

VILLAGE OF EMPRESS

Title: Councillor Expense Policy	Policy Number:11-01
Effective Date: September 20, 2013	Review Date: December 21, 2017 Revised Date: November 22, 2018

Councillor Expense Policy

Policy Statement

In order to address matters affecting Village of Empress, it is necessary for the Villages Elected Officials – the Mayor and Councillors to network, to meet with residents, and to support community, committee, regional, and other events.

It is recognized that the official duties of the Elected Officials often occur outside regular work hours and take them away from family and personal responsibilities.

The Business Expense Policy is intended to provide clarity in determining what expenses will be covered by the municipality and what expenses are considered to be personal expenses. Events listed are for guidance only, and are not intended to be an exhaustive list of covered events. Expenses categorized as Public Relations, Professional Development or Out of Pocket are recoverable, subject to conditions set out below. Personal Expenses are not recoverable from the Village. The Public Relations, Professional Development and Out of Pocket expenses for Elected Officials shall be paid from the individual operating budgets of the Elected Officials.

The purpose of the public disclosure of Elected Officials business expenses is to enhance accountability and transparency through routine disclosure of information on expenses reimbursed to Village Elected Officials and to enhance public confidence in the oversight of expenses incurred by Village Elected Officials

Definitions

Elected Officials refers to Village of Empress Mayor and Councillors.

Hospitality Event is an event or function where the provision of food, beverage, accommodations, transportation and other amenities are provided, at public expense, to people who are not engaged in work for Village of Empress.

Resident Meeting is a meeting of a small, focused group of residents the purpose of which is to inform or discuss a specific issue of interest or concern to those residents rather than to the Village as a whole. A Resident Meeting may be initiated by an Elected Official or by administration. A Resident Meeting is generally held at the Village Office or within a facility in the Village. Village staff may be expected to attend a Resident Meeting where appropriate. Elected Official-initiated Resident Meetings may be held at the discretion of the Elected Official and expenses for facility rental and light refreshments may be charged to their Public Relations Budgets.

Goodwill Function is an event primarily targeted to residents which is not endorsed or approved by Council or contained within a Council-approved budget. Examples of a Goodwill Function would be Councillor-hosted Christmas parties, barbeques or other such gatherings. Functions such as park or facility openings (irrespective of location) are not Goodwill Functions but are rather Village-endorsed events. A

Goodwill Function may not be charged to a Public Relations Budget; any expenses for Goodwill Functions shall be a Councillor Personal Expense.

Expenses incurred for resident meetings initiated by administration will be the responsibility of administration.

Regional –within Special Areas, MD of Acadia boundaries.

Working Session is a function where food, beverage, accommodation, transportation and other amenities are provided only for people who work for Village of Empress.

Guidelines

1) Boards and Committees Functions

Elected Officials can charge the ticket or registration fee for a function related to any Council Committee to their Public Relations Budget.

2) Community Events, Charitable and Non-Profit Fundraisers

(a) Tickets and registration fees:

Elected Officials invited to a regional charitable event or non-profit fundraiser by the charitable organization can charge the ticket or registration fee to their Public Relations Budget.

(b) Donations

Elected Officials may donate door prizes or auction items for community events, charitable and non-profit fundraisers. They may choose items from Village of Empress promotional items and charge them to their Public Relations Budget. Each gift will be accompanied by the Elected Official's business card.

3) Federal Political Events

The Federal Elections Act, as amended, provides that no person or entity other than an individual who is a citizen or permanent resident shall make a contribution to a registered party, a registered association, a candidate, a leadership contestant or a nomination contestant. A municipality, being a corporation, is an ineligible contributor and cannot make contributions. Accordingly, any tickets, registration fees or donations to any federal registered party, registered association, a candidate, a leadership contestant or a nomination contestant are personal expenses of a an Elected Official.

4) Provincial Political Events

The Provincial Election Finances and Contributions Act Disclosure Act, RSA 2004, c. E-2 ("the Act") provides that a municipality is a prohibited corporation and may not make any contributions to a registered party, registered constituency association or registered candidate. Any ticket purchases or contributions, including items for door prizes, auctions, and the costs of attending political conventions, shall be personal expenses. An Elected Official attending a fundraiser, if attendance has been approved by Village Council, may claim a meal expense as set out in Schedule "A" hereto.

5) Mayor's Representative

If a Councillor is designated by the Mayor to represent the Mayor in an official capacity, the cost of the tickets for that Councillor and his or her spouse or partner, where applicable, pursuant to subsection 6 (c), will be charged to the Mayor's Public Relations Budget.

6) Spouses/Partners

(a) If a spouse/partner accompanies an Elected Official to an out-of-town conference/convention, the expenses of the spouse/partner for travel, meals, registration is considered a personal expense except as noted in 6(b).

(b) Where the spouse/partner is invited through a conference to accompany an Elected Official to banquets/receptions, their tickets for these banquets/receptions may be charged to the Elected Official's Professional Development Budget. Under these circumstances if the cost of conference registration for a spouse/partner includes banquet/reception tickets and is less than or equal to the cost of banquet/reception tickets purchased separately, the registration fee for the spouse/partner may be charged to the Elected Official's Professional Development Budget.

(c) When an Elected Official is invited to a social or fund-raising function in an official capacity, the ticket for the spouse/partner may be paid from the Elected Official's Public Relations Budget.

7) Resident Meetings

(a) Elected Official-initiated Resident Meetings may be held at the discretion of the Elected Official and expenses for facility rental and light refreshments may be charged to their Public Relations budgets. Expenses incurred for resident meetings initiated by administration will be the responsibility of administration.

(b) Any expenses for Goodwill Functions shall be an Elected Official's personal expense.

(c) Village Hall/Community Centre conference rooms may be booked by Elected Officials for community meetings only if they will be in attendance. There will be no rental charges for conference rooms booked in Village Hall/Community Centre, provided the Mayor or the Councillor is present at the meeting.

8) Business Expenses

Business expenses must remain within the individual operating budget of an Elected Official. Any expenses which will exceed an Elected Official's total annual budget must be authorized by Council resolution prior to the expenditure being made. If expenses do exceed an Elected Official's total annual budget and have not been authorized by Council prior to the expenditure, then an Elected Official may not use funds from any other budget.

9) Cell Phones

(a) While travelling on Village business, business related long distance calls may be made at the Elected Official's discretion and where possible cell phones should be used to avoid excessive charges levied through hotels.

(b) The Elected Official should ensure that the cell phone plan covers the location to avoid excessive roaming charges.

(c) Elected Officials who use their personal cell phone for Village business will submit the phone bill with an explanation of the call expenses to the CAO for approval to be expensed to their Out Of Pocket budget.

10) Village Pins

Elected Officials may donate Village pins to groups as follows: up to 50 pins to teams or groups traveling outside the Village area and up to 100 pins to teams or groups hosting major events in the Village. Additional pins will be charged to the teams or groups. The pins donated will be charged to the Elected Official's Public Relations Budget.

11) Milestone Birthdays and Anniversaries

Council may recognize residents' milestone birthdays and anniversaries by providing a certificate and letter of congratulations from the Mayor on behalf of Council in an official Village presentation folder.

12) Criteria for Reimbursement of Expenses

(a) Principles

- i) Taxpayer dollars are to be used prudently and responsibly with a focus on accountability and transparency.
- ii) Expenses for travel, meals and hospitality support Village business objectives.
- iii) Plans for travel, meals, accommodation and hospitality are necessary and economical with due regard for health and safety.
- iii) Only legitimate authorized expenses incurred during the course of government business are reimbursed.

(b) Mandatory Requirements - General

- i) Alcohol cannot be claimed and will not be reimbursed as part of Travel or Meal expense.
- ii) If not already considered through an approved budget, Council authorization is required for the following before any arrangements are made:
 - Hospitality over \$150 and
 - Working sessions over \$100
- iii) Hospitality is only provided when the event involves participants from outside the Village. Functions involving only people who work for the Village are not considered Hospitality Events; they are considered Working Sessions.

(c) Elected Official's Responsibilities

- i) Identify and review required business expenses to ensure cost effective options for travel, accommodation, etc. are selected.
- ii) Submit Councillor Expense Reports accompanied by all necessary receipts and/or documentation on a monthly basis. Receipts must be detailed and show the GST amount and GST registration number. A Visa/Mastercard slip is not a receipt for business expense purposes.

(d) Reimbursement of Expenses

- i) **Travel:** The most direct, economical and time efficient mode of transportation shall be utilized or, if an Elected Official chooses an alternate method, then reimbursement shall be limited to an amount equal to the cost of the most direct, economical and time efficient mode of transportation
- ii) With respect to ground transportation, taxis are the preferred method of ground transportation. In a situation where a rental car is practical, an intermediate or smaller car is preferred; however, the size and type of rental car should be appropriate for the number of people in the car, road conditions, and nature of need
- iii) **Accommodations:** If an Elected Official is required to travel on Village business and accommodation away from the Elected Official's regular place of domicile is necessary, the Elected Official may claim the actual cost of accommodation for a single room rate or a per diem for stays in a private residence in an amount set out in Schedule "A".
- iv) **Meals:** While conducting Village business, an Elected Official may claim for meals in accordance with Schedule "A", and in the event of meal expenses exceeding the Schedule rates due to location of stay or economics of

the location, reimbursement will be based on actual receipted expenses including gratuities. If more than one meal is purchased, provide name(s) of guests including the company represented and the nature of the business meal. Gratuities are a reimbursable expense and should be appropriate to the location, service level and local protocol and are never to exceed 20% of the total bill.

- v) Transportation and Communication: An Elected Official may claim the following expenses with a receipt: bus fare, railway fare, limousine/taxi fare, parking charges, economy automobile rental, facsimile or e-mail charges.
- vi) Kilometer Rates: Elected Officials using personal vehicles for Village business purposes shall be reimbursed for travel as per Schedule "A".
- vii) Special Provisions: If an Elected Official incurs business expenses not specifically authorized by this Policy, the CAO may, subject to availability of funds in an appropriate budget, authorize payment of such a business expense claim.
- viii) A receipt is not required for a reimbursement of an expense for which an allowance can be claimed. This includes expenses such as meal allowances, mileage claims and meter parking.

13) Mayor's Expenses

- (a) In addition to those expenses authorized elsewhere herein for Councillors, the Mayor may have additional business expenses arising from the promotion of the interests of The Village of Empress which, subject to availability of budget funds, and subject to normal administration approvals, shall be treated as Public Relations expenses.
- (b) Hospitality Business Expenses: The Mayor and/or designate engaged in authorized Village business may claim for food and beverages including alcohol purchased at special events for consumption while promoting the interests of the Village of Empress. Functions or events of this nature are considered Hospitality Events. A detailed expense claim stating the names of all individuals involved and the purpose of the Hospitality Event shall be included with any such claim.

14) Administration

The administration of the regulations set out in this Policy is the responsibility of each individual Elected Official in cooperation with the CAO. The CAO must approve each expense claim prior to payment.

SCHEDULE "A"
Councillor Business Expense
Fee Schedule

Section 1 Mileage \$0.50.5/kilometer

Note: Kilometer rate changes will be set at the Alberta Government Provincial rate unless otherwise amended by resolution of Council.

Section 2 Meals

Up to \$50.00 /day as required:

- Breakfast \$10.00 (including gratuities and GST)
- Lunch \$15.00 (including gratuities and GST)
- Dinner \$25.00 (including gratuities and GST)

Section 3 Miscellaneous Reimbursable Expenses

- Laundry and dry cleaning when travel is longer than four consecutive nights.
- Internet connectivity in hotel, or other public places.

Section 4 Conventions

- Registration
- Transportation
- Meals
- Receipted Hotel Charge or \$25.00 /night in private accommodations (No receipt required)

Section 5 Per Diem

- \$75.00 for up to 3 hours
- \$10.00 per hour over 3 hours

Mileage amended April 2014

Mileage amended March 2017 retroactive to January 2017

Mileage amended November 2018

VILLAGE OF EMPRESS

Title: Expense Claim Policy:

Policy Number: 11-01

Effective Date: September 20, 2013

Review Date: April 17, 2014, March 16, 2017, November 2018

Expense Claim Form

Village of Empress
Expenses Claim Form
Policy # 11-01

Km Rate: \$.505/km
 Breakfast: \$8.00 or receipt
 Lunch: \$12.00 or receipt
 Dinner: \$20.00 or receipt
 max meal/day \$50.00
 Accommodation: attach receipts
 Per Diem: \$75.00 up to 3 hours
 plus \$10.00 per hour over 3 hours

Name: _____

<u>Meeting & Location:</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Meals</u>	<u>Kilometers</u>	<u>Accommodation</u>	<u>Total</u>
			B L D			
	TOTALS					
			B L D			
	TOTALS					
			B L D			
	TOTALS					
			B L D			
	TOTALS					
Grand total						

Date

Signature of Claimant

Signature of Approval