

NOVA SCOTIA UNION

NSUPE

OF PUBLIC & PRIVATE EMPLOYEES

Expense Claim Policy & Guidelines

Updated: July 11, 2024

PRINCIPLES:

1. The NSUPE Constitution states that it is an offence for any member representing the Union, a Local, or a Bargaining Unit to conduct Union business for personal gain.
2. NSUPE members will be reimbursed for actual monetary output that results from their volunteerism. That is, it should not cost you to be a volunteer for NSUPE.

GENERAL:

3. What follows below is NSUPE's Expense Claim Policy and Guidelines.
4. Expense claims will clearly specify the reason for the expense(s). Expense claims should be supported by receipts and proof of purchase, where possible. If not possible, an explanation should be provided within the expense claim.

EXPENSE CLAIM APPROVAL

5. Expense Claims should be sent to the Administrative Assistant and Treasurer. The Treasurer will provide approval for the expense claim prior to the Administrative Assistant preparing the reimbursement.
6. Where it has been determined that an expense has not been submitted correctly, the Administrative Assistant or Treasurer will notify the submitter of what corrections need to be made for resubmission.

REQUESTING RECONSIDERATION OF DISALLOWED EXPENSE CLAIMS

7. Every effort should be made to get approval from the Executive Council for expenses that fall outside of this policy prior to the expense being incurred. If approved, the Treasurer will provide written confirmation of the approval to the member/Local and the Administrative Assistant. This approval should accompany the expense claim.
8. Where it has been determined that an expense submitted for reimbursement falls outside of this policy and has not received prior approval, the Treasurer will notify the submitter of the reason(s) for why the expense is disallowed.
9. Members may request for disallowed expense claims to be reconsidered by contacting the Treasurer.
10. Requests for reconsideration will be reviewed by the Executive Council for a final decision.
11. The Treasurer will notify the Administrative Assistant and the submitter as to whether or not the expense was approved.

TRAVEL EXPENSES:

12. Travel expenses will be paid for members conducting direct Union business except in the case of general membership meetings and business for which the employer will reimburse under the terms of the collective agreement. Travel expenses could include mileage reimbursement for your own vehicle, transit fares, taxi fares, and rideshare services.
13. Direct Union business is any activity or committee of the Union (e.g. negotiating, labour-management, health and safety, Local Executive, Executive Council, etc.) or an organization to which NSUPE has appointed you (e.g. designate to the Confederation of Canadian Unions, etc.).
14. NSUPE follows the Automobile Allowance Rates set by the Canada Revenue Agency for each year. Current rates (2024) are set at \$0.70 per kilometre for the first 5000 kilometres, and \$0.64 per kilometre for every kilometre thereafter.
15. Only travel beyond which a member would normally have travelled but for Union business will be paid (e.g. if you normally take your car to work and then travel 10 extra kilometers to attend to union business, claim for 10 extra kilometers. If on the other hand, you would have taken the bus to work and have brought your car because of Union business, claim the return mileage from home.)
16. Carpooling is encouraged
17. Prior approval from Executive Council will be needed for expenses arising as a result of involvement in non-NSUPE committees and organizations (e.g. Water Watch, Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives).
18. Vehicle rentals and air travel require prior approval from the Executive Council. The Administrative Assistant will arrange and pay for these unless the member chooses to do so. If a member decides to handle the arrangements and payment, they must notify the Administrative Assistant promptly. Both the Administrative Assistant and the member should seek the most reasonable rates.

MEALS:

19. Members are eligible for meal reimbursement when they are conducting Union business (or are travelling for union business) during a mealtime.
20. The cost of meals will be reimbursed up to the following receipted amounts:

Breakfast - \$30.00
Lunch - \$40.00
Supper - \$45.00
21. The amounts listed above exclude the cost of tax and tips, however, these costs will be reimbursed.
22. The amounts above can be transferred to another meal in the day provided that you're entitled to multiple meals during that day and that your receipted amounts are not greater than the total allowed for that day.
23. Economical food choices are encouraged, especially for large meetings where bulk purchases can be made.
24. If meal amounts are greater than the limits set out above, a note explaining why more

was spent should be included with the expense report (i.e. the only option for that meal time was greater than the set amount).

25. Reasonable expenses for water, coffee, soft drinks, snacks, etc. will be reimbursed so long as receipts are submitted for such expenses.
26. The union will not reimburse for alcoholic beverages.
27. The cost of meals or snacks for spouses, partners and guests, except for guests invited by the Union, will not be reimbursed.
28. An advance of \$150 per day for travel expenses may be received where a member is conducting union business. The member will, within a reasonable time frame, provide an accounting and receipts for expenses, and reimburse the Union for any amount of the advance not used.

ACCOMMODATIONS

29. Hotel accommodations require prior approval by the Executive Council. The Administrative Assistant will arrange and pay for hotel accommodations unless the member chooses to do so. If a member decides to handle the arrangements and payment, they must notify the Administrative Assistant promptly. Both the Administrative Assistant and the member should seek the most reasonable rates. Examples of instances where hotel accommodations could be needed include, but is not limited to, attending conferences, and travelling long distances for Union meetings/business.
30. Use of unionized facilities is encouraged even in circumstances where less expensive, non-union accommodations are available.
31. Room sharing is encouraged.
32. Members will limit their in-room phone usage.
33. The Union will not reimburse for mini-bar expenses, pay-per-view television, exercise facilities, other paid hotel amenities which may be available.
34. The cost of accommodations for spouses, partners, and guests, with the exception of guests invited by the Union, will not be reimbursed. Guests may stay in the same room as a Union member, but the Union will not pay for any additional charges resulting from additional parties staying in the space with a Union member.

WAGES:

35. Union leave will be obtained pursuant to the NSUPE Union Leave Policy and Guidelines
36. A member who loses regular pay as a result of being absent from work to conduct Union business will be reimbursed for the lost pay. A member who is required by the Union to conduct Union business during their vacation or days off or when overtime or an extra shift are offered will be paid by the Union through banking union leave for use on another date as to recoup their day off.
37. Banked Union Leave will be accrued in days rather than hours as interruption to a day off should be recuperated through receiving a complete day off at another time.
38. Members can bank Union Leave for use on another date by filling out the "Banked Union Leave" form and submitting it to the Administrative Assistant. While the Administrative Assistant will keep track of banked time, the onus is on the member to keep track of and use their banked Union Leave in a timely manner.

39. A member who normally receives shift differential as part of their employment compensation who is absent from work to conduct Union business will be compensated for the shift differential.
40. A member claiming reimbursement for lost pay will, where possible, enclose documentation (e.g. letter(s) requesting an/or approving union leave, work schedule, etc.) with their expense claim.

CELL PHONES & LONG DISTANCE:

41. A person authorized by Executive Council who voluntarily uses their personal cell phone and/or incurs long distance charges to conduct union business will be reimbursed for such expenses. A bill from the telephone provider detailing the expenses will be submitted with the claim. Members will only be reimbursed for expenses that they would otherwise not have accrued had they not been using their phone for the Union.
42. Members will attempt to minimize cell phone and long-distance expenses incurred to conduct union business.

LOCAL EXPENSES:

43. If a Local wishes to make expenditures not provided for elsewhere in this policy, it will make a proposal to Executive Council setting out the amounts needed and the reasons.
44. Executive Council will consider and vote on a Local's proposal for expenditures as soon as possible.

SUBMISSION TIMELINE:

45. Expense claims are to be submitted each fiscal quarter (July 1 to Sept 10; Oct 1 to Dec 31, Jan 1 to Mar 31, and Apr 1 to June 30) at a minimum, unless there are extraordinary circumstances. Expenses for each fiscal year (July 1-June 30) must be submitted within the fiscal year. The last day to submit expenses for each fiscal year will be July 15 of each year.