



STAFF AND GOVERNING BODY MEMBER EXPENSES POLICY

October 2019

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Section	Contents
1.	Who the Policy affects
2.	Policy purpose
3.	What the Policy covers
4.	Eligible Expenses
5.	Claiming Expenses
6.	Loss of Earnings
7.	Review

1. Who the Policy affects

1.1 This policy is aimed at people who are:

- Members of Staff and our Governing Body and of the governing body of any of our subsidiaries.
- Everyone who works for us or any of our subsidiaries, whether employed directly or otherwise.

1.2 For the remainder of this policy the above will be referred to as “our people.”

1.3 As someone who is affected by this policy, you are personally responsible for ensuring that you are familiar with and comply with its terms. The Code of Conduct that you have signed reflects the terms of this policy.

1.4 Where you are considering taking any action that is affected by this policy, you must follow our requirements about declaring and managing the action and obtain any necessary consent or approval.

1.5 If you are unsure about anything relating to benefits, payments or entitlements you should consult with the Chair or CEO (if you are a member of the governing body) or with your line manager (if you are a member of staff).

1.6 You are also required to be familiar with and observe the terms of our Anti- Bribery and Fraud policies.

1.7 Failure to comply with the terms of this policy will be regarded as a breach of the Code of Conduct that you have signed.

2. Policy Purpose

2.1 We are a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) [and a Scottish Charity]. We are part of a sector that has a strong reputation for integrity and accountability to the people we exist to help and to our Regulators. This policy describes the expenses that our people are able to receive. It also describes what is not permitted and the arrangements that we have in place to ensure that the requirements of this policy are observed.

2.2 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) requires us to have a policy that sets out what expenses we permit. This Policy is intended to be a practical document that supports us in meeting that requirement, demonstrating that we conduct our affairs with openness, honesty and integrity and that we are accountable for what we do. It aims to ensure that no one benefits improperly or inappropriately from their involvement with us, but also to ensure that no one is unfairly disadvantaged either.

3. What the Policy Covers

3.1 The Association will meet expenses that our people incur while carrying out duties on behalf of the Association and which are acceptable within the terms of this policy. This policy also covers the conditions on which the Association will make payments related to loss of earnings, and the circumstances in which allowances are payable.

Expenses will only be paid:

- For actual expenses where a receipt is provided.
- When undertaking official business on behalf of the Association. This includes attendance at meetings conferences, training events and seminars
- clarification, , if required, on what is a reasonable expense can be sought from the Chair or CEO(if you are a member of the governing body) or your line manager (if

you are a member of staff for childcare or carers costs

4. Eligible Expenses

4.1 Payment of Out of Pocket Expenses will only be paid for the following, and where alternative provision was not included e.g. expenses cannot be claimed for meals, accommodation, car parking etc. where these are already included e.g. conference/seminar attendance fee, or they are provided free of charge.

4.2 However our people may claim reasonable expenses for tea/ coffee, a soft drink or snack between meals if required. A receipt must be provided for all claims. To avoid members being out of pocket an advance payment can be paid to our people on request and any surplus returned with a receipt for all purchases made.

4.3 **Meals:** Meal expenses will be payable to our people who are prevented by their official duties from taking their meal at home (or where they would normally take their meals), and thereby incur additional expenditure.

This does not include attendance at meetings at the Associations' offices, or where a suitable meal is provided or has been reimbursed.

This would cover lunch, and where it involves an overnight stay, evening meal and breakfast. Actual expenses will only be paid, up to the maximum amounts shown in the appendix.

4.4 **Accommodation:** Where accommodation costs are not covered in any other way e.g. within a delegate fee, our people will have their actual accommodation expenses paid. When you are travelling on official duties you should obtain accommodation in a reasonable quality hotel (5* Accommodation is not permissible, QCHA do not envisage that the price per room would be in excess of £80 per night), an Ibis, Novotel, Travel Lodge, or Premier Inn would be acceptable.

Overnight stays would be permissible during the duration of conferences and courses and at the conclusion of such when a return journey would be impractical. If in doubt clarification can be sought from your manager and or HR.

A receipt must be provided

4.5 **Reimbursement of Travel Costs:** Our people are expected to use the most cost effective form of transport unless there are specific reasons why an alternative had to be used, such as for issues of safety, inaccessibility, or where the times of departure or arrival are not suitable.

Under the terms of this policy, this includes:

- standard class (unless through advanced purchase alternate classes are more cost effective) fares on public transport fares (rail, bus, air or ferry)
- taxi fares, the Association has a taxi account and our people will be issued with a PIN which should be used only for business purposes
- travel mileage (see Appendix)
- bridge tolls, car park fees (fines for breaching parking regulations or road traffic offences are not included)

4.6 **Child Care:** The costs incurred through having to have a child looked after while carrying out official duties (see section 2.1) providing that a receipt for expenses incurred is provided and the person minding the child is not Someone who is connected to you (see table A Page 5 of the Entitlements , Payments and Benefits Policy)

Childminding expenses will be paid for any child or stepchild or any child for whom you are the legal guardian. The child must normally live with them, and be under the age of 16.

The Association may ask for documentary evidence of any child's age, or their legal guardian before paying expenses.

Childcare costs cannot be claimed where cheaper or free alternatives were available e.g. a crèche was provided.

Our people can only claim reasonable and legitimate expenses as per levels set out in the Appendix.

- 4.7 **Care of Other Dependent Relatives:** Our people can also claim expenses incurred through having other dependent relatives cared for while they are carrying out official duties (see section 2.1) , providing that they can provide a receipt for expenses incurred and the person caring for the dependent is not someone who is connected to you (see Table A page 5 of the Entitlements , Payments and Benefits Policy

The Association may ask for documentary evidence of the relationship of the dependent to our people and any legal duty of care e.g. payment of a relevant social security benefit, payment from social work etc. before paying expenses.

The same rates will apply as for childcare with the same maximum amount payable (see Appendix).

5. Claiming Expenses

- 5.1 Claims should be made only for expenses which are allowed for within this policy.
- 5.2 All claims must be made on the official expenses claim form. This must be completed in full and signed and dated by the claimant. The claim must then be authorised by the Chief Executive, or a Director. For the Chief Executive all expenses should be signed off by the Chair
- 5.3 The payment of expenses will be settled in cash from the petty cash up to a maximum of £50 or by cheque or BACS where appropriate. Receipts must be provided for all expenses claimed.
- 5.4 To avoid members being out of pocket an advance payment can be paid to members on request and any surplus returned to the Finance Team along with a receipt for all purchases made. This should be agreed with the Chair or CEO(if you are a member of the governing body) or your line manager (if you are a member of staff)

6. Loss of Earnings

- 6.1 The Association will also reimburse Governing Body Member of any loss of earnings or annual leave entitlement in the following circumstances:
- The payment is not being made in respect to a routine meeting.
 - The meeting or event could not have reasonably been held at an alternative time.
 - The attendance of the governing member was required and authorised by the Board
 - Another governing body member who would not lose earnings could either not attend in their place, or it would not have been appropriate for them to attend in their place e.g. where the Chair should attend.
 - The governing body member must submit an official letter from the employer confirming that earnings have been lost or annual leave entitlement used, on which date and the amount or value involved.
 - The upper limit for payment of loss of earnings will be in line with those for jury expenses.

7. Review

- 7.1 Our Rules require the Governing Body to set our policy on payments and benefits and keep it under review. This policy has been approved by our Governing Body and is consistent with the requirements of our Codes of Conduct for Governing Body Members and for Staff. These Codes have been confirmed by the Scottish Housing Regulator as meeting their regulatory requirements.
- 7.2 This policy was adopted by our Governing Body on October 2019. It will be reviewed not later than October 2022.

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