

## 17. Policy Statement – Travel

This policy statement covers reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses necessarily incurred while traveling on government business away from an employee's normal work location. It applies to employees appointed under the *Public Service Act* as well as Order in Council appointees.

When business travel is required to achieve program objectives, it is to be planned and carried out in the most efficient and cost effective manner, taking into account economy, travel and accommodation costs, travel time, and other related expenses.

**NOTE:** For purposes of this directive, where the terms “Ministry” and “Deputy Minister” are used, these will also include Special Offices, Boards, Commissions and Agencies of the Province and the chief executive officers of these organizations, as applicable.

### Definitions

**“assigned parking”**

means parking spaces that are administered by the Minister responsible for assigned parking and which are paid for by the individual employee/appointee and which are allocated as and when available;

**“authorized vehicle”**

means government, leased, visitor, and properly identified employee vehicles;

**“designated parking”**

means those parking spaces that are leased directly by a ministry from the Accommodation and Real Estate Services, Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services;

**“Group I”**

means all employees and Order in Council appointees not specifically included in or designated for reimbursement under Groups II and III;

**“Group II”**

means all persons in positions evaluated under the Management and Salaried Physicians' Job Evaluation Plans who are not covered under Group III. It also includes all members and managerial employees appointed to part-time or full-time positions on Boards, Commissions or Agencies;

**“Group III”**

means all persons with the status of Deputy Minister, Associate Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister, and those in positions classified at levels 9 through 12 of the Management Job Evaluation Plan. It also includes the Chief Provincial Court Judge, the Associate Chief Provincial Court Judge, full and part time Provincial Court Judges and all persons appointed as ministerial or executive assistants to a Minister;

### **“headquarters or geographic location”**

means that area within a radius of 32 kilometres of where an employee/appointee ordinarily performs his/her duties. When an employee/appointee is relocated, the headquarters area may be redefined where exceptional circumstances such as unusual road conditions exist;

### **“travel status”**

means the absence of the employee from the employee’s designated headquarters or geographic location to carry out Government business with the approval of the Employer. Travel status does not apply to employees temporarily assigned to a position outside of the designated headquarters or to field status employees.

### **Air Travel**

Employees/appointees travelling by air on Employer business or undertaking ministry operations requiring the use of chartered aircraft will use recognized commercial or charter companies piloted by professional pilots.

Employees/appointees are not authorized to fly private or personally rented aircraft on Employer business. Such unauthorized travel will not be eligible for travel expense reimbursement, air travel insurance, or Workers’ Compensation Board coverage.

### **Use of Government Owned or Leased/Rented Vehicle**

#### **Use Restrictions**

Government owned and leased/rented vehicles are for use on government business only. Where not otherwise covered in a collective agreement or the *Terms and Conditions of Employment*, such use includes reasonable incidental personal use of the vehicle while on travel status (i.e., for meals or a movie, etc.). Other personal use of these vehicles is limited to those activities that have been specifically authorized in advance by the Employer.

#### **Dependents**

An employee/appointee travelling on Employer business in a government owned or leased/rented vehicle may be accompanied by a spouse and/or dependents. Insurance coverage is afforded to family members, equivalent to that available under a standard vehicle insurance policy; however, only the employee/appointee is permitted to drive the vehicle. Any additional travel expenses incurred by a spouse and/or dependents are the responsibility of the employee.

#### **Casual Passengers**

Other than in emergency, severe weather, or life threatening situations, employees/appointees travelling in government owned or leased/rented vehicles are not to provide transportation to private citizens or off duty employees/appointees.

### **Use of Private Vehicle**

#### **Required Use of Private Vehicle**

Where, as a condition of employment, employees/appointees are required to use their own vehicles in the performance of their duties, this requirement will be included in any recruitment notices published for the position.

### **Use Within Headquarters/Geographic Location**

Employees/appointees who use their private vehicle within their headquarters or geographic location on Employer business will be reimbursed for receipted parking charges, transportation toll costs, and the distance driven in a private vehicle, in accordance with applicable sections of [Appendix 1](#).

### **Insurance**

All private vehicles used on the Employer's business are required to carry at least \$500,000 third party liability coverage and, where applicable, business use coverage as required by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

### **Minimizing Risk**

Based on the nature and circumstances of the travel that must be carried out, the types of private vehicles authorized for use on the Employer's business are to provide reasonable personal protection to the employee/appointee and ministry clients to minimize the risk of personal injury and potential liability to the Crown.

### **Damage to Private Vehicle**

Damage to an employee/appointee's private vehicle, as a direct result of employment with the Province, will be reimbursed where provided for by the applicable collective agreement or Terms and Conditions of Employment, in accordance with [Appendix 1](#).

### **Vehicles—General**

#### **Firearms in Vehicles**

Firearms of any description are not to be carried in any vehicle being used on the Employer's business unless the firearm is required for the employee/appointee's duties, has been specifically authorized for such uses and is safely transported under approved conditions.

#### **Parking Assignment**

Accommodation and Real Estate Services, Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Service provides parking for government ministries and agencies. Available parking is administered in accordance with provisions within [Appendix 2](#).

### **Foreign/Extended Travel**

Employees/appointees posted from British Columbia to a foreign location or hired locally in a foreign location who are required to travel on the Employer's business while in the local area, will be reimbursed travel expenses in accordance with [Appendix 1](#).

Employees/appointees required to travel away from their headquarters for extended periods will be afforded the opportunity to return home as provided for in the appropriate collective agreement or *Terms and Conditions of Employment*.

### **Meals**

Meals within headquarters or geographic location are reimbursed in accordance with the provisions of an applicable collective agreement, *Terms and Conditions of Employment*, or [Appendix 1](#). Meal expense reimbursement rates for travel to and from the United States, and all other foreign locations, are also outlined in [Appendix 1](#).

### **Relocation**

Eligibility for reimbursement of travel expenses incurred during relocation, for employees/appointees and dependents, is set out in [Terms & Conditions of Employment for Excluded Employees/Appointees](#) or applicable collective agreement. The rates for eligible travel expense reimbursement are specified in [Appendix 1](#).

### **Injury, Loss, and/or Damage**

#### **Injured Employee Transport**

An employee/appointee injured on the job and requiring medical care will be transported to appropriate medical services by the Employer, or at the Employer's expense. Return transportation to the work site or the employee/appointee's local accommodation (as appropriate) will also be provided or paid for by the Employer.

#### **Vehicle Damage**

Where vehicle damage has occurred, it must be reported, and ministries must verify this damage happened in the course of an employee carrying out Employer business, in accordance with Treasury Board Directives.

The Risk Management Branch will adjudicate the claim and notify the relevant ministry of their findings. The claim will be paid from that ministry's funds.

#### **Personal Property Loss/Damage**

Instances of extraordinary personal property damage or loss must be reported, in accordance with Treasury Board Directive. In addition, ministries must verify that this damage or loss: occurred while the employee was on Employer business; was for items pertinent to that business, all access to recovery through other avenues (personal insurance policies, action against other responsible parties) has been exhausted, and reasonable recovery efforts have been made.

An employee/appointee may be reimbursed for extraordinary loss of or damage to personal property pertinent to the performance of his/her duties, in accordance with the provisions of the applicable collective agreement, *Terms and Conditions of Employment*, or [Appendix 1](#).

The Risk Management Branch will adjudicate the claim and notify the relevant ministry of their findings. The claim will be paid from that ministry's funds.

## Administration

### Reimbursement of Expenses

Reimbursement of business travel expenses for Group I, II and III employees/appointees will be in accordance with the rates and provisions contained in [Appendix 1](#). Administrative and claim procedures for reimbursement, published by the Office of the Comptroller General and Risk Management Branch, should also be referenced.

### Discretion

Where Group I and II employees/appointees are required to attend a government function, with the Minister, Parliamentary Secretary, Deputy Minister or Associate Deputy Minister, the Deputy Minister may authorize a higher per diem or meal rate (Group II or III) for the duration of the function.

### Travel Advances

Employees/appointees required to travel on Employer business, who have not been issued a corporate credit card, may request an accountable travel advance to cover the anticipated travel expenses.

## Responsibilities

The ***Minister responsible for the BC Public Service Agency*** is authorized to:

- establish and revise the business travel expense and loss or damage policies and rates of reimbursement;
- approve business travel expenses of an unusual or unique nature not otherwise covered in this directive;
- negotiate travel expense reimbursement rates with the bargaining units;
- establish and revise the policies for allocating available assigned parking spaces to bargaining unit employees;
- assign administrative responsibility for business travel expenses, loss or damage claims and employee/appointee parking;
- delegate any or all of these responsibilities.

The ***Minister responsible for assigned parking*** is authorized to:

- administer assigned parking spaces and allocate these to employees/appointees;
- delegate any or all of these responsibilities.

***Accommodation and Real Estate Services, Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services*** is authorized to:

- establish the number and standard of parking facilities to be provided for ministry and employee/appointee use;
- set the rates that Ministries are charged for designated parking spaces;
- allocate designated parking spaces to Ministries and Crown agencies;

- delegate any or all of these responsibilities.

The **Comptroller General** is authorized to:

- establish and amend administrative procedures to implement this directive;
- publish business travel claim procedures;
- delegate any or all of these responsibilities.

The **Minister responsible for the Risk Management Branch** is authorized to:

- establish and amend loss or damage claim policies and administrative procedures to implement the claim provisions of this directive;
- delegate any or all of these responsibilities.

### **Accountabilities**

The **Associate Deputy Minister responsible for the BC Public Service Agency** is accountable for ensuring that:

- required negotiations are concluded with the bargaining units;
- revisions and updates to the business travel policies and rates are distributed to Ministries and the Comptroller General;
- revisions and updates to the assigned parking policies are forwarded to ministries and the Minister of Labour and Citizens' Services.

The **Deputy Minister responsible for assigned parking** is accountable for ensuring that:

- available assigned parking spaces are allocated and administered;
- parking fees from assigned parking are collected and remitted.

**Accommodation and Real Estate Services, Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services** is accountable for ensuring that:

- the parking provided is marked, maintained and policed.

The **Comptroller General** is accountable for ensuring that:

- administrative procedures are in place to process business travel expenses;
- instructions are provided to all staff involved in administering business travel;
- records of business travel expenses are kept and statistical data provided as required.

The ***Risk Management Branch*** is accountable for ensuring that:

- administrative procedures are in place to process private vehicle damage claims and personal property loss or damage claims;
- instructions are provided to all staff involved in processing loss or damage claims;
- all damage and loss claims are adjusted;
- reports and statistical data are provided to ministries and agencies as required, including an annual summary of the number/type of claims filed and the amount requested; and the number of such claims accepted/rejected and the final amount paid for each claim;
- records of damage and loss claims are kept.

***Deputy Ministers*** are accountable for ensuring that:

- business travel authorized is the most appropriate method of accomplishing program objectives;
- the means of travel approved represents the lowest cost alternative taking into account transportation, accommodation, travel time and other related costs;
- administrative procedures are in place to authorize, control and pay damage and loss claims;
- administrative procedures are in place to authorize, control and record business travel costs;
- administrative procedures are in place to allocate, control and pay for designated parking within the Ministry;
- information on business travel and parking allocation policies are provided to Ministry staff;
- mandatory accounting and reporting procedures are adhered to.