



Document:
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Primary Manual:
FINANCE

Title:
TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY EXPENSE POLICY

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SCOPE

This policy and procedure applies to any Claimant seeking reimbursement or incurring expenses covered by this policy on behalf of Georgian Bay General Hospital (GBGH). It also applies to the Approver.

POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles and rules for those incurring or seeking reimbursement for travel or hospitality expenses to ensure fair and reasonable practices. It also demonstrates accountability to stakeholders by ensuring that the expense policy is in accordance with the standards and legislated expectations of Broader Public Sector (BPS) Organizations. The following key principles apply to this policy:

Accountability

GBGH is accountable for the use of public funds when reimbursing travel and hospitality expenses. All expenses must support GBGH's business objectives. All expense reimbursements must be approved by an authorized individual.

Transparency

GBGH is transparent to all stakeholders. The rules for incurring and reimbursing expenses are clear, easily understood and available to the public.

Value for Money

GBGH uses taxpayer dollars prudently and responsibly. Plans for expenses are necessary and economical with due regard for health and safety.

GBGH expects discretion to be applied with any expenses incurred and reserves the right to limit reimbursement to reasonable costs.

Fairness

Claimants will be reimbursed for reasonable and legitimate expenses incurred by them when performing GBGH business.

In the instance where a collective agreement or an employment contract specifies reimbursement terms/rates, those terms/rates shall supersede this policy.

This policy must be posted to GBGH's website, so they are available to the public.

DEFINITIONS

Approver: Those who have been delegated authority to approve expenditures as set out in this policy.

Broader Public Sector (“BPS”) Organizations: For purposes of this policy, refers to all government agencies and includes every Ministry, hospital, school board, university and college, in Ontario including GBGH.

Claimant: The individual (board member, staff, Professional Staff [medical, dental, midwifery, and extended class nurses], volunteer or student) who has incurred the expense or who is seeking reimbursement for the expense.

Consultant: A person or entity that under an agreement with GBGH, other than an employment agreement, provides expert or strategic advice and related services for consideration and decision-making.

PROCEDURE

1. ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

An accountability framework for expenses is required to ensure that everyone understands the authority for approvals. It is also fundamental to ensuring effective internal controls.

A. CLAIMANTS

Claimants are responsible for:

- Being familiar with and adhering to the principles and procedures outlined in this policy when incurring travel and/or hospitality expenses.
- Electronically submitting the expense claim as the requisitioner and obtaining all appropriate approvals before incurring expenses.
- Submitting itemized receipts with claims.
- Submitting claims within 30 days of the incurred expense, otherwise the claim may not be paid.
- Documenting on the electronic claim form, the business purpose of the claim.
- Repaying any overpayments as this is considered a debt owing to GBGH.

For Claimants that incur expenses in a situation where they are sponsored by another organization (e.g. Ontario Hospital Association), where possible, the reimbursement should be made directly to the individual by the sponsoring organization. If the sponsor will only pay GBGH directly, GBGH will reimburse the Claimant the higher of the sponsor’s payment or GBGH’s reimbursement.

B. APPROVERS

Approvers are responsible for:

- Ensuring Claimants are familiar with this policy.

- Ensuring the travel arrangements and expense claims comply with the principles and mandatory requirements set out in this policy.
- Ensuring the expense can stand up to audit and public scrutiny.
- Ensuring the business rationale for the expense is documented.
- Ensuring proper documentation such as original, itemized receipts, as required.
- Ensuring the expenses are fair and equitable.
- Ensuring the expenses are reasonable and appropriate.

Approvers are prohibited from approving their own expenses directly or indirectly. Where feasible, individual receipts should be obtained; however, if the expense is for a group function, the most senior person present will submit the claim for approval.

C. AUTHORITY LIMITS

The Approver's dollar limits are outlined in the *Delegation of Financial and Signing Authority & Approval Process Policy*. The Approver is dependent on who the Claimant is, and is outlined as follows:

Claimant	Approver
Volunteers	Manager of the Department
Staff	Leader (Manager level or above)
Professional Staff	Department Chief or Chief of Staff
CEO/COS	Board Chair
Board Members	Board Chair
Board Chair	Board 1 st or 2 nd Vice Chair

2. EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

A. EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT FORM

All claims for expense reimbursement must be submitted through the Travel and Expense Management (TEM) portal.

B. FOREIGN EXCHANGE

When claiming expenses incurred in currencies other than Canadian, the amount must be claimed in Canadian dollars using the following exchange rates:

1. The exchange rate as it appears on the credit card statement; or,
2. If paid with cash, the Claimant can use The Bank of Canada daily or monthly average exchange rate for the period the expense was incurred (<http://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/exchange/>)

Proof of the exchange rate must be attached to the expense claim.

C. ADVANCES

In extenuating circumstances, cash advances may be approved by the CFO.

3. TRAVEL EXPENSES

A. APPROVALS PRIOR TO MAKING TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Travel requirements under the following conditions must be requested and approved in writing prior to incurring travel expenses.

Travel Description	Required Approval
Travelling within Ontario when travel costs will include accommodations	Individual's leader
Travelling elsewhere in Canada	Individual's VP or delegate
Travelling outside of Canada	CEO (or Board Chair for CEO/COS or Board Members)

Claimants must have health insurance when travelling out of country.

All efforts should be made to book travel arrangements as soon as pre-approval is received to ensure best value for cost of travel and using appropriate judgement in booking options (e.g. fixed dates or open-ended tickets, travel health insurance, trip cancellation, etc.).

B. PERSONAL TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Claimants may extend their business trip for personal business providing the following conditions are adhered to:

- There is no additional cost to GBGH, with any additional costs paid directly by the Claimant;
- Staff utilize vacation or banked time if the extended stay covers regular work days; and
- The time away from work must be pre-authorized by the Claimant's leader.

Time spent on an extended stay will not be considered travel time or work time.

Time spent on the return trip home will be considered travel time.

C. TRANSPORTATION

The mode of transportation chosen by Claimants is expected to be the most practical, economical and reasonable choice, consistent with the least amount of interruption to regular business and personal schedules. Where a number of persons attend the same function, shared travel will be considered and required where possible.

1. Travel by Driving a Vehicle

It is expected that the Claimant will hold a valid driver's license and personal insurance.

i. Rental Vehicle

All luxury and sports car rentals are expressly prohibited. Collision and liability insurance offered by the car rental companies must be obtained since GBGH's insurance coverage does not cover replacement value for rental cars. Rental cars must be refueled before returning to avoid extra charges. Reimbursable costs will include vehicle rental charges, gas and direct incidentals.

ii. Use of Personal Vehicle

Personal vehicles used for GBGH business must be insured at the vehicle owner's expense for personal motor vehicle liability. Coverage must be equal to or greater than the minimum liability specified in the Insurance Act. It is the Claimant's responsibility to confirm with their Insurance provider that they are covered for business use of their vehicle prior to use. Persons driving a personal vehicle on GBGH business cannot make claims to GBGH for damages as a result of a collision.

iii. Mileage Reimbursement

GBGH assumes no financial responsibility for personal vehicles when used for GBGH business, other than paying a kilometric reimbursement allowance at the rate of \$0.55 per kilometer. This reasonable allowance is to cover the costs of fuel, depreciation, maintenance and insurance. With the exception of elected Board members, the total kilometers of a trip that originates from the Claimant's home will exclude the normal distance driven to GBGH.

2. Air & Rail

A copy of the boarding pass or other confirmation of travel for air or rail transportation must be provided through the TEM system.

3. Taxis & Ridesharing

Reasonable use of taxis, ridesharing (e.g. Uber) and airport limousines is permitted. Where possible, hotel shuttles or airport buses should be used. A reasonable gratuity of up to 15% will be permitted as an allowable expense.

4. Public Transit

Use of public transit such as GO Transit and Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) are reimbursable costs. Published per diem rates will be accepted where detailed receipts are difficult to obtain.

5. Parking and Tolls

Reasonable expenditures for parking, as well as tolls for bridges, ferries and highways, when driving on hospital business are reimbursable costs. There is no reimbursement for traffic or parking violations.

D. MEALS

Reasonable and appropriate meal expenses may be reimbursed when the Claimant is on GBGH business and away from the office area over a normal meal period.

The Claimant is required to attach detailed receipts. Meal reimbursement limits are as follows:

Meal	Meal Limit*
Breakfast	\$20
Lunch	\$30
Dinner	\$50

*Rates in the USA are the same as in Canada prior to foreign exchange. For all other countries, discretion may be required. For example, a breakfast allowance is \$20US. This rate will need to be converted to CDN dollars upon reimbursement (see Foreign Exchange section above).

Expenses should not be claimed when meal(s) are offered to the Claimant at no cost (i.e. included as part of conference, complimentary hotel breakfast etc.). In certain circumstances where it is not feasible to consume the meal provided, a meal expense may be claimed.

In limited and exceptional circumstances (e.g. health considerations, limited options available, etc.) where a meal expense is higher than the meal limit, the higher cost of the meal may be reimbursed. In these situations, the claim for meal reimbursement must be accompanied with a written rationale for exceeding the rate and approval is subject to the Approver's discretion.

E. ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations will be reimbursed if the location of a business event is a reasonable distance from GBGH and provides a reasonable disruption to regular business and personal schedules. When booking a hotel room, all reasonable efforts should be made to secure a single/standard room and the individual booking accommodations should ask for an available discount such as Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) or a government rate.

A detailed copy of the hotel bill must be provided when submission is made in TEM.

F. OTHER REIMBURSEABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

Additional reasonable business expenses not otherwise specified may be reimbursed provided the charge is incurred while conducting GBGH business. These items include, but are not limited to, business calls, internet costs, photocopying, etc.

G. NON-REIMBURSABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

Certain expenses considered of a personal nature will not be reimbursed by GBGH.

Examples are:

- Dry cleaning unless in exceptional circumstances which must be approved by the Approver.
- Other incidentals such as newspapers, toothbrushes, haircuts, and other products and services that would normally be expected to be incurred by the individual while not on business.

- Interest charges on outstanding credit card balances.
- Personal expenses including kennel fees, travel, accident and life insurance, movies, other in-room entertainment, mini bar charges.
- Expenses of family members unless these individuals are also conducting approved GBGH business.
- Expenses for failure to cancel transportation or hotel reservations when appropriate notice period is provided.
- Passport expenses.
- Personal phone calls.

4. ALCOHOL

The consumption of alcohol is not encouraged. However, reasonable expenses for limited quantities of alcoholic beverages may be expensed with documented proof of approval by the CEO or Board Chair. If alcohol is not being expensed, a separate bill is recommended.

5. HOSPITALITY EXPENSES

Hospitality is the provision of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation and other amenities.

A. ALLOWABLE HOSPITALITY

In general, hospitality is not to be provided to people engaged to work for GBGH or other BPS Organizations. However, GBGH does endorse and allow the provision of food or beverage hospitality expenses in the following circumstances:

1. Business meetings

- For purposes of this section, business meetings involve GBGH employees, GBGH Board Members, GBGH committees and/or employees of other designated BPS Organizations, with a specific discussion considered beneficial to the business objectives of GBGH. Food & Beverages provided at business meetings should not be offered solely for the personal benefit of the employee(s).
- Business meetings/events that are sponsored and hosted by GBGH with other BPS Organizations.
- Business meetings do not include regular staff meetings or informal events such as social gatherings.

2. Educational Sessions

- GBGH provides Team GBGH with the opportunity for continuous learning and development, including voluntary education sessions (i.e. unpaid lunch and learns).

3. Recognition & Celebration Events

- GBGH endorses recognition and celebration events, such as service milestones, project milestones, staff appreciation events that are designed to recognize, enhance engagement and value our people.
- These events must be approved by a member of the executive leadership team.

4. Emergency Incidents

- Periodical or unforeseen emergency incidents or events

Any other exceptions will be considered on a case by case basis and must be approved by the CEO.

Allowable transportation expenses are addressed above.

B. HOSPITALITY TO OR FROM VENDORS

Where hospitality events are offered to or from vendors (current or prospective), leaders are responsible for reviewing the supply chain policies to ensure that the event does not give or is not perceived to give preferential treatment to any vendor or constitute a conflict of interest. Please refer to Supply Chain Code of Ethics policy.

In NO circumstances can hospitality, incidental or food expenses be considered allowable expenses for Consultants and contractors under the rules or in any contract between an organization and a Consultant or contractor. This includes meals, snacks, beverages, gratuities, laundry or dry cleaning, valet services, dependents care, home management, or personal telephone calls. Reimbursement for allowable expenses can be claimed and reimbursed only when the contract specifically provides for it.

CROSS REFERENCES

Georgian Bay General Hospital (2022) *Approval Authority Policy*

Georgian Bay General Hospital (2022) *Policy and Procedure Procurement*

REFERENCES

Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010. Retrieved on July 15, 2022

(Part IV– Expense Claims: Allowable Expenses)

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/10b25#BK41>

Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive (Updated January 2020). Retrieved on July 15, 2022.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/broader-public-sector-expenses-directive-2020>