

Title:	Elected Member Allowances and Expenses
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Adopted By:	Council
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1	20\2501	23/02/10	Adopted
2	20\4123	28/06/11	Adopted – per new Ministerial Guidelines issued Feb 2011
3	21\3410	16/06/15	Revision Adopted
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1 Policy Summary

This Policy covers the Allowances and Expenses to be paid to Elected Members.

2 Policy Objectives

To clearly state Elected Member entitlements in relation to allowances and expenses and to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.

3 Background

Guidelines were issued by the Minister for Local Government pursuant to the Local Government Act 2008 (as amended) establishing rules in relation to Elected Member Allowances and Expenses. In places these Guidelines make reference to Council Policy and this Policy is intended to complement the Minister's Guidelines providing a sound framework for the payment of Allowances and Expenses.

4 Policy Statement

Pursuant to Section 71 and 72 of the Local Government Act 2008 (as amended) and the Local Government Act Ministerial Guidelines, this Policy clarifies the Allowances and Expenses to be paid to Elected Members, Professional Development and Council Approved Activities and travel.

Base Allowance

Section 2, of the Local Government Act Ministerial Guidelines 2 as follows:

The base allowance covers those activities required of a council member in the performance of his or her role as an elected representative. Without limiting the generality of the preceding sentence, the base allowance covers:

- a) Agenda study and meeting preparation;
- b) Attendance at regular council meetings
- c) Attendance at social functions as a council representative;
- d) Constituency responsibilities; and
- e) Council representation outside the municipality, including delegations interstate and overseas, unless such representation has extra meeting allowance approval.

Section 2 incorporates attendance at all **regular** Council meetings.

Regular meetings at the City of Darwin are Ordinary Council Meetings.

Extra Meeting Allowance

Section 2, of the Local Government Act Ministerial Guideline 2 states as follows:

- (1) *For a principal member, deputy principal member and acting principal member, this allowance is not paid separately. It is provided for and included in the base allowance.*
- (2) *For other council members this allowance is paid only after an approved claim has been made.*
- (3) *In Accordance Section 2.1 of the Local Government Act Ministerial Guideline 2 the City of Darwin has determined only the following meetings will attract the allowance:*
 - i). *Council Committee meetings*
 - ii). *Council Advisory Committee meetings*
 - iii). *Special meetings of Council and special meetings of council committees;*
 - iv). *Council workshops or briefings*
 - v). *Meetings of external agencies or organisations to which the Council has formally appointed, or nominated through or with LGANT, a representative;*
 - vi). *Professional development courses/conferences that have approval and are in line with Council Policy.*

Professional Development Allowance

The Local Government Act Guideline 2 definition:

An allowance payable to council members to attend appropriate and relevant conferences or training courses which sustain a member's professional competence by keeping the member informed of, and able to comply with, development in professional standards applicable to their role as a council member. Any such course/conference must have approval and be in line with council policy in order to attract this allowance.

- (i) This allowance is available to all council members.
- (ii) The professional development allowance may be claimed multiple times each year, but the total value of those claims must not exceed the amount specified in the Guidelines.
- (iii) The professional development allowance is to be used to cover the cost of travel to the course/conference, course/conference fees, meals and accommodation for the duration of the course/conference.
- (iv) Claims must be made using approved forms.
- (v) Only approved courses/conferences that are in line with council policy attract professional development allowance (payable for each day of attendance)

Pursuant to Section 2, 6 (e) of the Local Government Act Ministerial Guideline 2, use of the Professional Development Allowance must be:-

- i). approved by the Chief Executive Officer, prior to attendance at a professional development activity;

In accordance with Section 71(5) of the Local Government Act 2008(As amended), these allowances will not be paid in advance except for course fees, conference registration costs, travel and accommodation which will be paid for by the Council to the provider of the relevant service in advance of attendance at the approved activity; and

- ii). for an approved Course or Conference, requires the completion of Form A1 to use the Professional Development funds and Form A2 if claiming an 'Extra Meeting Allowance' during the period of attendance.

Elected Members may access the annual Professional Development allocation by completing the appropriate form and submitting to the Chief Executive Officer for approval, prior to any commitments being made.

Approved Courses

The Chief Executive Officer will approve such applications if the expenditure supports an Elected Member to:

- further his/her knowledge of Local Government;
- undertake courses of study in a discipline that would assist in the performance as an Elected Member;
- attend a course/conference on a topic or function related to Local Government;

The expenses may cover reasonable travel, accommodation, meals, course fees, conference fees and appropriate associated expenses.

Subject to the expense being approved in advance, payment will be made through the Council's purchasing system direct to the provider of the conference etc. or by the way of reimbursement being claimed by the Member and supported by receipts, tax invoices or other evidence of the expense being incurred.

A register of expenses shall be maintained and reported to Council quarterly.

Travel Expenses

In accordance with Section 71(2) and 72(b) of the Local Government Act 2008(As amended), when a Member of Council is required to travel outside the Darwin region to attend to Council approved activities, the Council shall meet all reasonable travel, conference, meals and accommodation fees associated with that attendance.

In accordance with Section 7 (4)(d) of the Local Government Act Ministerial Guideline 2, when a Council Member is required to travel in order to attend an approved activity (Professional Development or Council has a formal Representative), the Council Member may claim an extra meeting allowance for each full day of travel, unless that travel falls on the same day on which the meeting is held. In this context, a full day of travelling means at least four hours of travelling, which may include time in transit.

The Council shall meet the cost of air travel where required for Aldermen attending a Council Approved Activity.

In normal circumstances the Council will purchase the most economical class of travel ticket available for Aldermen. This might be a discounted ticket or an economy ticket.

Business class tickets will not be purchased for Aldermen.

Should an Elected Member choose to change or alter bookings for personal reasons, the additional cost of these changes shall be met by the Elected Member.

Air travel arrangements are generally made through the Council purchasing system and approved travel agent.

Reimbursement of travel expenses may be claimed in special circumstances, subject to satisfactory documentation eg. tax invoice.

The Council allows Elected Members to retain and make personal use of any frequent flyer points earned whilst travelling at Council's expense.

Claims for Allowances

Pursuant to Section 32 of the Local Government Act 2008(As amended) the Council delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the power and authority to approve claims for allowances in accordance with the guidelines and appropriate policy.

Claims forms for allowances are attached:

- Form A1 : Professional Development
- Form A2 : Extra Meetings Allowance

Claims for allowances must be lodged on an approved form signed by the claimant member.

Superannuation

Subject to confirmation of the ability to do so, members may choose to have all or part of their allowances paid into the Local Superannuation Fund or another fund of their choice.

5 Legislation, terminology and references

Sections 71 and 72 of the Local Government Act 2008 (As amended) and the Local Government Act Ministerial Guideline 2

6 Implementation and delegation

Pursuant to Section 32 of the Local Government Act 2008 (As amended) the Council delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the power and authority to approve claims for allowances in accordance with the guidelines and appropriate policy.

FORM A1 - REQUEST FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ELECTED MEMBER

As per City of Darwin Policy No. 017 – Elected Member Allowances, Elected Members may access the annual Professional Development allocation by completing the appropriate form and submitting to the Chief Executive Officer for approval, prior to any commitments being made.

Air travel arrangements are made through the Council purchasing system and approved travel agent.

Reimbursement of Professional Development expenses, including conference fees and travel, will be subject to approval by the Chief Executive Officer. All reimbursement requests must be accompanied by appropriate documentation, receipts and tax invoices.

Name:

I hereby request approval to use the Professional Development funds allocated to me for:

Course / Conference:

Dates:

Location:

Payment to be
made to

Item	Cost (\$)	Elected Member	Creditor	Creditor Name	Work Order No.
Travel (Airfare)					
Accommodation					
Course Registration					
Other					

Policy



TOTAL					

Financial Year: _____
\$ _____

Fund use requested:

Extra Meeting Allowance Claimed? Yes / No
If yes, please fill out Form A2 - Extra Meeting Allowance and return it with this form.

Signature: _____ **Date:**

Office Use Only

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Approved / Not approved

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Notes:

FORM A2 - EXTRA MEETING ALLOWANCE CLAIM

Please note:

- Ordinary Council Meetings are paid automatically.
- Observers are not paid for meetings that they choose to attend.
- You may claim an extra meeting allowance for a number of meetings including:
 - ❖ Special Council Meetings and Workshops
 - ❖ City of Darwin Standing Committees
 - ❖ City of Darwin Sister City Committees Meetings and Workshops
 - ❖ City of Darwin Advisory Committees (including RMAC)
 - ❖ Outside Committees with Local Government Association of the Northern Territory appointed representation.
 - ❖ Outside Committees with City of Darwin appointed representation.

Please note meetings below and sign on second page.

Name: _____

Committee Meetings				
Member				
Date	Start Time	Finish Time	Meeting	CEO Signature Approved
Co-opted				
Date	Start Time	Finish Time	Meeting	CEO Signature Approved
Extra Meetings – Member or Representative				
Date	Start Time	Finish Time	Meeting	CEO Signature Approved

Deputy Lord Mayor or Acting Lord Mayor				
Date From	Date To	Deputy Lord Mayor	Acting Lord Mayor	CEO Signature Approved
Extra Meetings – Professional Development				
Date From	Date To	Meeting / Event		CEO Signature Approved

I hereby confirm that the above is a true record of the meetings attended during the period _____ to _____ and that I attended at least 75% of each meeting.

Signature: _____
 Date: _____

Office Use Only

Approved by: EXECUTIVE MANAGER

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Approved by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Notes: _____