



BOULIA SHIRE COUNCIL

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL POLICY

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Keyword Classification:	Employee Travel
Summary:	To provide guidelines of what are considered to be reasonable expenses incurred when travelling on official Council business.
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Related Documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Policy 105 Entertainment and Hospitality- Policy 111 Councillor Expenses Re-imbursment Policy- Policy 125 Telecommunication Policy- Policy 131 Council Credit Card Policy- Policy 132 Study and Training Policy- Policy 146 Code of Conduct- Travel Movement Form- Form 72: Employee Expense Claim Form
Responsible Section:	Executive
Responsible Officer:	Director of Corporate Services
Legislation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Queensland Government Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses (Directive No 13/23)- Local Government Act 2009- Queensland Local Government Industry Award – State 2017

OBJECTIVE

To provide employees with guidelines of what are considered to be reasonable expenses incurred when travelling on official Council business and to ensure consistency, accountability and transparency in the payment of these expenses.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of Boulia Shire Council.

It does not apply to situations where staff are directed to stay in a Council provided camp as this is addressed under the relevant Award.

Failure to comply with the policy or misappropriation of expenses or facilities could give rise to an offence under the Criminal Code and/or a breach of Council's Code of Conduct.

Reimbursement of expenses or provisions of facilities outside these guidelines will not be considered unless preapproval has been granted by the Chief Executive Officer. Should you encounter a situation outside the scope of this policy it is expected that you make travel arrangements in the spirit of the guidelines below and seek Manager approval before embarking.

DEFINITIONS

Employee: This policy applies to all employees of the Boulia Shire Council including those employed under the Queensland Local Government Industry Award - State 2017 or contract. It does not apply to Councillors, contractors, volunteers, and other Council representatives.

Training: A training course provided by a registered training provider or equivalent. E.g. LGAQ, LGMA.

Conference: An event usually provided for networking and professional development for members/observers of associations such as LGAQ, LGMA, IPWEA or LGFPQ.

Official Duty: Includes training and conferences and any other meeting or business trip related to Council's official duties such as meetings with state government representatives and regional groups.

Family: Includes spouse/defacto and children.

APPROVAL PROCESS

Staff must have received prior written approval to attend a training course, conference or meeting to be eligible to claim reimbursement of expenses associated with travel/being away from the workplace. This approval may be given in the form of an email upon receipt of a request detailing the purpose of travel and expected travel times and dates.

FAMILY

Council believes a family friendly policy is an integral part of retaining and attracting employees. Family members may accompany employees when they participate in approved official functions. Where airfares are involved, this will be at a cost to the employee.

Council will pay the standard room rate sufficient to accommodate one person and the employee will be responsible for the difference between a standard room rate and extra costs for extra persons.

Council will pay the Partner's meal at any official dinner, however, the partner will be responsible for all other costs.

ENTITLEMENT

An employee who is required to travel on official duty shall be allowed actual and reasonable expenses for accommodation, meals and incidental expenses necessarily incurred.

An employee undertaking travel to attend authorised training or conference is, unless otherwise provided for in the Study Policy, and following CEO/Director approval, entitled to be paid, or to accrue TOIL/RDO in the case of weekend or out of hours travel, at their ordinary hourly rate to a maximum of 8 hours per day (Queensland Local Government Industry Award – State 2017, Division 2 – Section 1, Part 8, Clause 31 (b)).

Travel time when driving or flying will be accrued as per the recommended travelling time shown on the RACQ travel planner or such appropriate site, and shall where practical, be not longer than the employees ordinary working day. For safety reasons, employees are advised not to drive/travel after sunset, or during sunset/sunrise particularly when heading in an east/west bound direction (eg: Winton Rd).

Should the employee be required to stay over a weekend to undertake a separate course, Council will provide the accommodation, however Council will not pay for meals as the weekend will be free time. Should the course actually be held on the weekend then Council will pay/reimburse the employee for meals not provided for at the venue.

TRAVEL

Employees will be provided with a Council vehicle or provided with air travel to attend official engagements. The employee will obtain the Chief Executive Officer's prior approval to use their own vehicle. The CEO will determine how the employee will be reimbursed at this time. On occasions where private vehicles are used the employee should be aware that, in the event of any accident, all claims must be covered by the employee's own insurance on their vehicle. Council's insurance does not cover vehicles not owned by Council.

Should the employee require car hire this will also be arranged prior to travel by the delegated Council Officer.

When using a Council vehicle, the vehicle should be fully fuelled at the Council Depot prior to departure and any fuel purchased during travel should be purchased using the vehicle's fuel card. If an officer requires fuel for a Council vehicle and is in a location where fuel is not able to be purchased using a fuel card, the expense can be paid for using a corporate credit card or reimbursement for the fuel expenses can be claimed upon submission of the receipt and the relevant claim form.

When refuelling a hire vehicle, the expense can be paid for using a corporate credit card or reimbursement can be claimed upon submission of the receipt and the relevant claim form.

Employees travelling by air will have arrangements made by the delegated Council Officer. Ideally airfares for accompanying family members should be booked and paid for separately outside of Council processes, however if any air fare bookings are made for family members accompanying employees on conferences/meetings, employees will be required to reimburse Council for the value of the accompanying person's air fares.

Council will not pay for membership to frequent flyer or loyalty programs nor can employees use their booking to accumulate points towards their existing frequent flyer or loyalty programs.

All employees will be required to complete a Travel Movement Form prior to any journey taken outside of their normal place of work.

ACCOMMODATION

All employee accommodation bookings will be made by the delegated Council Officer and will be made taking into consideration:

- value for money
- availability
- distance from training/conference/meeting

Where possible, accommodation will be arranged at the training/conference/course venue or where this is not an available option, as close to the venue as possible.

In accordance with the *Queensland Government Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses (Directive No 13/23)*.

Employees are to be provided with reasonable accommodation in well appointed establishments offering a comfortable standard of accommodation, including individual sleeping quarters and ensuite, except where this standard is not available at a particular centre. Employees may be offered a higher standard of accommodation where appropriate (e.g. conference venue, location of hotel in relation to work site, competitive rates negotiated with a higher standard establishment).

Should an officer choose to stay in private accommodation (e.g. with friends or family), the officer is not entitled to claim costs for accommodation.

Should an officer choose to upgrade their accommodation (e.g. to a higher rated property or to a larger suite to accommodate family) the officer is responsible for paying the upgrade cost difference.

MEALS

The actual and reasonable costs allowed for meals are not to exceed the *Queensland Government Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses (Directive No. 13/23)* which may be viewed at <https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/pay-benefits-and-policy/directives-policies-circulars-and-guidelines/domestic-travelling-and-relieving-expenses-directive-1323> (or as updated).

An employee is not entitled to claim expenses for a meal that is provided as part of a conference, training course or meeting.

Meal allowances shall be claimable to the value below upon production of receipts, however, the CEO may approve payment beyond these amounts under certain circumstances.

Breakfast	\$30.00
Lunch	\$35.00
Dinner	\$60.00

Alcoholic beverages are the employees' responsibility. The employee will be responsible for all mini bar expenses.

TELEPHONE CALLS, FACSIMILES AND POSTAGE

Official telephone calls, facsimiles and postage costs will be reimbursed by the Council upon production of receipts. A miscellaneous expenses total of \$22 per day including telephone calls (for e.g. to phone home) is claimable with receipts to be provided.

INCIDENTAL EXPENSES

Incidental expenses will be reimbursed to employees upon production of receipts to cover costs such as:

- Taxi fares/rail fares/bus fares etc
- Toll fees
- Parking fees
- Laundry

EXTENDING OF TRAVEL PERIOD

Employees seeking to extend their stay for annual leave, RDO, TOIL or leave without pay or over a weekend shall be responsible for the extra costs associated with the extended time.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Should travel insurance be required for travel, this is to be arranged on a case by case basis with the approval of the CEO.

ILLNESS OR INJURY WHILST TRAVELLING

If an officer becomes ill whilst travelling they are to notify their Manager as soon as possible. The officer will then commence on sick leave if required.

In the event of an injury, the officer is to notify their Manager and Council's Workplace Health and Safety Officer as soon as possible.

OPTIONS FOR PAYMENT

Council will where possible, arrange for accommodation, travel and meals to be paid in advance on corporate credit card or by Council purchase order.

If an officer holds a corporate credit card, the officer may use this card to pay for accommodation, fuel, meals or incidentals (up to the value of any applicable allowances mentioned above) where prepayment was not available. The officer is responsible for providing receipts for credit card reconciliation.

The officer is not to pay for meals for accompanying people on the corporate credit card unless that person is a Council Officer or Official Council guest to the meeting or conference being held. Should the cost of the meals exceed the meal expense limit, the officer is responsible for the additional expense and this amount must be paid back immediately to Council upon return from travel. If an officer is travelling with a Councillor, the officer's meals or other expenses are not to be paid for using the Councillor's corporate credit card.

METHOD OF REIMBURSEMENT

Before an expense is paid, the employee is required to produce documentary evidence that the expenditure has occurred by way of:

- Receipts
- Tax Invoices
- Itemised statements

An EFTPOS receipt is not sufficient to claim reimbursement of expenses for payments in excess of \$50.00.

Reimbursement will be made by completion of the appropriate form (accessible on Council's records management system, Magiq) and reimbursed through creditors on the next available run.

TIME LIMIT ON CLAIM

A claim shall not be paid unless it is submitted within three months of the date the expense is incurred.

CONDUCT

Staff shall at all times adhere to Council's Code of Conduct provisions and act in a professional manner so as not to harm Council's reputation.