Regional Municipality of Durham
Corporate Services
Regional Council Policy Manual

Title: Council Expense Policy		
Policy #: CS-EXP-1	**Issued: September 25, 2024**	**Page #: 1 of 6**
Revised: January 1, 2026 , November 2026		
Approved by: Regional Council		
Responsibility: Legislative Services		**Section: Corporate Services**

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy provides members of Council with guidelines for reimbursement of expenses for:

- conferences, conventions and external offsite meetings related to Regional business; and
- mileage expenses for Regional meetings.

2. General Principles

2.1 Members of Council are accountable to the public and are responsible for ensuring that their expenses clearly and directly relate to the business of the Region of Durham. Only expenses incurred by a member in relation to Regional business shall be compensated by the Region.

2.2 Members of Council may attend conferences, conventions and offsite meetings related to Regional business at the Region's expense. The Region of Durham provides a discretionary allocation to reimburse Members of Council for reasonable expenses incurred while traveling on Regional business.

2.3 The Region shall reimburse Councillors for the actual cost of attending a conference or convention as supported by receipts for registration, including event registration, accommodations, meals, and transportation.

2.4 Only expenses incurred by individual Members of Regional Council shall be paid. Expense claims shall not be permitted for spouses, partners, family members, or other individuals who are not the Member.

2.5 The following expenses shall be paid but shall not be incurred against a Member of Council's discretionary allocation for the term of office:

a) Where a member of Council is required to attend a conference or event by virtue of a directive of Regional Council or their role on a committee (e.g. as a Committee Chair);
b) mileage for attendance at Regional Council, Committee meetings, and offsite meetings; and

c) If a member is required to campaign for election to a board (e.g. FCM or AMO).

In such cases, funding shall be identified at the discretion of the Commissioner of Finance or their designate.

2.6 Regional Councillors' expenses, regardless of funding source, shall be reported annually in accordance with the reporting requirements in Section 284 of the *Municipal Act*.

3. Discretionary Allocation for Term of Office

3.1 The discretionary allocation per Regional Councillor shall be as described in Schedule 'A' to this policy for the current term of office, which may be utilized by each Regional Councillor in full or in part during any year of the term of office.

3.2 The Treasurer is delegated authority to adjust the maximum allocation described in Schedule 'A' at the start of each new term of Regional Council in accordance with Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflationary increases measured against the start of the previous term of office.

3.3 If a member is elected or appointed after the term commences, the term allocation shall be pro-rated to the year that they are elected.

4. Accommodation

4.1 Councillors shall be reimbursed for overnight accommodation under any of the following circumstances:

a) The meeting takes place at a location which is in excess of a reasonable location from Durham Region Headquarters;
b) The meeting concludes at a late hour which will not permit the Councillor to arrive home at a safe hour of travel; or
c) Other extraordinary circumstances that would prevent further travel such as extreme weather conditions.

4.2 Members shall utilize bulk booking rates where available.

4.3 Accommodation shall be reimbursed at the single room rate except where such accommodation is not available.

5. Transportation

5.1 Councillors are expected to use the most economical form of transportation in the circumstances, taking into consideration travel time, convenience, and means of travel.

a) Automobile: current rate per kilometre (plus parking fees).
b) Public Transit, Taxi, Rideshare: Actual expenses.
c) Rail: First class fare, lower berth and/or chair plus transportation to and from the station, and parking fee, if any.
d) Air: Economy fare (if available) plus transportation to and from the airports and parking fees or return of car to Durham Region Headquarters (reimbursement of parking fees and return of car would also apply to flat rate drivers).

5.2 A Councillor will be reimbursed for use of their personal automobile or motor vehicle for the purposes in attending Regional Council and committee meetings or a conference, convention or offsite meeting while on Regional Business.

5.3 Mileage reimbursement for conferences, conventions, or offsite meetings shall be calculated between Regional Headquarters and the event location, or from the member's primary residence to the event, depending on which is the closest to the event location.

5.4 Mileage reimbursement for attendance at Regional Council and Committee meetings shall be calculated between the local municipal headquarters and Regional Headquarters.

5.5 The rate for mileage shall match that provided to Regional staff and shall be described in Schedule 'A'.

5.6 The Regional Treasurer is delegated the authority to update the mileage rate described in Schedule 'A' at any time in order to match changes to the mileage rate for Regional employees.

5.7 Highway toll charges (e.g. 407 ETR) shall be reimbursed by the Region, excluding vehicle transponder charges.

6. Meals

6.1 Meal expenses are to be reimbursed as incurred and supported by receipts, unless the per diem rate is being utilized. Meal expenses are to be reimbursed for individual Councillors and not submitted as a group.

6.2 The per diem rate for Regional Council members shall match the rate paid to Regional employees as described in Schedule 'A' to this policy. The rate shall be paid for all daily expenses (including meals, gratuities, etc.) without receipts. Meal rates include gratuities and may only be claimed if the meal is not provided at the conference, convention, or external offsite meeting.

6.3 The Treasurer is delegated authority to adjust the per diem rate described in Schedule 'A' to match changes to the rate paid to Regional employees.

6.4 If circumstances are such that the daily maximum is clearly insufficient, reimbursement for actual expenses with receipts covering total expenses may be submitted for actual costs incurred, subject to funds being available and such costs being deemed reasonable in the circumstances.

6.5 Reimbursement for alcohol shall not be permitted under any circumstance.

7. Expenses for other Agencies, Boards and/or Commissions

7.1 Where a Member is appointed to another body by virtue of their position on Regional Council and such body provides the Member with reimbursement for expenses related to its activities, expenses incurred by the Member for participation on that body (in full or in part)

shall not be paid by the Region. This includes but is not limited to Members appointed to the Durham Regional Police Services Board or any Conservation Authorities.

8. Reimbursement Procedures

8.1 Where a Regional Councillor personally incurs a cost for a matter of Regional business in accordance with this policy, they shall submit their itemized expense claims to the Regional Clerk's Office, with accompanying receipts, by e-mail to Clerks@Durham.ca. Confirmation e-mails shall not be accepted as a receipt. Expenses shall be paid back directly to the Councillor.

8.2 Where a local municipality incurs a cost on behalf of a Regional Councillor for a matter of Regional business, they shall invoice the Region for any related expenses they have processed. All invoicing must be itemized and accompanied by fully paid receipts and calculations. Each invoice must be clearly identifiable to one member of Regional Council. Confirmation e-mails shall not be accepted as a receipt. Invoicing shall be sent by e-mail to Clerks@Durham.ca. In such cases, expenses shall be paid back directly to the municipality.

8.3 The Regional Clerk or their designate shall review the expense claim to determine if the expense is within Regional jurisdiction, and if so, the appropriate funding source. The Clerk's Office shall then approve and forward valid claims to Expenditure_Management@Durham.ca and identify the funding account.

8.4 Expenditure Management shall review the expense and verify that the funds are available in the identified account, and if applicable, confirm that the Regional Councillor has not exceeded their discretionary allocation for the term of office. Expenditure Management shall provide reimbursement directly to the Member, or the local municipality where applicable, for expenses covered under the policy.

9. Responsibilities

9.1 Members of Regional Council are responsible for keeping detailed records of expenses and providing receipts when submitting claims for expense reimbursement. Members shall ensure expenses are only submitted to the Region for matters of Regional business and that expenses are submitted to either the local municipality or the Region and not to both.

9.2 The Regional Clerk or their designate is responsible for reviewing expense claims to determine if they are eligible for reimbursement under this policy, identifying the appropriate expense account and forwarding the approved expense claim to Expenditure Management.

9.3 Expenditure Management is responsible for verifying that funds are available in the identified expense account, processing the expense claim and issuing reimbursement.

9.4 Financial Services is responsible for preparing the annual report on Councillor expenses and remuneration as required by the *Municipal Act*.

10. References

10.1 Corporate Policy: Expenses – Conferences, Conventions and Meetings

10.2 Corporate Policy: Vehicle Advance and Casual Travel Reimbursement Policy

10.3 Schedule ‘A’: Current Reimbursement Rates

11. Inquiries

11.1 For additional information regarding this policy please contact Legislative Services at Clerks@Durham.ca.

SCHEDULE ‘A’

CURRENT COMPENSATION RATES

Compensation Item	**Rate**
Discretionary Allocation	$17,700 per term of office
Per Diem Reimbursement	$75 per day Allocated as follows for partial claims: Breakfast $10 Lunch $18 Dinner $32 Incidentals $15
Mileage	$0.73 per kilometre for the first 5,000 kilometres driven per year, and $0.67 for each additional kilometre beyond 5,000 per year