

Contact North | Contact Nord

Ontario's Distance Education & Training Network
Le réseau d'éducation et de formation à distance de l'Ontario

Financial Policy and Procedures

Originator: Director, Financial Services

Approved by: Maxim Jean-Louis, President

Effective Date: April 1, 2012

Replaces: January 29, 2012

Travel and Business Expenses

1.0 Introduction

This policy has been revised to align with the BPS Expense Directive issued under the authority of the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act*, 2010, and to provide guidance on the circumstances and appropriateness of incurring expenses relative to travel, meals, hospitality, gifts and corporate expenses

2.0 Purpose, Application and Scope

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is:

- To set out rules and principles for the reimbursement of expenses;
- To provide a framework of accountability ; and
- To ensure the expenditure of Contact North funds are properly authorized and support business, initiatives and goals.

Application and Scope

The expense rules apply to any person in the organization making an expense claim, including the following:

- Appointees;
- Board members;
- Volunteers;
- Employees; and
- Consultants and contractors engaged by the organization, providing consulting or other services.

In addition, every funding agreement between Contact North and a ministry or agency of the Government of Ontario is deemed to include the requirements of this directive. Where there is a conflict or inconsistency of such agreements and the directive, this directive prevails over the agreement, save and except terms and conditions of employment contracts.

3.0 Principles

This policy and the procedures surrounding expenditures and employee reimbursement of expenses are based on four principles.

- A. **Accountability** - Contact North is accountable for public funds used to reimburse travel, meal and hospitality expenses. All reimbursed expenses are to support business objectives.
- B. **Transparency** - Contact North rules and policies for incurring and reimbursing travel, meal and hospitality expenses are clear and available to all stakeholders and to the public on the Contact North web site.
- C. **Value for Money** - Contact North funds must be used prudently and responsibly. Plans for travel, meals, accommodation and hospitality are necessary and economical with due regard to health and safety. Staff aim to make the most practical, economical and reasonable arrangements for travel, meals, hospitality, gifts and corporate expenses.
- D. **Fairness** - Legitimate authorized expenses incurred by employees while on Contact North business will be reimbursed.

4.0 Requirements

4.1 Accountability Framework

This Policy has been approved by Contact North's President. The President may establish additional rules consistent with those laid out in this policy

4.2 Posting

This policy is posted on Contact North's website and is available to all Contact North employees and the general public.

4.3 Alcohol

Alcohol cannot be claimed and will not be reimbursed as part of a travel or meal expense.

Employees will not be reimbursed for alcohol served or consumed at events, meals or meetings in which only employees of Contact North, designated Broader Public Sector (BPS) organizations or any of the Ontario government ministries, agencies or public entities covered by the OPS Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expense Directive are present.

For rules regarding reimbursement for the service of alcohol as part of a hospitality event, see section 4.4.

4.4 Hospitality

Hospitality is defined as the provision of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation and other amenities paid out of public funds to people who are not engaged to work for Contact North, a designated BPS organizations or any of the Ontario government ministries, agencies or public entities covered by the Ontario Public Services (OPS) Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expense Directive.

Hospitality may be extended in an economical, consistent and appropriate manner when it can facilitate Contact North business and is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy or protocol.

Hospitality may never be offered solely for the benefit of anyone covered by the BPS Expenses Directive, or by the OPS Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive.

All expenses must be documented and include original itemized receipts.

The hospitality claim must include event details regarding:

- Purpose;
- Date(s);
- Location;
- Type of hospitality (breakfast, lunch, dinner, reception, refreshments, etc.);
- Attendees
 - ✓ Contact North, BPS or Ontario government attendees (all people and positions covered by this Directive) listed by name
 - ✓ other attendees listed by name and organization;
- Appropriate prior approvals as required.

Service of Alcohol as Hospitality

The decision to provide alcohol at a hospitality event with invitees who are not solely engaged to work for Contact North, a designated BPS organization or any of the Ontario government ministries, agencies or public entities covered by the Ontario Public Services (OPS) Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expense Directive, must have the appropriate approval and appropriate measures should be taken to ensure a reasonable limit is placed on the quantity and cost of alcohol to be provided in advance of the event.

If alcohol is provided, it is to be provided in a responsible manner, e.g. food should always be served when alcohol is available.

Responsibility of event participants who consume alcoholic beverages:

1. To ensure that alcoholic beverages are consumed in moderation; and
2. To arrange for appropriate transportation from the event.

Approvals for Alcohol for Hospitality Claims

Prior written approval is required for hospitality events where alcohol will be served. The following chart identifies the level of approval for alcohol provided during hospitality events for everyone covered by this policy.

APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR ALCOHOL FOR HOSPITALITY CLAIMS Authorization Required Prior to Incurring Expense					
	President	Chair of the Board	Board	Cost Centre Managers	Employees
Authorization to serve alcohol at hospitality events and approve claims for alcohol	Chair of the Board	Chair of the Audit Committee	Chair of the Board	President	President and Supervisor

No delegation of Authority is allowed, except in the case where individuals are temporarily acting in positions with approval authority, they can exercise the full authority of the position provided that they do not approve their own expenses.

Hospitality from Vendors

Acceptance of hospitality from vendors (current or prospective) by a Contact North employee may constitute a conflict of interest, and should be avoided if the hospitality could be perceived as a conflict of interest.

4.5 Documentation

Good record-keeping practices must be maintained for verification and audit purposes.

All business-related expenses must be documented on the appropriate expense report forms, which must be approved by the appropriate person based on the Designated Signing Authority.

Original itemized receipts must be submitted with all claims unless otherwise indicated in this policy. Credit card slips themselves are insufficient to support a claim for reimbursement. The Financial Services Department has the authority to question or request additional information concerning the business purpose, supporting documentation or reasonableness of an expense.

4.6 Consultants and Other Contractors

Consultants and other contractors will not be reimbursed for any hospitality, incidentals or food expenses, including:

- Meals, snacks and beverages;
- Gratuities;
- Laundry or dry cleaning;
- Valet services;
- Dependent care;
- Home management; and
- Personal telephone calls

Reimbursement for allowable expenses can be claimed and reimbursed when the contract specifically provides for it. Travel for consultants and/or contractors should not be charged direct to Contact North.

Note: Consulting contracts, which were in effect prior to the effective date of this policy which included reimbursement for the above noted expenses, will continue to be reimbursed until expiry of the existing contract.

4.7 Individuals Making Claims (Claimants)

Claimants must:

- Obtain all appropriate approvals before incurring expenses, unless otherwise stated within this policy;
- Submit original, itemized receipts with all claims;

- Submit claims within ten (10) days of travel for travel expense claims and by the tenth of the following month in which the expense was incurred for other expenses. The exception is year-end, at which time claims must be submitted by the year-end deadline communicated by the Financial Services Department;
- If the information above is not available or is not possible, submit a written explanation with the claim to provide the approver with adequate information for decision-making;
- Repay any overpayments – considered to be a debt owing to Contact North; and
- If leaving employment with Contact North, submit any claims for expenses before leaving.

4.8 Approvers

Approvers are prohibited from approving their own expenses. Expenses for a group can only be claimed by the Contact North employee in attendance with the most seniority. Expenses incurred by the approver of the claim cannot be submitted as part of the claim.

Prior Approval for Exceptions to the Policy and Managerial Discretion

At times, special circumstances arise that may require managerial discretion to all warranted exceptions.

For the purpose of this policy and the expense rules, managerial discretion is the administrative authority to make decisions and choices with some degree of flexibility, while maintaining compliance with this directive and the rules.

When exercising managerial discretion, the rationale must be documented and filed with the claim.

Approvers are accountable for their decisions, which should be:

- Subject to good judgment and knowledge of the situation;
- Exercised in appropriate circumstances; and
- Comply with the principles and mandatory requirements set out in this policy and the expense rules.

Where an approver exercises discretion in making a pre-approved exception, the waiver must be pre-approved by the President and accompany the claim.

5.0 Travel

This policy applies whenever business travel is required. For the purpose of this policy, business travel does not refer to a person's regular commute to work – expenses related to a person's regular commute are not reimbursable.

There are some jobs where frequent travel is a requirement and part of the regular job duties. On hiring, supervisors should ensure employees are aware of the policy and procedures and how they will affect their job. In these situations, approvers should meet with the employee to determine appropriate strategies and discuss when pre-approval would be required, when meals can be reimbursed, use of vehicles, etc. Supervisors should ensure newly hired employees read this policy.

Contact North will not reimburse expenses that are reimbursed by another party.

5.1 Approvals for Travel

Prior approval by the appropriate authority is required for all business travel by travellers according to destination:

TRAVEL APPROVAL AUTHORITY Authorization Required Prior to Incurring Expense					
	President	Chair of the Board	Board	Cost Centre Managers	Employees
TRAVEL					
Within Ontario	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Supervisor*
Within North America – outside Ontario	N/A	N/A	Chair of the Board	President	Supervisor
International travel – outside N. America	Chair of the Board	Chair of the Audit Committee	Chair of the Board	President	President and Supervisor

*If your regular duties require you to travel within your catchment area, prior approval is not required; claims however must be approved by your Supervisor.

Special Status for International Travel

For some individuals, the requirement to travel internationally may be considered integral to their business. To ensure that the approval process does not have an undue negative effect on the ability of Contact North to conduct business, these individuals may have the opportunity to request the President or Chair to approve international in advance.

5.2 Delegation of Authority for Travel Approvals

In the case where individuals are temporarily acting in positions with approval authority, they can exercise the full authority of the position provided that they do not approve their own travel plans or expenses.

5.3 Before Travelling

Prior to travelling:

- Seek approval in writing as indicated if required;
- Choose the most cost-effective accommodation or method of travel in line with this policy;
- Use the authorized travel agent to make travel arrangements (mandatory for flights, optional for hotel and rental vehicles); and
- With a change in your itinerary, you should:
 - ✓ Report any changes to your approver if prior approval is required for travel;
 - ✓ Submit any changes through the authorized travel agent;
 - ✓ Ensure all changes are recorded on your travel claim including change fees, any credits owed or used along with a business reason for the change.

5.4 Ineligible Travel Expenses

The following is a sample of expenses that are not eligible for reimbursement and should not be included in claims:

- Entertaining expenses (i.e. Pay TV, movies, video rental, mini-bar, extra amenities);
- Laundry (unless away for more than 5 business days);
- Child, elder or pet care expenses;
- Sports facilities and recreational expenses;
- Parking violations and other expenses resulting from unlawful conduct;
- Vehicle repairs and/or maintenance or other expense related to the use of a privately owned vehicle;
- Expenses for spouse or other family members accompanying claimant on a trip;
- Reimbursement of expenses related to attendance at political fundraising events is not allowed;
- Costs associated with unnecessary stopovers, making voluntary changes to existing travel arrangements, 'no show' charges unless incurred as a result of business-related circumstances or extenuating personal circumstances, and unused or lost tickets are not reimbursable;
- Excess baggage charges (unless directly related to Contact North business); and
- Personal travel insurance for lost or stolen items.

The above is not an exhaustive list of all ineligible expenses.

5.5 Lost or Missing Receipts

On occasion, an employee misplaces an original receipt; in these cases, the amount not receipted becomes the responsibility of the employee, except in extenuating circumstances. In extenuating circumstances, the employee must complete a Missing Receipt Voucher and have it approved by the Designated Signing Authority. It is the Designated Signing Authority's responsibility to approve the circumstance and missing receipt amount and ensures that the approvals of lost or missing receipts are kept to a minimum.

5.5 Overpayments (Personal expenses)

Any expenses that are not in accordance with the rules of this policy should not be charged to a Contact North credit card and should not be claimed through a travel expense form. All charges or claims that are not in accordance with the terms of this policy (personal expenses) shall be recovered from the claimant as a debt owing to Contact North.

5.6 Advances

Requests for advances of travel funds are to be submitted to the Financial Services Department, at least five (5) business days prior to departure. The amount of the advance is based on anticipated cash expenses, as outlined in this policy. An advance is not allowed for a one-day trip. It is the responsibility of the employee to safeguard the travel advance received until he/she has accounted for its use.

5.7 Loyalty and Other Points Programs

Until the time that loyalty points can be accumulated through Contact North, participation in frequent flyer or other loyalty programs is permitted provided that you:

- Choose the most cost-effective accommodation or method of travel;
- Ensure there are no additional costs to Contact North;
- Use the corporate travel agency to book your method of travel; and

- Use the Contact North credit card to pay for all travel expenses except meals.

Loyalty points can be redeemed at the user's discretion; however, they cannot be redeemed for cash by using the points for business purposes and then submitting a claim for reimbursement.

5.8 Transportation

The type of travel selected should be the most practical and economical way to travel to align with the principles established in this policy.

Air Travel

Air travel is permitted if it is the most practical and economical way to travel. All employees are to book their own travel through the authorized travel agent. Air travel is to be charged through the Contact North account, and not on individual credit cards.

Economy (coach) is the standard option for ticket purchase. Travel in business class must have prior approval by the President and may be considered:

- On international flights over six hours in duration, or
- On flights within North America, if related to provision of reasonable accommodation (e.g., health reasons).

Travellers are encouraged to obtain the lowest available fare and/or use of Aeroplan points if return airfare is expected to exceed \$600 (if seats are available) and if Aeroplan point utilization is considered cost effective. Information should be obtained through corporate travel as to whether or not seats are available. Once availability is confirmed, contact the Travel and Reimbursement Clerk with details of flight information to book an Aeroplan seat versus paying full fare.

Financial penalties which apply to changes and cancellations of non-refundable tickets are to be made for Contact North business only and not for personal reasons. Financial penalties incurred for reasons that are not business related will not be reimbursed by Contact North and will become the responsibility of the employee. If a travel arrangement must be missed or changed, employees are responsible for notifying the travel agent and/or company direct to try to reschedule or receive a credit for missed or unused tickets. Employees are responsible for notifying the Travel and Reimbursement Clerk for any missed or changed ticket.

Road Transportation

When road transportation is the most practical and economical way to travel, the order of preference shall be:

- i. Contact North vehicle when available;
- ii. Rental vehicle if the Contact North vehicle is not available and a rental is more economical than use of privately owned vehicle; or,
- iii. Privately owned vehicle when the Contact North vehicle is not available; and a privately owned vehicle is more economical than use of a rental vehicle.

Car pooling is recommended for multiple people attending the same meeting/function.

When travelling by vehicle, dates, kilometers and destination(s) must be included on the travel claim.

Contact North Vehicle

Contact North vehicles may be used only for Contact North business and operated only by Contact North employees with a valid driver's license. Passengers can be allowed in the Contact North vehicle only if the passengers' travel is related to Contact North business.

Rental Vehicle

The size of the car rental must be the most economical and practical required for the business task and number of occupants, taking into account safety (including weather) considerations. Exceptions must be documented and approved. When making car rental bookings, the traveller should take advantage of corporate and other discounts.

Car rental bookings can be made by the traveller or with the assistance of the authorized travel agent.

If an employee holds a Contact North credit card, they are to pay for the rental vehicle with their Contact North credit card and are to deny the rental insurance provided at a cost by the rental company. Insurance coverage for damage to rental vehicles will be covered either through the credit card company or Contact North insurance.

The credit card insurance only insures the credit card holder as a driver and the Contact North insurance only covers employees of Contact North as the driver. The Contact North credit card insurance will cover the collision damage waiver (CDW) and the roadside assistance service fee. Vans, cargo vans or mini cargo vans (other than mini-vans) are excluded from coverage by the Contact North credit card company and therefore the employee should accept the insurance coverage when renting those types of vehicles. Normally only passenger vehicles are covered by Contact North credit card insurance coverage. The credit card company does not cover third party liability, however Contact North insurance does.

If you do not have a Contact North credit card to charge the rental vehicle to, **you are to purchase** the CDW and liability damage waiver (LDW) and claim them as an expense.

In order to avoid higher gasoline charges imposed by the rental car agency, the rental car should be refueled wherever possible before returning it.

Some rental agencies allow you to pre-purchase the tank of fuel at a discounted/competitive price, at the start of the rental; however there is no refund for unused fuel. **This option should only be used when the person renting the car can be sure they will be able to leave the tank very close to empty otherwise it actually increases the cost to Contact North for fuel.**

Privately Owned Vehicles

Business mileage reimbursement for using a personal vehicle will be at the per kilometer rate specified below.

Transportation of any kind between an employee's residence and official worksite during a regularly scheduled workweek is not reimbursable.

Business mileage is reimbursable only to the extent it exceeds the employee's normal daily commuting mileage on a regularly scheduled workweek.

Examples

- A) During a regularly scheduled workweek, an employee's normal commute is 15 kilometers one way to his/her official worksite. If that employee drives 10 kilometers from their residence to attend an off-site meeting, then 10 kilometers from the meeting to their official worksite, the employee may be reimbursed for the 5 kilometers in excess of the normal commute (the employee travelled 20 kilometers to get to work via the off-site meeting versus the normal 15 kilometer commute). A similar calculation applies if an employee is returning home from his/her official worksite and stops to attend an off-site meeting, drop flyers at a business or other work-related activity.
- B) During a regularly scheduled workweek, an employee is required to make an extra commute to his/her official worksite; mileage will be paid between the employee's residence and official worksite. The commute must be required, and it must be in addition to the employee's normal work day commutes. If an employee works late on a normal work day, but is not required to make an extra commute, mileage to the employee's residence will not be reimbursed. The interpretation of an "extra commute" may vary due to the organizational structure of a department therefore it is at the discretion of each supervisor to define its own criteria for "extra commute" mileage reimbursement.
- C) During a regularly scheduled workweek an employee begins a business trip and drives from his/her residence to the airport, kilometers from the employee's residence to the official worksite will be excluded from the calculation. If mileage is LESS from residence to the airport than from residence to his/her official worksite, the employee will not be reimbursed for mileage. Conversely, if mileage is greater from residence to the airport than from residence to his/her official worksite, then the difference between mileage from residence and mileage to the airport will be reimbursed (the employee normally travels 11 kilometers to official worksite and travels 8 kilometers to the airport instead of going to work, the employee is not reimbursed for any mileage, however if travel to the airport for the same employee is 15 kilometers, the employee would be reimbursed for 4 kilometers – the difference between the airport and their regular commute to work).
- D) An employee begins a business trip not during a regularly scheduled workweek (i.e. Saturday or in the evening after already commuting to and from the official worksite) and drives from his/her residence to the airport; kilometers from the employee's residence will be reimbursed.
- E) During a regularly scheduled workweek, an employee attends a training session and drives from his/her residence to the training session, mileage from the employee's residence to official worksite will be excluded from the calculation. If mileage is less from residence to the training session than from residence to his/her official worksite, the employee will not be reimbursed for mileage. Conversely, if mileage is greater from residence to the training session than from residence to his/her official worksite, then the difference between mileage from residence and mileage to the training session will be reimbursed (the employee normally travels 10 kilometers to official worksite and the training site is 20 kilometers the employee will be reimbursed the difference of 10 kilometers).

A rental vehicle must be utilized if the travelling employee will be driving more than 300 kilometers in a day.

If the travelling employee uses his or her personal vehicle while on Contact North business, the following apply:

- The vehicle must be insured at the vehicle owner's expense for personal motor vehicle liability;
- It is the driver/owner's responsibility to ensure that the motor vehicle insurance includes coverage for business use of the vehicle (an additional premium may apply);
- Contact North will not reimburse the costs of insurance coverage for business use, physical damage or liability;
- Contact North is not responsible for reimbursing deductible amounts related to insurance coverage claims; and
- The kilometer allowance is designed to cover vehicle operating costs, including gasoline, insurance, repairs and maintenance.

The kilometer allowance is reviewed and adjusted from time to time by Contact North.

The current allowable kilometer rate is **\$0.43**.

Accident Reporting

All accidents must be reported immediately to:

- Local law enforcement authorities;
- The rental car agency (if applicable within 48 hours of accident);
- The automobile insurance company (if using a privately owned vehicle);
- The person's immediate supervisor;
- The Director, Human Resources; and
- The Director, Financial Services if a rental vehicle is charged to a Contact North credit card.

Rail

Travel by train (coach class) is permitted when it is the most practical and economical way to travel. The Club Car accommodation for day travel, or standard lower berth or roomette accommodation for overnight travel is acceptable for travelling by rail. Any exception to this policy is to be approved in advance by the Designated Signing Authority.

Any staff member if they so choose, can upgrade from Economy Regular to any class they wish, as long as they personally pay directly at the train station for the upgrade for the leg of travel they are taking at that time.

Taxi/Shuttle/Bus

For transportation to and from airports or train terminals, and other trips required in the course of performing the organization's business while travelling, a shuttle or bus is recommended. The destination and purpose of each trip is to be identified on the expense claim.

Taxi fare expenses are also justifiable where group travel by taxicab is more economical than the total cost, had individuals travelled separately.

The guideline for gratuities on taxi fares is a maximum rate of ten percent (10%) of the service.

Parking and Tolls

Reimbursement is provided for necessary and reasonable expenditures for parking, as well as bridge, ferry and highway tolls when driving on Contact North business. Receipts must be obtained and submitted with your expense claim wherever practicable.

Parking costs incurred in the office area as part of a regular commute to work will not be reimbursed.

6.4 Accommodation

Employees are reimbursed for hotel expenses for the night prior (if necessary) and days out-of-town doing business.

Reimbursement will be made for single accommodation in a standard room.

There will be no reimbursement for hotel suites, executive floors or concierge levels when travelling unless it is required for hosting outside guests and represents a more effective and economical alternative than paying for other hotel facilities or services.

In selecting accommodation, claimants should take into account the additional costs of transportation and/or parking charges that could result in a higher total cost.

Employees should request Government or Corporate rate where available. Prior approval is required for rates that exceed \$200 per night.

Penalties incurred for non-cancellation of guaranteed hotel reservations are the claimant's responsibility and may be reimbursed only in exceptional circumstances. It is the responsibility of the traveller to make sure that cancellation is made in advance so that "no show" charges will not be incurred.

In extenuating circumstances, when appropriate hotel accommodations are not available and an employee has arranged accommodation with a relative/friend while travelling on Contact North business and if it is approved in advance by Designated Signing Authority, a maximum rate per day of \$40 in lieu of accommodation charges may be reimbursed to the employee as a contribution to expenses or a gift of hospitality. Accommodation date(s) and location must be provided with the claim.

Room service should not be paid with the Contact North credit card.

6.5 Meals

Without exception, alcohol cannot be claimed and will not be reimbursed as part of a travel or meal expense.

Reasonable and appropriate meal expenses may be reimbursed. Meal expenses are claimable when:

- Travelling on Contact North business and are away from the office area at least 40 kilometers (one way) over a normal meal period; or
- Attending a business meeting which a specific business discussion takes place within the office area that must occur over meal (i.e. working lunch).

Claims for meals consumed at home or included in the cost of transportation, accommodation, seminars or conferences are not allowed.

Meals are not to be charged to the Contact North credit card and if room service is utilized, room service charges are to be paid personally by the employee prior to checkout.

Meal Rates

For each full day of approved travel, actual expenses may be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$69/day for incurred meals (including taxes and gratuities). The maximum amount is calculated per day. For partial days of travel, the maximum amount is calculated using the eligible meal rates.

Meal	Meal Rate	Claim if travelling begins before or ends after
Breakfast	\$15	7:00 a.m.
Lunch	\$20	1:00 p.m.
Dinner	\$34	6:00 p.m.
Maximum Daily Meal Rate	\$69/day	

Claimants have flexibility in distributing their maximum allowed amount per day, based on the schedule above, amongst their meals and are not limited by the individual meal amounts noted above, provided they do not exceed their maximum amount for the day.

Example: if a claimant is entitled to three meals per day, there is no limit on what the claimant can spend per meal, provided the total claim does not exceed \$69. A claimant may skip breakfast and distribute the \$69 maximum across lunch and dinner.

Example: if a claimant's departure time is at 10:30 a.m. and travels for the remainder of the day, the maximum amount that can be claimed for that specific day is \$54, based on the schedule above, distributed at the claimant's discretion amongst lunch and dinner.

Employees are eligible for a maximum of three meals per day, based on the schedule above, and may only submit one receipt per meal. Reimbursement will be based upon receipt totals or the combined maximum rates, whichever is lower.

The combined maximum daily meal rate must exclude the individual meal rate for any of the following:

- Business meal(s);
- Meal(s) provided for by Contact North or any other means (i.e. meals included in transportation, accommodation, seminars, conferences, vendor, etc.); and
- Meal(s) excluded if travel does not cover an entire day

The combined maximum daily meal rate will be reduced by the amount of the meal provided through other means. No other meal receipt will be reimbursed for the same meal provided.

Claimants are to identify on their travel claim if a meal is provided and by whom.

Contact North staff business meeting meals are to be claimed by the Contact North employee in attendance, with the most seniority and are limited to the meal rate per person for the specific meal.

All meals claimed require a detailed itemized receipt.

The guideline for gratuities on meals is a maximum rate of fifteen percent (15%) of the service. When claiming amounts for meals, the gratuity should not be separately listed.

The rates are not an allowance or per diem. They are for individual meals and you must have eaten the meal to be able to submit a claim for reimbursement. Only meals eaten and supported by an original, itemized receipt will be reimbursed.

There may be extenuating circumstances where it may not be possible to purchase a meal within the limits above. In these situations, the employee's supervisor may approve reimbursement for a meal greater than the meal rates above.

Business Meals

Business meals are meals taken with guests, professional colleagues, fellow Contact North employees during which a specific business discussion takes place. Such meals must be considered beneficial to the business objectives. Names of all participants and the organizations they are employed by are to be noted on the receipt.

For business meals with employees of Contact North or other designated Broader Public Sector (BPS) organization, or any of the Ontario government ministries, agencies and public entities covered by the Ontario Public Sector (OPS) Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive, receipts will be reimbursed to the maximum of meal rates listed above. If the amount per person exceeds the meal rate, the Claimant will pay the difference and will only be reimbursed to the maximum meal rate for the number of people in attendance.

If Contact North employees are meeting over a meal, each employee, unless meeting with their direct supervisor, is to claim their own meals.

For business meals with guests other than those covered by the BPS or OPS Expense directives, reasonable meal expenses will be reimbursed. Accountability and transparency are essential due to public and media scrutiny. Names of all participants and the organizations they are employed by are to be noted on the receipt.

Where justified by business needs, expenses for meals that are incurred while working during or through normal meal periods (without prior notice) require the pre-approval. In general, working meals are to be provided in-house.

Reimbursement of overtime meal expenses with receipt must be consistent with the meal rates listed in this policy.

6.6 Combining Business Travel with Personal Travel

Travellers may combine Contact North travel and personal travel with the prior approval of their supervisor.

In the event that the traveller schedules an indirect route (interrupting business portions of a trip for personal travel or vice versa), the supervisor and the traveller must agree in advance on a fair allocation of the trip expenses that refer to Contact North business. In no event will Contact North's

portion of expenses exceed what would have been charged had the personal travel interruption not occurred.

If the traveller extends their travel for personal reasons, the extension cannot increase the cost to Contact North. An example being that rather than returning home on a Friday afternoon, the traveller returns on Sunday. The traveller will be responsible for any expenses incurred beyond the time they would have completed their business portion of the trip and any increased costs of travel.

6.10 Other Eligible Travel Expenses

The specific nature of miscellaneous expenses claimed, are to be detailed on the travel claim form and original itemized receipts must be provided.

- Reasonable telephone and internet charges;
- Photocopying and facsimile charges for business activities;
- Any travel expenses related to physical/medical disabilities of the traveller;
- Parking – as required, associated with the use of an automobile for business activities; and
- Other – occasional purchase of books, manuals and other sundry supplies necessary for business activities.

6.11 Group Travel

Financial Services requires a list of the individuals comprising the group. The individual overseeing the trip is responsible for obtaining and submitting all original receipts. If the cost of travel exceeds \$1,500, a purchase order is required and may require a quote. See the procurement policy for more details regarding quotes and purchase orders.

6.12 Corporate Events

The organization will decide annually the budget for staff event(s) and recognition. Corporate events may include small gifts to employees.

If, in addition to the budgeted staff event(s) and recognition, individual departments and/or units/teams wish to hold their own social event(s) during the year for their staff, the costs will be covered by staff and activities should be outside of regular operations of the organization.

6.13 Gift Giving

Employee related gifts

The Human Resources Department and the Cost Centre Managers will coordinate any gift giving for the items listed below. Gift expense may be incurred, in the form of a gift, on behalf of an employee or an employee's immediate family, for the following events:

- a. Recognition of a long-term employee retiring**
-\$10 per year of service with a recommended maximum gift limit of \$200 (inclusive of taxes, delivery charges, etc.).
- b. Illness of an employee, requiring hospitalization**
- A recommended maximum gift limit of \$75 (inclusive of taxes, delivery charges, etc.).

c. The death of an employee's immediate family member

- A recommended maximum gift limit of \$75 (inclusive of taxes, delivery charges, etc.).

Gifts made on behalf of an employee may include flowers, fruit basket or a donation to a charitable organization. In such cases, Contact North should be acknowledged as the sender (e.g., "from all your friends and colleagues at Contact North"). In the case of a donation to a charity, the notation should indicate the donation is from Contact North.

Gifts General

Gifts to honour an individual for personal reasons other than those indicated above (e.g., birthday, wedding, baby shower, housewarming, promotion, etc.) may not be charged to Contact North accounts.

Detailed receipts for gifts must be submitted with the reimbursement claim and the name of the receiver must be on the back of the receipt(s).

Appropriate token gifts of appreciation may be offered in exchange for pro bono services or expertise to people who are not engaged in work for the organization.

Gifts of cash, alcohol or gift cards for alcohol are not allowed and will not be reimbursed.

Gifts for staff and students, with the exception of approved Corporate Events or prizes drawn for specific events (i.e. trade show, open house, etc.), are not allowable expenses.

Awarding gifts must be compliant with Canada Revenue Agency rules.

All gifts should be appropriately documented, including the name of the individual receiving the gift, the individual who approved the gift, the reason for awarding of the gift, the contents, the cost of the gift itself, and any other pertinent details.

6.14 Service Milestones

Human Resources will coordinate letters of recognition along with a milestone pin or other token gift of recognition identifying the number of years of service (e.g. 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, etc. years).

7.0 Procedures/Responsibilities for Travel Expenses:

Responsibilities of Claimant:

- Verify the travel and other business-related expenses, ensuring the claim is accurate and conforms to policy;
- Provide justification for trip and provide descriptions for expenses claimed;
- Provide explanations for unusual expenses and when claiming expenses for another employee/client/vendor/consultant, etc.;
- Complete claim forms within ten (10) business days after completion of travel/expense; and
- Email electronic copies of claim and scanned receipts to the Travel and Reimbursement Clerk.

Responsibilities for Approval Authority

Those authorized to approve expense claims according to the Financial Signing Authority Policy must:

- Ensure that expenses are consistent and comply with this policy and are work-related, cost effective, modest and appropriate, and strike a balance among economy, health and safety and efficiency of operations;
- Ensure that funds are available in their budget to cover the expenses;
- Ensure business travel was necessary and incurred in the performance of Contact North business;
- Ensure employees whose expenses are to be charged to one of their accounts are familiar with the Travel and Expense Policy prior to taking a trip;
- Ensure that employees are aware of all conflict of interest rules and/or regulations;
- Ensure that all travel arrangements are consistent with this policy;
- Ensure that appropriate receipts are provided to support expense claims;
- Ensure the expenses are being charged to the appropriate account;
- Ensure that any unusual items are explained appropriately or proof is given of prior approval; and
- Authorize and forward the claim to Financial Services Department.

Where an employee with Approval Authority decides to exercise discretion in making an exception, and in order to ensure a proper record for audit purposes, the rationale for the exception must be documented and accompany the claim. All exceptions must also be pre-approved by the President.

Responsibilities of Financial Services Department

Before claim is authorized:

- Review claims for reasonable expenditures, supporting documents, variances from normal practices, ensure expenses are consistent, detailed and comply with this Policy. Claims may be returned for clarification if information or documents are missing;
- Pre-approval for exceptions is included with the claim; and
- Forward claims for approval authorization, notifying the approver of any disputes that could not be settled with the claimant or causes for concern related to the claim.

After claim is authorized:

- Review claims for appropriate authorizations;
- If exceptions have been authorized, ensure proper documentation is received; and
- Process payment.

Auditing and Disputes

Financial Services will conduct random audits of expense claims and receipts.

Financial Services is responsible for the administration of this policy and procedures, and is authorized to question any receipt, obtain further clarification when necessary, and challenge non-compliance with policies.

The appropriate Designated Signing Authority will be informed when items are being disputed for reasons other than clerical errors.