

## **COUNCIL PROCEDURES**

### **Staff Travel Procedures**



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<b>POLICY TITLE:</b>	Staff Travel Procedures
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<b>POLICY TYPE:</b>	Administrative
<b>APPROVING OFFICER:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
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<b>TIME PERIOD OF REVIEW:</b>	2 Years
<b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:</b>	21/08/2021
<b>RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT:</b>	Finance / Human Resources
<b>LINK TO CORPORATE PLAN:</b>	

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#### **1. OBJECTIVE**

This procedure describes the processes to be followed and the entitlements for official staff travel on Flinders Shire Council business.

This procedure applies to all staff for all official travel without exception.

#### **2. SCOPE**

This procedure applies uniformly to all Flinders Shire Council (FSC) workplace participants - employees (including casuals), volunteers, contractors and consultants. It does not apply to Elected Members. The current Queensland Industrial Relations Directive No. 9/11 "*Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses*" is used as the basis for calculating allowances payable.

#### **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Travellers – provide complete copies of any documentation supporting a request, obtain cost estimates, have prior approval from higher level officer/s and retain receipts for any travel expense claims to be reimbursed.

**Travellers must have Travel Request form properly completed and authorised prior to any bookings being made.**

Travel Approving Officers – ensure official travel is for the benefit of FSC, within the current budget, and using the best price and service levels.

Travel Booking Officers – ensure all documentation is complete and authorised before any bookings are made. Bookings should be made by the person doing the travelling or subordinates under the direction of the traveller. If bookings are to prepaid then appropriate documentation should be presented to Finance for the payment to be made. Adequate time should be allowed for the payment to be made by Finance.

All Travel Request Forms for travel involving training must be authorised by Human Resources.

#### **4. POLICY**

Any workplace participant proposing to travel at FSC's expense must complete a Travel Request Form in full, **clearly stating the purpose of the trip and attaching written documentation as validation.**

This form must be lodged a minimum of one week before the proposed travel dates, except in the case of an emergency. The traveller must estimate the cost of travel to allow the approving officer to make an informed decision. All FSC official travel must be pre-approved, regardless of the funding source for the travel.

All travel bookings must be completed as soon as possible after approval, to secure the best available fares and room rates, and take advantage of any “early bird” discounts. Travel will be purchased through FSC’s purchase ordering system or Council credit card. We should always consider “value for money” in any travel.

Travel must be booked in accordance with the approval granted, using the best value to suit business needs and traveller entitlements. Best value is determined by fares and other relevant costs such as accommodation, driving and waiting time. Travellers are not expected to undertake lengthy or circuitous itineraries or travel outside ordinary working hours in order to access lower fares, but this area should be considered if appropriate.

Travellers may combine private and official travel, but any expenses incurred as a result of the private travel component must be met by the traveller, for example where airfares are more expensive than they would have been for the official travel component only. Travellers can be accompanied (for example, by family member/s) providing that no additional expenses are incurred by FSC, and the traveller’s duties are not adversely affected. If an officer chooses to be accompanied by a family member or associate when travelling, the fares and any other increases in costs must be booked and paid for separately outside Council processes.

Personal excess baggage not directly related to official travel must be paid for by the traveller.

Travellers cannot claim travelling allowance for expenses that are already paid for – such as for accommodation or meals provided at a meeting or conference. Allowances can be paid in advance or in arrears. Where actual costs are reimbursed, tax invoices or receipts must be attached to the Claim Form, along with a copy of the approved Travel Request

FSC will not pay for alcohol, unless this is included in registration for an event (for example, a conference dinner).

International travel has mandatory reporting requirements and all such requests must be referred to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) before any commitments are made.

### **Cancellations and Changes**

Travellers must advise their immediate superior as soon as possible if any changes to the approved itinerary are needed. All changes must be approved by the immediate supervisor. Any increase in cost must be approved by a relevant financial delegate. Travellers requesting changes for personal reasons must pay for any extra charges incurred.

### **Accommodation**

Accommodation will be booked and paid for in advance wherever possible, using government rates and/or with reference to the Directive No. 9/11 *Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses*. A higher room rate may be appropriate for example at or close to the conference or work site, if this avoids other costs – such as taxi fares and/or is inclusive of breakfast. If a traveller can obtain a competitive rate due to private hotel loyalty membership, this may be used, but FSC will not pay for staff to join such a program. Employees who choose to stay at a higher cost accommodation for personal reasons rather than normal business requirements may book and pay for their own arrangements, but are only reimbursed according to the applicable rates in the Directive.

Employees staying in private accommodation (for example with relatives or friends) may claim overnight and meal allowances as prescribed in Directive No. 9/11.

### **Airfares**

Flights should be booked in economy class and take advantage of specials wherever possible. When selecting the best value, employees are to consider time of travel, the starting time of the work commitment, and conditions associated with the airfare. Frequent flyer and lounge club memberships may be used at the traveller's own discretion, but FSC will not pay for staff to join or belong to such a program.

On flights of more than three hour's duration, extra leg-room may be booked.

When travelling on smaller regional airlines to catch connecting flights, travel insurance may be booked.

### **Motor Vehicles**

Where air travel is not available or best-value, a Council vehicle is to be used for work-related travel and in accordance with FSC policy. In exceptional circumstances where a Council vehicle is not available, a private vehicle may be used and mileage reimbursed. Employees must produce evidence that the vehicle is insured, and distances will be calculated using Google Maps unless a legitimate reason is otherwise provided. Employees who choose to use their own vehicle where air travel is available and obtain prior approval will be paid at the lower rate as prescribed in Directive No. 20/16 *Motor Vehicle Allowances*. The allowance paid is not to exceed the cost that would have been incurred via normal means of travel (e.g. flights).

Travellers must ensure commercial hire cars are returned with a full fuel tank.

### **Expenses that will not be paid or reimbursed by FSC**

- Expenses that are not incurred in the performance of official duties
- Expenses incurred by a spouse, partner, family member or other person travelling with or accompanying the employee
- Any fines or penalties
- Expenses normally recoverable from a third party
- Expenses incurred by taking indirect routes or making stopovers for personal reasons

### **Expense Claims**

All claims for expenses (other than accommodation and/or travel ) incurred during a trip are prepaid as per "Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses" listed on the Travel Request Form. No other expenses are to be reimbursed except in exceptional circumstances – such expenses must be authorised by the immediate supervisor or Manager.

All claims for exceptional expenses must be accompanied by accounts and receipts.

All accommodation charges incurred must be supported by an account rendered by the relevant motel/hotel. The Pink Reimbursement form must be completed and lodged with Finance to receive Meals and Incidentals Allowances prior to travel commencing.

### **Completion of Travel Request Form**

The completed Travel Request Form must be lodged with Reception for filing after all authorisations have been completed.

## **5. IMPLEMENTATION**

## **COUNCIL PROCEDURES**

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This procedure will be available to all staff on Council's Policy Central, and to all outdoor staff via their supervisor or manager.

## **6. RELATED LEGISLATION**

- Local Government Regulations 2012

## **7. RELATED DOCUMENTS (LOCAL LAWS, POLICIES, DELEGATIONS ETC)**

- Financial Delegations Register

## **8. ATTACHMENTS**

- Minister for Education and Industrial Relations Directive No. 9/11 – Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses

## **REVIEW TRIGGER**

Policy is to be reviewed every 2 years, or with a change in Legislation or circumstances determined by the Chief Executive Officer.

## **9. PRIVACY PROVISION**

Council respects and protects people's privacy and collects, stores, uses and discloses personal information responsibly and transparently when delivering Council services and business.

## **10. APPROVAL**

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**Daryl Buckingham**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_