

AP0300 – TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSE

Interior Health would like to recognize and acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Dākelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka’pamux, Secwépemc, St’át’imc, Syilx, and Tšilhqot’in Nations, where we live, learn, collaborate and work together.

Interior Health recognizes that diversity in the workplace shapes values, attitudes, expectations, perception of self and others and in turn impacts behaviors in the workplace. The dimensions of a diverse workplace includes the protected characteristics under the human rights code of: race, color, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, criminal or summary conviction unrelated to employment.

1.0 PURPOSE

This policy is to ensure that Travel and Meeting Expenses incurred for Interior Health Authority (IH) business purposes are:

- necessary to support IH business and/or clinical operations;
- relevant to the individual’s roles and responsibilities within IH;
- incurred at a reasonable cost;
- appropriately documented;
- properly authorized; and
- reimbursed fairly.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Approver	<i>The individual with the authority to approve travel and related reimbursements or allowances under this policy, in accordance with the designated signing authority under AP0700 Signing Authority.</i> <i>In order to be eligible to approve an expense, an Approver must have spending authority over the impacted cost centre and must be at a more senior level in the organization than the claimant.</i>
Designated IH Worksite	<i>The IH site where an Employee would ordinarily perform their work when not at a Flexible Work Location.</i>

Policy Sponsor: Chief Financial Officer & Vice President Corporate Services 1 of 8

Policy Steward: Corporate Director Capital Finance & Controller

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AP0300 – TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSE

<i>Eligible Individuals</i>	<i>Includes all IH employees, medical staff, or any other person authorized by IH (including clients and contractors as necessary) to incur expense while conducting IH business, but excludes Directors of the Board (who are covered by Board Policy 3.6 “Director Retainers, Fees and Expenses”) and excludes contractors with specific provisions which vary from those contained in this policy (e.g. Cost Recoverable Contractors under Facilities Management Reimbursable Expense Guidelines or physicians covered by various IH Medical Staff Policies).</i>
<i>Travel Expense</i>	<i>Includes travel costs for transportation (automobile, air, bus, and train), meals, incidentals and out-of-country travel incurred by an Eligible Individual 40 kilometers or more from their Designated Home Site; includes travel costs for accommodation incurred by an Eligible Individual 75 kilometers or more from their Designated IH Worksite; and includes mileage and related parking costs (no meals) for travel within a 40 kilometer radius of the Eligible Individual’s Designated IH Worksite. Exceptions will be made to distance guidelines to ensure traveler safety in circumstances where road conditions, after hour travel, or other hazards are a concern. Exceptions will also be made for non-contract employees residing within the boundaries of BC, outside IH region, and traveling under section 3.6 of IH policy AUI300.</i>

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Principles.

The following principles will guide Eligible Individuals in business travel decisions:

- taxpayer dollars are used prudently with the intention of delivering best value;
- risk to any person is minimized;
- environmental and sustainability factors are considered;
- reimbursement processes are effective and efficient; and
- information about Travel and Meeting Expenses is publicly disclosed as required.

Policy Sponsor: Chief Financial Officer & Vice President Corporate Services	2 of 8
Policy Steward: Corporate Director Capital Finance & Controller	
Date Approved: November 2004	Date(s) Reviewed-r/Revised-R: February 2024 (R)
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AP0300 – TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSE

3.2 Application

The provisions of this policy apply to all Travel Expenses incurred by Eligible Individuals in the course of conducting authorized IH business, regardless of the manner of payment (e.g. corporate credit card (see also [A00600](#) Corporate Credit Cards Code of Responsibility), direct billing, personal credit card). This policy includes Travel Expenses related to approved conferences, educational pursuits, and employee recognition events in accordance with the terms established as part of this policy.

Employees who are covered by a Collective Agreement shall be entitled to reimbursement of expense in accordance with the terms and rates as specified in the applicable Collective Agreement. If terms and rates are not outlined within the Collective Agreement, this policy shall apply.

For detailed procedures on travel planning, reimbursement limits, making claims, and approving claims, refer to the [Travel User Guide](#) (electronic file version) which provides links to approved forms, and is considered integral to this policy.

3.3 Fiscal and Environmental Responsibility

As employees of a public institution which is accountable to the taxpayer for the use of its resources, Eligible Individuals must exercise prudence and care in incurring Travel Expenses and ensure proper approval and documentation is obtained as defined in the [Travel User Guide](#). The means of travel chosen needs to be operationally feasible, cost effective and consider travel methods that will mitigate the production of greenhouse gas emissions. To minimize the impact of travel on the environment, Eligible Individuals should consider teleconferencing, carpooling, or choosing electric or hybrid vehicles when these options are feasible.

3.4 Insurance

Appropriate and necessary insurance must be in place for all IH-related travel. For more information about available coverage, please refer to the [Travel User Guide](#).

If an Eligible Individual becomes ill and requires medical attention and/or hospitalization while traveling outside of Canada during business travel, the

Policy Sponsor: Chief Financial Officer & Vice President Corporate Services	3 of 8
Policy Steward: Corporate Director Capital Finance & Controller	
Date Approved: November 2004	Date(s) Reviewed-r/Revised-R: February 2024 (R)
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AP0300 – TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSE

individual may claim reimbursement of any related expenses in excess of personal coverage in British Columbia and any purchased medical insurance.

3.5 Incurring Travel Expenses

- 3.5.1 Eligible Individuals must ensure that expenses claimed are in compliance with the principles and requirements of this policy and the [Travel User Guide](#).
- 3.5.2 Claim for reimbursement and an allowance shall not be submitted in respect of the same expense (e.g. gas receipts plus mileage allowance for the same trip).
- 3.5.3 Except for specific examples noted in the Travel User Guide, itemized original receipts must accompany all properly authorized expense claims in order to be reimbursed.
- 3.5.4 Reimbursement is limited to amounts considered reasonable as outlined in the Travel User Guide.
- 3.5.5 When an Eligible Individual utilizes a discount or credit for travel that reduces the original cost, only the net expense shall be claimed. For clarity, the cash value of personal discounts, credits, gift certificates, etc. applied to IH Travel Expenses may not be claimed for reimbursement (e.g. a personal flight travel credit cannot be reimbursed to an Eligible Individual if used for business travel purposes).
- 3.5.6 Eligible Individuals wishing to combine a business trip with personal travel may do so at their own expense. The traveler will be required to pay for any additional expenses for accommodation and living expenses incurred above those related to business travel. Proof of cost difference must be provided. Personal travel in corporate vehicles is not permitted. When combining business and personal travel impacts transportation costs (e.g. airfare or rental vehicles), determination of the business portion must be fair and equitable.
- 3.5.7 Employees who receive third-party reimbursements for travel costs that have been paid for by Interior Health, either with a corporate purchase card or through employee expense reimbursement, must provide the reimbursement to Interior Health. Travel expenses are

Policy Sponsor: Chief Financial Officer & Vice President Corporate Services		4 of 8
Policy Steward: Corporate Director Capital Finance & Controller		
Date Approved: November 2004		Date(s) Reviewed-r/Revised-R: February 2024 (R)
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AP0300 – TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSE

limited to the maximum amounts described in the policy regardless of the expectation of external reimbursements to be received.

3.5.8 Claims must be submitted within six months of the expense date. Expenses incurred more than six months prior to the reimbursement request will not be reimbursed.

3.6 General Provisions

3.6.1 All travel undertaken on behalf of IH, whether funded by IH or external entities, must comply with [AU0100](#) Standards of Conduct for IH Employees.

3.6.2 Responsibilities of the Eligible Individual and Approver, as well as minimum documentation requirements, are specifically defined in the [Travel User Guide](#).

3.6.3 Any group expenses incurred must be paid for by the most senior employee and be accompanied by a list of staff and guests included in the event and other documentation as detailed in the Travel User Guide.

3.6.4 All loyalty points/credits/discounts earned during business travel accrue to the benefit of the Eligible Individual; however, principles regarding selection of least-cost options must not be compromised to acquire travel loyalty points. Please refer to Canada Revenue Agency to understand personal tax implications of receiving loyalty rewards from employment-related business travel.

3.6.5 Eligible Individuals using Corporate Credit Cards to pay for travel expenses must comply with [AQQ600](#) Corporate Credit Card Code of Responsibility, and shall not charge personal or ineligible expenses to the Corporate Credit Card.

3.6.6 Non-compliance with this policy and/or the Travel User Guide could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment for the Eligible Individual and/or the Approver.

Policy Sponsor: Chief Financial Officer & Vice President Corporate Services		5 of 8
Policy Steward: Corporate Director Capital Finance & Controller		
Date Approved: November 2004	Date(s) Reviewed-r/Revised-R: February 2024 (R)	
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AP0300 – TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSE

3.7 Specific Provisions – Business Meeting and Catering Expenses

- 3.7.1 IH does not ordinarily consider meals or refreshments for internal meetings that are unrelated to travel to be appropriate business expenses. Expenses may be reimbursed in exceptional circumstances including:
- expenditure has been approved in advance by an Executive Director or higher;
 - The nature of the meeting is such that it cannot be interrupted;
 - The nature of the meeting is related to Aboriginal engagement or Aboriginal cultural events or activities that include Elders or Knowledge Keepers; or
 - It is essential to meet over a meal period and food services are not available at the location of the meeting.
- 3.7.2 Expenses must be claimed by the most senior person in attendance and must be approved by a signing authority at a higher level.
- 3.7.3 All business meals, refreshments and catering expense claims must include all of the following:
- A list of the names of all attendees; where known;
 - An explanation of the business purpose of the function; and
 - The original itemized receipt.
- 3.7.4 Expenses incurred for business meetings or catering must fall within the limits defined in the [Travel Guide](#).

3.8 Approvals

- 3.8.1 The signing authority ([AP0700](#)) for expense claims is generally the Eligible Individual's manager. For Eligible Individuals who are not employees, authorization must be obtained from the Cost Centre Manager to whom the expenses will be charged. Exceptions are outlined in the **Travel User Guide**.
- 3.8.2 No individual shall approve his/her own expense claim including expenses incurred on his/her behalf by staff who report to the individual.
- 3.8.3 Authorization of a claim signifies that the Approver has reviewed detailed receipts and found all expenses and documentation to meet the requirements of this policy and the **Travel User Guide**.

Policy Sponsor: Chief Financial Officer & Vice President Corporate Services	6 of 8
Policy Steward: Corporate Director Capital Finance & Controller	
Date Approved: November 2004	Date(s) Reviewed-r/Revised-R: February 2024 (R)
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AP0300 – TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSE

- 3.8.4 A Vice President may approve certain exceptions to the Travel Policy under extenuating circumstances including:
 - Claims submitted with missing receipts with valid documented explanation;
 - Claims submitted late, between six and twelve months after the date of the expense being incurred; and
 - Claims exceeding the limits defined in the **Travel User Guide** due to valid documented reasons.

3.9 Reports and Audits

3.9.1 Internal Audit will conduct periodic audits to evaluate overall compliance with policy. The results of those audits will be reported to the Senior Executive Team and the Audit & Finance Committee of the Board.

3.9.2 IH conducts ongoing reviews to ensure that claims are reasonable, appropriate documentation is submitted, and that approvals of expense claims are in compliance with all sections of this policy.

3.10 Dispute Resolution

Disputes related to any aspect of Travel Expenses, except as provided otherwise in this policy or in the Travel User Guide shall be directed to the next highest authority of the original expense claim Approver. The next highest authority shall review the dispute and make a determination within the scope of this policy. The decision is final and not subject to appeal, except where permitted by the law or legislation.

3.11 Disclosure

IH reserves the right to disclose and publish details of Travel Expenses to the extent considered necessary to fulfill its commitment to public accountability and transparency and to meet requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. All published information is audited by Internal Audit.

4.0 PROCEDURES

Procedures for obtaining approval, booking travel, claiming expenses, and processing reimbursement requests are provided in detail in the [Travel User Guide](#).

Policy Sponsor: Chief Financial Officer & Vice President Corporate Services		7 of 8
Policy Steward: Corporate Director Capital Finance & Controller		
Date Approved: November 2004	Date(s) Reviewed-r/Revised-R: February 2024 (R)	
<i>This is an Interior Health CONTROLLED document. A copy of this document in paper form is not controlled and should be checked against the electronic file version to ensure accuracy.</i>		

AP0300 – TRAVEL AND MEETING EXPENSE

5.0 REFERENCES

- [AP0700](#) - Signing Authority
- [AQ0600](#) - Corporate Credit Card (BMO Commercial) Code of Responsibility
- [AU0100](#) - Standards of Conduct for IH Employees
- [AU1300](#) - Flexible Work Location Policy
- [TEER](#) - Travel/Education Expense Reimbursement Request
- [Travel User Guide](#)
- [Quick Reference Guide](#)

Policy Sponsor: Chief Financial Officer & Vice President Corporate Services	8 of 8
Policy Steward: Corporate Director Capital Finance & Controller	
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