodation should not be booked at a Local Government rate. However, should the discounted Local Government rate be applied, then Elected Members are to take into account the gift implications which apply and should complete the necessary disclosure forms to ensure transparency of the accommodation payment transaction.

Motor Vehicle Allowance

Elected Members may make application to seek reimbursement for costs of utilising their private vehicles to perform their duties as Elected Members.

Travel costs incurred while driving a privately owned vehicle are to be calculated at the same rate applicable to the Local Government Officers’ (Western Australia) Interim Award 2011 issued by the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission as at the date of the current determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal on Local Government Elected Members.

Elected Members should endeavour to locate the most cost effective travel arrangements, including travelling with other Councillors in their vehicles where reasonable to do so and also travelling by plane in lieu of a motor vehicle where that is more cost effective.



Child Care

Members who incur childcare costs as a result of attending Council meetings or a meeting of a committee (of which he or she is a member), are entitled to reimbursement in accordance with section 5.98(2) as prescribed in regulation 31(1)(b) of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*.

Childcare costs incurred are to be calculated at the same rate applicable to the current determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal on Local Government Elected Members.

Other Expenses (Incidentals)

It is not expected that members may need to incur any unreasonable level of expense in the performance of their duties. Where a member does incur in the performance of their duties any other expense (in addition to those specifically highlighted in this Policy) which the member believes they are entitled to have reimbursed, a claim should be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer, who shall decide in accordance with the LGA and the Administration Regulations on the extent of the reimbursement.

Claiming of Costs

Any claim for other expenses shall include receipts or suitable evidence of expenditure and are to be submitted with the SOA CEO 023 ELM05 Travel Expense Claim form to the Chief Executive Officer for authorisation.

In instances where receipts or proof of expenditure cannot be supplied, a written declaration with sufficient information of expenditure should be submitted with the travel claim (a written declaration will ideally only be used for special circumstances and will be determined as appropriate by the Chief Executive Officer).

The appropriate methods of payment of allowances and forms to be used are to be determined by Corporate Services having regard to accounting and auditing requirements.

Other guidelines, directions, and procedures for the administration of this policy may include such things as:

- Purchasing procedures
- Preferred accommodation providers
- Corporate charging arrangements.

Costings

Elected members should contact the Elected Member Support Officer in order to ascertain their expenditure regarding costs incurred as part of this policy at the time of application.

Supporting Documentation



Document Control Box							
Document Responsibilities:							
Owner:	Director Corporate Services	Owner Business Unit:	Corporate Services				
Reviewer:	Coordinator Records	Decision Maker:	Council				
Compliance Requirements:							
Legislation:	<i>Local Government Act 1995, s2.10, 5.98(2) (b), 5.98(3)(b) 5.98(5) (b 5.99A (b), 5.102. Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, Regs 31(1), 32(1) Salaries & Allowances Act s7B Salaries and Allowances Tribunal on Local Government Elected Council Members June 2014 Public Service Award 1992 (Schedule F & I) Local Government Officer's (Western Australia) Interim Award 2011</i>						
Industry:							
Organisational:	Code of Conduct Record Keeping Plan ELM05 Elected Member Training/Conference Attendance Policy ELM05 Procedure SOA CEO 058 ELM05 Application for Training Form SOA CEO 023 ELM05 Travel Expense Claim Form SOA CEO 054 ELM05 Evaluation Form.						
Document Management:							
Risk Rating:		Review Frequency:	Annual	Next Due:		Records Ref:	
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