



FIN-31 Reimbursement of Expenses – Managing Policy

Policy Approved By:	Board of Directors
Date:	April 1, 2016
Supersedes:	November 25, 2011
Updated:	December 11, 2017, February 28, 2019

1. Policy Purpose:

The Board has approved a Governing Policy for Reimbursement of Expenses – see FIN-30-G Reimbursement of Expenses – Governing Policy when on Society Business. The purpose of this managing policy is to provide further direction for staff in order to comply with the Governing Policy.

2. Stewardship

This policy is developed and administered by the Finance Department. It will be reviewed and updated every three years unless events occur that require an earlier update.

3. Definitions

In this policy, word and expressions have the following meanings:

1. "Board" means the Board of Directors of Children's Aid Society of Hamilton.
2. "Society" means the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton.
3. "E.D." means the Executive Director of the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton
4. "Consultant" means a person or entity that under an agreement, other than an employment agreement, provides expert or strategic advice and related services for consideration and decision making.
5. "Reimbursable expenses" shall include mileage, travel costs, accommodation, meals, and gratuities. Other items will only be reimbursed if there is an explicit approval by the E.D.

4. Scope

The provisions of this policy apply to any person in the Society making an expense claim including the following:

1. Board Members and appointees,
2. employees and volunteers,
3. consultants and contractors engaged by the Society.

5. Authorities

Refer to the separate managing policy for delegated authorities for obligations and payments - see FIN-06 Authorities for Obligation and Payments – Managing Policy.

6. Policy

The Society will reimburse employees, contractors, volunteers and others for legitimate and reasonable expenses incurred by them in the discharging of their duties on behalf of the Society. Reimbursable expenses are limited to those items which are related to costs incurred when conducting activities that are for the fulfillment of the mandate of the Society. At no time is a person or entity claiming reimbursement to include any charges of a personal nature.

Expenses in General

The Society has set specific allowances and limits for specific expenses (i.e. mileage, meals), and at no time are Society employees, contractors, volunteers and others to claim amounts in excess of the limits set.

Following are criteria to be respected when incurring reimbursable expenses:

- Expenses must be work related, modest and appropriate.
- Expenses of a personal nature will not be reimbursed. Such expenses include but are not limited to expenses for: recreational purposes (video rentals, mini-bars, etc.); personal items; traffic and parking violations; social events, alcoholic beverages; and friends or family members unless specifically permitted by the Hospitality Policy.

Travel

- Normal travel related to casework and within the Society's area of jurisdiction does not require prior approval.
- Travel outside the Society's area of jurisdiction requires approval from the employee's immediate supervisor.
- Travel outside Ontario requires prior approval from the appropriate Department Director and the E.D. if the amount to be incurred is greater than \$1,000. A proposal for travel outside of Ontario demonstrating the essential nature of the travel and that the requested travel arrangements (e.g. transportation mode, accommodation) are cost-effective, must be provided. An itemization of all expenses that will need to be incurred must be included with the proposal.
- Travel outside Canada requires prior approval from the appropriate Department Director and from the E.D. A proposal for travel outside of Canada demonstrating the essential nature of the travel and that the requested travel arrangements (e.g. transportation mode, accommodation) are cost-effective, must be provided. An itemization of all expenses that will need to be incurred must be included with the proposal.
- Air travel is to be organized by the Senior Administrative Assistant. No arrangements will be confirmed until all authorized documentation referred to above has been received.

Principles to be followed when traveling on Society business include:

- The most practical and economical way to travel (including accommodation) will be chosen in each circumstance, unless an exception is granted by the appropriate authority.

1. Society Owned Vehicles

- i. Use of one of the Society's vehicles is only as authorized.
- ii. When using the Society's vehicles, daily logs must be kept showing purpose of trip,

start and stop points, and personal (if any) and business mileage.

2. Personal Vehicles

- i. Guidelines governing the use of personal vehicles for business purposes are provided in the Human Resources Transportation Policy effective October 1, 2003.
- ii. The Society assumes no financial responsibility for privately owned vehicles other than paying the mileage rate. The Society is not responsible for reimbursing deductible amounts related to insurance claims. Those driving a personal vehicle on Society business cannot make a claim to the Society for damages.
- iii. Claims for mileage reimbursement are to be submitted using the approved process (I-Expense). Claimants must ensure the required purpose of each trip is documented and that all forms indicate start and end points for each trip claimed.
- iv. The rate for reimbursement of mileage will be that as set in the collective bargaining process.
 - Where employees travel directly between their home and a business-related location (e.g. client, training, meeting, conference), reimbursement will be based on the lesser of the distance from their home or from the Society's office at 26 Arrowsmith Road to the business location.
- v. Employees are strongly encouraged to rent cars for business travel instead of using their own vehicle when the total distance to be driven in one day is expected to exceed 200 kilometers.
 - The size of the rental car must be the most economical and practical required for the business task and number of occupants. Luxury and sports car rentals are prohibited.
 - The rental car must be refueled before returning it to avoid higher gasoline charges imposed by the rental car agency.

3. Hotel Accommodation

- i. Reimbursement for overnight accommodation within Society's area of jurisdiction will not normally be authorized. Exceptional or emergency situations that require employees to remain close to their headquarters for periods long in excess of normal working hours (e.g. extended collective bargaining sessions) may be considered.
- ii. Reimbursement will be made for single accommodation in a standard room and no reimbursement will be made for suites, executive floors or concierge levels.
- iii. For extended stays at one location, long-term accommodation must be pre-approved by the appropriate Department Director and the priority should be to take advantage of lower weekly or monthly rates.
- iv. Reasonable gratuities for hotel services will be reimbursed. Receipts are not necessary to support reimbursement of gratuities.
- v. Staff are required to arrange their own hotel accommodation and to claim reimbursement on the monthly staff expense claim form. The original hotel receipt must accompany the claim for reimbursement.

4. Meal Allowances

- i. Employees may request reimbursement for meal expenses incurred when meeting

with a client or other business professional during meal times, or as a result of their participation in a training or other business event that was carried on during a meal period. Meal claims include taxes and gratuities. Original, itemized receipts must be provided. Maximum reimbursement amounts per attendee (staff or client) are as follows:

Breakfast	\$ 10.00
Lunch	\$ 15.00
Dinner	\$ 25.00

For a full day of meal claims, (e.g. Breakfast, lunch and dinner when an employee is traveling for work purposes) employees have the discretion to allocate the daily total three meal rate of \$50.00 among meals, subject to a cap of \$30.00 for any single meal. The total cost of meals for a full day cannot exceed \$50.00 including taxes and gratuities. Refer to chart above.

ii. Celebratory Meals – Birthdays and Graduations:

Employees may take children in care out for a celebratory meal on their birthday or for their graduation. Advance approval is not required for this annual meal. Due to the “celebratory” nature of the event, staff may spend an additional \$5 each for the child’s meal and their own meal. All expenses require an itemized receipt. The type of celebration should be indicated on the receipt. The maximum reimbursement amounts per attendee (staff or client) are as follows:

Lunch	\$20.00
Dinner	\$30.00

iii. Reimbursement of meal costs must not include the cost of any alcoholic beverages.

5. Consultants and Other Contractors

- i. Reimbursement for allowable expenses under this policy can be claimed only when contract or engagement document specifically allows for it.
- ii. Expenses for hospitality, incidental or food expenses will not be considered allowable expenses for consultants and contractors or in any contract between an organization and a consultant or contractor.

Advances and Reimbursement Process

- Advances, which represent a reasonable proportion of expected expenses, may be issued upon request and appropriate authorization. Within 10 days of return, the person must complete a statement of the reimbursable expenses incurred. Any unused portion of the advance must be returned at that time. Employees will be issued payment for authorized expenses that exceed the original advance.
- Requests for reimbursement must be submitted on forms as specified by the Finance Department. Before submitting the request for reimbursement to the Finance Department, the form must have been duly authorized.

- All requests for reimbursement must be accompanied by original receipts (credit card slips alone are insufficient to support a claim for reimbursement) and amount claimed cannot exceed the amount of the receipt.
- If a disbursement is claimed for reimbursement or an advance is used for an item that is not in accordance with the Society's policies and practices, the item will be denied, and the claim rejected and the payment via the advance recovered from the employee.
- Requests for reimbursement must be submitted within 30 days of the date that the charges were incurred.
- Employees leaving the Society should ensure expense claims are submitted prior to their last day of employment.
- Requests for reimbursement will be paid as per the schedule set by the Finance Department.

Responsibilities

Persons involved in the reimbursement of expenses have the following responsibility:

- Those claiming reimbursement must be familiar with the contents of this policy and to seek clarification from managers when required.
- Those claiming reimbursement are not to claim for any items not permitted and only for items that pertain to the Society's business.
- Persons approving reimbursement claims are to ensure that claims are directly related to the conduct of duties on behalf of the Society; expenses are reasonable in the circumstances and are within the guidelines of this policy. When approving expenses, the approver will so assume this responsibility. Approving persons are responsible for taking correction action when necessary for inappropriate claims.
- Requests for reimbursement will not be rejected solely because they arose from mistakes or misinterpretations of the requirements of this Policy. Decisions whether to approve reimbursement or to require repayment will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Where an approver decides to exercise discretion in making an exception, and in order to ensure a proper record for accountability purposes, the rationale for the exception must be documented and accompany the claim.
- The Finance Department is responsible for spot checking calculations, verifying that supporting documentation is sufficient, pursuing staff to provide explanation for any queries, correctly processing the reimbursement, and monitoring trends for costs and claims.
- Persons claiming reimbursement and those approving them are to cooperate with the Finance Department in providing explanations or additional information when requested or making amendments requested.
- The Finance Department will endeavor to provide for an efficient and effective process for those requesting reimbursement while also obtaining the necessary documentation required for accountability purposes.
- The Finance Department will review the allowances for mileage and meals on an annual basis by referring to the allowances permitted by the Ministry for people acting on its behalf and can update the amounts in this policy by issuance of a memo duly authorized by the E.D.
- The Finance Department will maintain all information pertaining to claims for no less than seven (7) years.

7. Effect on Prior Policies

The effective date of this policy is referenced above. Any prior policies regarding purchasing and other matters dealt with in this policy are hereby superseded. This policy shall have no effect on the reimbursement of expenses prior to the date this Policy is approved.

8. Appendices

- Guidelines governing Submission of Reimbursement Claims – Mileage and Other
- Procedures for Children’s Services Workers requesting Airline Travel

9. Other Reference

For additional direction, staff are to refer to other affiliated policies including but not limited to:

- FIN-40-G Procurement Purchasing Goods and Services – Governing Policy
- FIN-41 Delegated Authorities for Procurement – Managing Policy
- FIN-05-G Authorities for Obligation and Payments – Governing Policy
- FIN-06 Authorities for Obligation and Payments – Managing Policy
- FIN-30-G Reimbursement of Expenses – Governing Policy
- FIN-35 Society Credit Cards
- FIN-32 Hospitality Expenditures

Appendix 1: Guidelines governing Submission of Reimbursement Claims – Mileage and Other

This policy requires that all requests for reimbursement be submitted within 30 days of the date that the charges were incurred (Advances and Reimbursement Process). This is to ensure that the Society records capture all financial obligations and that reporting to the Ministry is current and complete. This information is crucial as it has a direct impact on cash flow arrangements and forecasting.

Finance staff will process current monthly claims, that is those submitted on time, and those of the immediately preceding month in the usual way. Claims from prior periods will be returned to the claimant.

For those who, from time to time, may be affected by this and wish to have their claim reconsidered, the following process is to be used:

- You may make a written request to your supervisor identifying the circumstances which prevented you from submitting your claim in a timely manner.
- If your supervisor supports and authorizes your request, they will forward it to their department director for review and authorization
- The original claim together with the supervisor and director authorized explanation, can be forwarded to finance for processing.
- The claim will be paid on the next scheduled deposit processing date.

Appendix 2: Procedures for Children’s Services Workers requesting Airline Travel

In circumstances where Children’s Services staff are required to travel by air in order to fulfill requirements related to servicing children in care the following will apply:

- The CS Worker will email the Director of Children’s Services, Supervisor and Senior Administrative Assistant requesting approval for air travel outlining the purpose of the trip, the rational for air travel destination and the planned timeframe; that is day or overnight travel. The email subject should be structured as follows: *Air Travel Request re: name of child in care.*
- The Director of Children’s Services will review the request and if approved provide the CS Worker with a written email response.
- The Director of Children’s Services will sign the written email response and forward the signed document to the Senior Administrative Assistant for filing in the Travel Arrangements binder.
- The Senior Administrative Assistant will book travel the arrangements that are the most cost-effective contingent upon the parameters related to the need for travel outlined in the email by the CS Worker.
- The Senior Administrative Assistant will book the travel arrangements utilizing the credit card issued.
- The Senior Administrative Assistant will print a copy of the invoice for the travel arrangements and file in the Travel Arrangements binder along with the approval email.
- Arrangements for car rental and hotel accommodation must also receive prior approval from the Director of Children’s Services but are the responsibility of the Children’s Services worker to book and arrange payment. The CS worker submits the related invoices in accordance with the staff expense policy (mileage sheets).
- Each month the Senior Administrative Assistant will reconcile the Credit Card monthly statement with the invoices and approved emails maintained within the Travel Arrangements binder.
- This procedure will be reviewed annually with the Children’s Services Supervisors.