

Council Policy - Travel and Accommodation Policy

Policy Statement

Travel within Western Australia

1. Councillors may attend City Representation events within Western Australia during their term of office upon the following conditions:
 - a. The travel falls within the definitions for conference, professional development or delegation;
 - b. Prior approval has been granted by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor as applicable;
 - c. In deciding whether approval is to be granted the Mayor or Deputy Mayor should take into consideration the councillors' remaining term of office; and
 - d. There is sufficient budget allocation for the councillors' travel.

Travel outside of Western Australia

2. Councillors may attend City Representation events held outside WA and overseas during their term of office upon the following conditions:
 - a. The travel falls within the definitions for conference, professional development or delegation;
 - b. An item has been presented to Council specifying:
 - (i) the benefit to the City of the attendance at the conference, professional development or delegation;
 - (ii) whether, if applicable, there is a necessity to send more than one councillor; and
 - (iii) whether the information to be discussed at the conference or professional development can be sourced from within Western Australia.
3. Approval has been granted by Council resolution;
4. There is sufficient budget allocation for the councillors' travel.

General conditions of travel

5. **Bookings**
 - a. Approved travel and accommodation will be booked by the Office of the Chief Executive Officer upon the completion of a form titled "Request for travel booking".
 - b. This will allow the City to take advantage of any discounts offered. Travel requests should be provided at least one month before travel to allow adequate time for bookings to be made.

6. **Travel**

- a. The cost of air travel to and from destinations is to be by the shortest most practical route unless additional travel is contemplated before or after a conference.
- b. Councillor delegates who include travel other than that referred to in (6a) as part of the entire journey and the additional travel is unrelated to the approved travel, must pay the costs of this additional travel from personal funds.
- c. Air travel will be booked as economy class on the most economical flight.
- d. The cost of any upgrade to business class shall be paid from the councillor's personal funds.
- e. The Mayor shall have the authority to assess special, medical or extenuating circumstances and approve business travel. Such requests must be in writing and supported by appropriate evidence.
- f. Hire cars may be booked only if required to meet the reasonable travel requirements of the conference or professional development.
- g. Taxi fares for reasonable travel requirements relevant to the conference and/or Council Business:
 - will be reimbursed upon return on the production of receipts to verify the expense; or
 - can be paid with Cab-charge card or vouchers issued to the councillor delegate prior to departure.
- h. Councillor delegates, who use their private vehicle for conference travel, will be reimbursed for vehicle costs in accordance with the Public Service Award Motor Vehicle Allowance to a maximum amount equivalent to what it would have cost to travel by air.
- i. As part of the City's Business Travel Insurance Policy, any travel insurance for Elected Member delegates or their spouses is provided for as part of that certificate of currency.

7. **Accommodation**

Accommodation will be booked, where practicable, at the associated venue or, if unavailable, at premises in close proximity to the venue provided this accommodation is better value for money. Bookings will include accommodation the night before and/or after the event where necessary because of travel, airline flights and/or event timetables.

8. **Meal and Incidentals**

- a. The City will pay for reasonable costs of meal and incidentals. Such expenses which will be paid or reimbursed by the City include:
 - Taxi, train, bus and tram fares to/from the airport and the venue;
 - Vehicle hire, petrol and parking fees;
 - Breakfasts, lunches, dinners not included in the registration fee;
 - Reasonable telephone, facsimile and internet charges;
 - Optional activities related to the conference/training; and
 - Laundry and dry cleaning if the stay is for more than three days.

- b. The City will not pay for or reimburse:
- Mini bar expenses;
 - Entertainment costs not associated with those scheduled as part of the City Representation event.
 - Any expenses associated with matters other than those attended to while attending the City Representation event.

9. **Accompanying persons**

- a. A partner or spouse may accompany a councillor delegate to a City Representation event.
- b. All expenses incurred by the accompanying person are to be paid by the accompanying person or councillor delegate, except the following which will be paid or reimbursed by the City:
- Official conference meals;
 - Accommodation provided there is not increase in accommodation costs arising from the councillor delegate attending the event on their own.
- c. Where the City meets an account containing any expenditure of cost incurred on behalf of an accompanying person attending, such expenditure must be repaid to the City by the councillor delegate/accompanying person within 30 days of being invoiced for such expenditure.

10. **Report**

- a. Within 30 days of returning from a City Representation event of more than two days duration (excluding Local Government Week), the councillor delegate(s) must submit an individual or composite report (where approval has been granted for more than one councillor to attend) for inclusion in the "Reports of Members" in the next Council Agenda. The report should stipulate the program, major points of interest to the City and whether attendance at similar events is recommended.
- b. All conference and training papers remain the property of the City.

Objective

11. To establish clear guidelines for travel and accommodation arrangements for councillors who are required to travel for City business.

Scope

12. This policy applies to the Mayor and all councillors of the City of Albany.
13. **Roles and Responsibilities:** The Executive Director Corporate Services is responsible for implementing this Policy.

Legislative and Strategic Context

- *Local Government Act 1995*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*, including associated regulations
- City of Albany's Codes of Conduct

Review Position and Date

14. This policy and procedure is to be reviewed by the document owner annually.

Associated Documents

- Councillor Quarterly Mileage Claim Form
- Councillor Quarterly Childcare Expense Claim Form
- Travel Expenses Claim Form

Definitions

- **CEO** means the Chief Executive Officer of a local government.
- **Councillor** means a person who holds the office of councillor on a council.
- **Mayor** means a person elected by the electors to hold the office of Mayor.
- **Conference** means conferences, seminars, congresses, forums, workshops, study tours, delegations and events relevant to the role of a councillor.
- **Professional Development** means personal development such as undergraduate and post graduate studies, short courses, study tours, conferences, seminars, forums, or similar events that will assist a councillor in their broad civic leadership role.
- **Delegation** means any formal group visit, authorised by Council, to an external organisation representing the City of Albany.
- The Terms "**Conference, Professional Development and Delegation**" are collectively used in this policy under the term "**City Representation**".

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