

Travel Policy

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish authority and criteria for pre-approval of travel requests; to establish and define the limits and the conditions related to travel; to guide the selection of the most cost effective means of travel; and to identify allowable expenses for travel.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Northern Lights College staff and board members.

DEFINITIONS

Stakeholders: NLC employees and Board of Governors

POLICY STATEMENTS

Approval for Travel

All employees must obtain prior written approval of their Dean/Director/Manager for all travel, excluding inter-campus travel.

For all international travel, prior written approval must be obtained from the President.

Travel Arrangements

All travel arrangements must be made through the Northern Lights College travel management service.

Accommodation

Employees should seek hotels offering BC Government rates. Should no government rate be available in the general area, rates comparable to government must be sought.

In addition, while travelling for the College, staff may claim for reimbursement if accommodation is provided by colleagues, relatives or friends. See Appendix A for rates.

Air Travel

For all other employees travelling by air, travel approval should be obtained well in advance, and reservations should be made with the airline offering the lowest cost.

When travelling on one (1) continuous flight greater than four (4) hours, the purchase of a business class ticket is acceptable.

Meals and Miscellaneous Expenses

Staff required to travel on college business will be reimbursed for reasonable meal expenses if supported by actual receipts. Alternatively, per diem meal allowances may be claimed without submitting receipts. Per diem meal allowances may only be claimed for individual staff. Current Per diem rates are found in Appendix A.

Where travel is for a partial day, only meals that are applicable to that portion of the day can be claimed.

Where meals are provided without charge or are paid for from public funds, no claim for that meal can be made.

For travel in the US, meal/per diem allowances outlined in Appendix A are the amounts claimed in US currency, converted to Canadian dollars.

The meal per diem allowances covers travel expenses for absences from a home campus over meal periods.

Where the duration of travel exceeds seven consecutive days, a per diem for incidental expenses such as laundry, portage, etc. may be claimed for reimbursement. (This is interpreted to include the seven qualifying days.) See Appendix A for current rate.

Business Meals and Related Expenses

The College recognizes that in certain circumstances such as conferences, business invitations/meetings or planned staff meeting events, hospitality expenditures are conducive to the success of college business affairs. Hospitality expenditures may include food, beverages and admission fees and the most senior team member present from the host location should pay for the related hospitality expenditures.

Reimbursement for expenses related to alcoholic beverages will only be allowed in special circumstances where it is warranted as part of an organized function or is considered necessary to the business purpose of the College. (See Administration Policy: A-4.04 Hospitality).

Gratuities

A maximum gratuity of 15 percent of the total bill will be allowed on meals and other expenses.

Telephones, Internet, and Courier/Mail

When travelling, local and long-distance business calls are reimbursable as are Internet business usage charges. Personal calls and internet usage allowing business travelers to stay in reasonable contact with their immediate family are also reimbursable. Calling cards are to be purchased and used where applicable to reduce communication costs.

Purchases of cell phones are not permitted as a travel or business expense. Courier and mail charges are reimbursable for business-related materials being shipped to/from the staff member's travel location.

Combining Personal Travel

Where personal and business travel are combined, reimbursement is to be based upon the lesser of actual expenses or the most economical transportation expenses that would have been incurred had personal travel not taken place. Per diem allowances and other expenses will not be reimbursed beyond the costs that would have been incurred had personal travel not taken place.

Taxi, Bus or Car Rental

Staff members may use taxis, busses, commuter trains etc. in their travels. Where rental cars are used, staff must confirm a "government rate". Reimbursement for car rental will only be to the government rate or less.

When renting an automobile purchase a minimum limit of \$1 million third party liability limit if available. Decline to purchase the Collision Damage or Loss Damage Waiver for vehicles that are rented in Canada or the U.S. and operated within the guidelines described in this section (e.g. under \$75,000 (CAD) value, operated only by an employee or officer who is declared as permitted drivers on the rental agreement, only rented and operated within Canada or the US, etc.)

Other Transportation Costs

Miscellaneous expenses such as parking, road tolls, public transportation, and airport buses/trains including reasonable gratuities are reimbursable subject to the presentation of original receipts where possible. Examples of smaller expense items that will be accepted without a receipt include coin-metered parking and bridge tolls.

College Vehicle

Employees are encouraged to use College vehicles as their first choice of travel.

Personal Vehicle

Employees are entitled to claim for the full mileage rate for their own vehicle for travel away from their normal work location. Staff members who use their private vehicles for College business are responsible for maintaining appropriate automobile insurance to cover any claims the staff member may have. The cost of insurance coverage is considered a part of "operating costs," which is covered by the cents-per-kilometre reimbursement. The reimbursement rate will be reviewed on a periodic basis.

See Appendix A for current kilometre reimbursement rate.

See Appendix B for standardized return distances. Staff members who choose to use their own vehicle should also see policy A-1.03 Vehicle Use.

Where an employee/board member's private vehicle is damaged while in use on the Employer's business, the Employer shall reimburse the lesser of actual vehicle damage repair costs or the employee's vehicle insurance deductible to a maximum of \$600 per occurrence, for:

- damage caused to the vehicle by students, other employees or board members of the College; and/or
- damage caused to the vehicle by vandalism that results from employment; and/or
- damage as a result of an accident while on the Employer's business.

This section will not apply where:

- a court holds that the employee/board member or driver of the vehicle is guilty of willful, wanton or gross negligence;
- or damage is caused from falling or flying objects such as a rock, or gravel hitting your windshield.

Should an employee choose to drive rather than fly, mileage at prevailing rates will be paid to the lesser of actual mileage or the most economical return airfare that NLC could obtain when the necessity for the trip became known. Meals, accommodation and/or other expenses will not be reimbursed for any period beyond that which would occur if the employee was travelling by air. Exceptions can be made for substantiated medical reasons, or where adequate air travel is uneconomical, or not reasonably available.

Other Foreign Travel Expenses

Reimbursement may also be claimed for reasonable expenses incurred which relate directly to foreign travel:

- car rental insurance;
- Visa's and passports;
- inoculation(s);
- travelers' cheques;
- bottled water;
- preventive medication, i.e. malaria tablets, etc;
- premiums for additional medical insurance to provide coverage equivalent to that available under the Medical Services Plan in B.C.;
- additional dry cleaning/laundry costs;
- additional baggage insurance;
- reasonable travel gratuities;
- similar directly related travel costs.

Ineligible Travel Expenses

The following expenses are considered personal expenses and will not be considered on reimbursement claims:

- Interest charges on outstanding charge card balances.
- Annual or monthly fees charged on bank accounts or credit cards.
- Uninsured losses to vehicles.
- Travel insurance for College employees.
- Parking and traffic fines.
- Personal expenses including hotel pay movies, sporting events, excursions and similar items.
- Laundry and dry cleaning on trips of less than a week.
- Lost or stolen tickets, cash or personal property. Travelers need to ensure that their personal insurance provides adequate coverage for personal property.
- Hairdresser/barber or other personal care.
- Spa/massage fees or club fees (exception is daily charge for hotel workout facilities while travelling).
- Mini bar purchases.
- Excess personal baggage (exception will be College related materials such as teaching tools and promotional materials).
- Hotel room damage or cleaning charges.

SUPPORTING FORMS, DOCUMENTS, WEBSITES, RELATED POLICIES

- Appendix A
- Appendix B
- F-2.07 Signing Authority
- F-3.11 Travel Advances
- A-4.04 Hospitality
- A-1.03 Vehicle Use

RELATED ACTS AND REGULATIONS

N/A

RELATED COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

N/A

APPENDIX A

Per Diem Rates	
Breakfast	\$26.25
Lunch	\$26.25
Dinner	\$36.00
Incidentals (after 7 days)	\$17.50
Accommodation provided by colleague, relative or friend	\$50.00/night

Current kilometre reimbursement rate: \$0.57 per kilometre.

APPENDIX B

The standardized return distances are listed below:

Kms Return

Dawson Creek to:

Chetwynd	220 kms
Fort St. John	170 kms
Tumbler Ridge	245 kms
Moberly Lake	260 kms
Grande Prairie	260 kms
Fort Nelson	980 kms
Hudson's Hope	355 kms
Dease Lake	2,770 kms
Prince George	810 kms

Chetwynd to:

Moberly Lake	40 kms
Tumbler Ridge	210 kms
Fort St. John	330 kms
Hudson's Hope	135 kms

Fort St. John to:

Fort Nelson	810 kms
Hudson's Hope	180 kms
Tumbler Ridge	410 kms