



MAPOON ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL
Councillor Expenses Reimbursement Policy
RESOLUTION NO. 116/2020 VERSION V2

COUNCILLOR EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities policy is to ensure that councillors (including mayors) can receive reimbursement of reasonable expenses and be provided with necessary facilities in the performance of their role.

2. COMMENCEMENT OF THE POLICY

This Policy will commence from 16 January 2018. It replaces all other Councillor expenses and reimbursement policies of Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council ("MASC").

3. BACKGROUND

A local government must adopt, by resolution, an expenses reimbursement policy or an amendment of the expenses reimbursement policy as per section 250 of the Local Government Regulation 2012.

Division 2 is about the expenses, reimbursement policy. Section 249 (2) the expenses reimbursement policy is a policy providing the following

- a) Payment of reasonable expenses incurred, or to be incurred by councillors for discharging their duties and responsibilities as councillors;
- b) Provision of facilities to the councillors for the purpose.
- c) The use of the provided facilities will be open for review to the extent appropriate to the proper performance of a Councillor's responsibilities.
- d) The MASC will provide only those facilities reasonably necessary for the efficient performance of a Councillor's responsibilities.
- e) To maximize equity and the participation of Councillors from diverse backgrounds and circumstances, this Councillor Expenses Reimbursement Policy expressly permits the reimbursement of expenses that are necessarily incurred to allow the participation of Councillors who experience unusual barriers to participation, such as a disability or cultural responsibilities.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and adhered to by the Mayor and Councillors.



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6. Definitions

Official MASC Business - activities conducted on behalf of MASC where a Councillor is required to undertake certain tasks to satisfy legislative requirements or achieve business objectives for the MASC. Official MASC business should result in a benefit being achieved, either for the Local Government and/or the local community. This includes:

- i) Attendance at Council, Portfolio and Briefing meetings;
- ii) Attendance at prescribed Local Government training activities/workshops, seminars and conferences;
- iii) Attendance at civic ceremonies and community events where a formal invitation has been received inviting Councillors in their capacity to undertake official duty;
- iv) Attendance at public meetings, annual meetings or presentation dinners where invited as a Councillor;
- v) Attendance at meetings of community groups where appointed as a MASC delegate to the group or invited to speak about MASC programs and activities;
- vi) Attendance at private meetings with constituents, where arranged through official MASC channels and details of discussions are documented in official records or diaries;
- vii) Attendance at civic functions on behalf of the Mayor;
- viii) Attendance at organized meetings/deputations/inspections/community consultations on a one-off basis; and
- ix) Attendance at organized meetings pertaining to a meeting of a community organization where a delegate of the MASC has not been appointed to attend or is unavailable to attend.

1. Reasonable - Councillors must make sound judgements and consider what is *prudent, responsible* and *acceptable* to their communities when determining reasonable levels of expenditure.

2. Expenses - MASC will reimburse Councillors for their reasonable and necessary expenses incurred or to be incurred when discharging their duties as Councillors.

3. Professional Development - Attendance at workshops, courses, seminars and conferences that improve Councillor's skills relevant to the role of a Councillor. *Mandatory Professional Development* is the title that applies when the MASC resolves that all Councillors must attend the event. *Discretionary Professional Development* is the title used to describe all professional development that is not Mandatory Professional Development.

7. POLICY

MASC will reimburse Councillors for expenses as set out in this policy.



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In addition to the expenses expressly referred to in the section of this Policy headed Expense Categories, the MASC will reimburse other expenses that are necessarily incurred to allow the participation of Councillors who experience unusual barriers to participation, such as a disability or cultural responsibilities.

Expense Categories

1. Professional Development

MASC will reimburse expenses incurred for:

- All mandatory professional development; and
- Discretionary professional development up to a maximum of \$5,000 (indexed annually to CPI) during a single Local Government term.

2. Travel as required to represent Council

MASC will reimburse local, interstate and overseas travel expenses (e.g. Flights, car hire, accommodation, meals and associated registration fees) deemed necessary to achieve the business of MASC when:

- i) A Councillor is acting as an official representative of Council; and
- ii) The activity/event and travel have been endorsed by resolution of Council.

Councillors must travel via the most direct route, using the most economical and efficient mode of transport. The amount of the reimbursement will be the actual amount expended by the Councillor, or where an actual amount cannot be directly substantiated, an equivalent mileage allowance.

NOTE: Any fines incurred while travelling in Council-owned vehicles or privately-owned vehicles when attending to MASC business will be the responsibility of the Councillor incurring the fine.

2.1 Travel bookings

- i) All Councillor travel approved by Council will be booked and paid for by MASC. Economy class is to be used where possible, although MASC may approve Business class in certain circumstances.
- ii) Airline tickets are not transferable and can only be procured for the Councillor's travel on MASC business. They cannot be used to offset other unapproved expenses (e.g. Cost of partner or spouse accompanying the Councillor).

2.2 Travel transfer costs

- i) Any travel transfer expenses associated with Councillors travelling for MASC approved business will be reimbursed, e.g. Trains, buses, taxi and ferry fares.
- ii) Receipts must be provided with all claims for reimbursement.

2.3 Private vehicle usage



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Payment for use of the Councillor's private vehicle on MASC business will be reimbursed to the Councillor on a kilometre rate as set out in the Australian Taxation Office 'Allowable deductions for Motor Vehicles'.

In other circumstances, Councillor's private vehicle usage will be reimbursed by MASC if the:

- i) Travel has been endorsed by Council resolution;
- ii) Total travel claim does not exceed the cost of the same travel using Economy flights plus the cost of taxi transfers.

2.4 Accommodation

All Councillor accommodation for MASC business will be booked and paid for by MASC. Accommodation should be selected that provides:

- i) MASC with the best price value; and
- ii) Convenient to the conference/meeting Councillors will be reimbursed for the actual cost of meals when:
 - a) The Councillor incurs the cost personally;
 - b) The meal was not provided within the (registration) costs of the approved activity/event/travel; and
 - c) The Councillor can produce documents sufficient to verify the actual meal cost.

If a Councillor cannot produce a receipt for a meal they have purchased then a Statutory Declaration must be completed to claim the reimbursement. No alcohol will be paid for by MASC.

2.5 Hospitality Expenses

The Mayor will be reimbursed up to \$1,000 per annum for hospitality expenses deemed necessary in the conduct of MASC business.

3. FACILITIES CATEGORIES - 'Administrative tools' Administrative tools will be provided to Councillors as required to assist Councillors in their role. Administrative tools include:

- i) Office space and meeting rooms
- ii) Computers/ Ipad with internal access
- iii) Mobile Phone (Mayor Only)
- iv) Stationery
- v) Access to photocopiers
- vi) Printers
- vii) Facsimile machines
- viii) Publications
- ix) Use of Council landline telephones and internet access in Council offices.
- x) Councillors will be reimbursed \$50.00 per month for mobile phone usage.



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4. VARIATION

MASC reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time.

POLICY VERSION AND REVISION INFORMATION

Policy Authorised by: Naseem Begam Chetty Original issue: 1
Title: Chief Executive Officer
Policy Maintained by: David Ferguson Version: 1
Title: Corporate Services Manager
Policy Maintained by:
Title: Governance Manager Current Version 2
Review date:
30 June 2022

WORKPLACE PARTICIPANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*I acknowledge:
receiving the MASC Policy;
that I should comply with the policy; and
that there may be disciplinary consequences if I fail to comply, which may result in the termination of my employment.*

Your name:

Signed:

Date:
