

# Council Expenses Policy

Corangamite Shire

December 2024



**CORANGAMITE  
SHIRE**

# Council Policy



## Council Expenses Policy

### Introduction

Councillors and members of delegated committees are entitled to the reimbursement of any necessary out-of-pocket expenses reasonably incurred while performing their duties, in accordance with section 41 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the reimbursement of Councillor expenses associated with the conduct of their role as Councillors, as well as reimbursement of expenses for independent Audit and Risk Committee members, and members of delegated committees.

### Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors representing Corangamite Shire Council and independent members of the Audit and Risk Committee appointed by Council, in addition to members of delegated committees (if established). The policy applies from the date adopted.

### Definitions

In this policy:

**Councillor** means a person elected to Corangamite Shire Council and capable of acting as a Councillor in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.

**Audit and Risk Committee member** means an independent member of the Audit and Risk Committee appointed by Council.

**Delegated Committee member** means a Council appointed member of a delegated committee established by Council, and not a Community Asset Committee.

**Out-of-pocket expenses** means expenses that are bona fide, have been reasonably incurred in the performance of the relevant role, and are reasonably necessary to perform that role. Out-of-pocket expenses particularly related to travel is limited to vehicle parking, road tolls, public transport costs, taxi charges and vehicle hire.

### References

*Local Government Act 2020*

*Income Tax Assessment (1997) Regulations (2021) (Cth)*

*Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*

Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal - Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2024  
Councillor Professional Development Policy  
Organisational Light Vehicle Fleet Policy  
Organisational Electronic Communications Policy  
Organisational Council Owned Smartphone Tablet Usage Policy

## **Policy Detail**

### **Valid Expenses Criteria**

Council will reimburse out-of-pocket expenses including those specified in this policy where the expenses are bona fide, have been reasonably incurred in the performance of the relevant role, and are reasonably necessary to perform that role.

### **Types of Expenses**

#### Travel Expenses for Councillors

Travel expenses will be paid to a Councillor for out-of-pocket expenses related to:

- Council meetings, special Council meetings, briefings, meetings of committees of Council and Council business related to Council meetings.
- Council functions.
- Inspections and meetings with planning applicants.
- Road inspections or other property inspections within Corangamite Shire relating to the role and responsibilities of a Councillor.
- Meetings as a result of a Councillor being appointed by the Council to an external body<sup>1</sup> or internal committee.
- Meetings or occasions in accordance with the *Support for Councillor Professional Development Policy*.
- Any other meeting, event or function attended in the capacity as a Councillor.

#### Road Travel

The following parameters are to be applied to road travel:

- Council will provide the Mayor with a vehicle to be used in a manner consistent with the Organisational Light Vehicle Fleet Policy.
- Where possible, Councillors are to seek to use a Council pool car for travel involved in performing their duties.

Rates for reimbursement of motor vehicle expenses shall be reimbursed on a per kilometre basis as prescribed in accordance with the prevailing Income Tax Assessment (Cents per Kilometre Deduction Rate for Car Expenses) Determination.

#### Remote Area Travel Allowance for Councillors

Councillors, are entitled to receive a remote area travel allowance as prescribed by the prevailing Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal - Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination

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<sup>1</sup> Expenses will not be paid in the event that these expenses are reimbursed directly to the Councillor by the relevant external body.

The remote area travel allowance for is payable to Councillors travelling more than 50 km from home to attend official meetings or functions.

#### Other Forms of Travel

- When travelling interstate, the mode of transport is to be the most cost-effective mode of transport.
- When travel is by air, the standard form of travel is to be economy class.

#### Travel Expenses for Independent Audit and Risk Committee Members

Travelling expenses will be paid to an independent member of the Audit and Risk Committee for out-of-pocket expenses related to:

- Audit and Risk Committee meetings.
- Meetings related to Audit and Risk Committee business.
- Any other meeting, event or function attended in the capacity as an Audit and Risk Committee member.

Rates for reimbursement of motor vehicle expenses shall be reimbursed on a per kilometre basis as prescribed in accordance with the prevailing Income Tax Assessment (Cents per Kilometre Deduction Rate for Car Expenses) Determination.

#### Travel Expenses for Delegated Committee Members

Travelling expenses will be paid to members of Delegated Committees for out-of-pocket expenses related to:

- Attending formal meetings of the Delegated Committee.
- Attending any other special event or function, that has been organised by Council, in the capacity as a Delegated Committee member.

Rates for reimbursement of motor vehicle expenses shall be reimbursed on a per kilometre basis as prescribed in accordance with the Income Tax Assessment (Cents per Kilometre Deduction Rate for Car Expenses) Determination 2024

#### Carer Expenses

Council acknowledges that Councillors, independent Audit and Risk Committee members and members of Delegated Committees may at times require childcare services, or respite or care services if they are a carer, in a care relationship within the meaning of section 4 of the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*.

Reimbursements for care expenses that is reasonably required for a Councillor, independent Audit and Risk Committee member or Delegated Committee member will be made to:

- A recognised care provider; or
- A person who does not:
  - Reside either permanently or temporarily with the Councillor or the relative for whom care is being provided.

- Have a relationship with the Councillor or his or her partner such that it would be inappropriate for Council to reimburse monies paid to the care provider.

Reimbursements for care expenses will not be made where services attract alternative reimbursements, and this is being utilised.

Reimbursements for care expenses will be paid to a maximum of \$2500 (including GST) per year.

#### Accommodation and Professional Development

Councillors and independent Audit and Risk Committee members will be reimbursed for accommodation and other expenses (including meals, but not alcohol) associated with accessing training and development opportunities. Councillors and independent Audit and Risk Committee members should apply best value principles when accessing services including accommodation. Further direction for Councillors is outlined in Council's *Support for Councillor Professional Development Policy*. Please refer to this policy for more detail. Accommodation and meals limits should not exceed limits in within table 3 of the prevailing Taxation Determination for reasonable travel and overtime meal allowance expense amounts. Where accommodation cannot not be obtained within the prescribed limits three quotations should be obtained. The Municipal Association of Victoria's accommodation provider is preferable when staying overnight in Melbourne.

#### Communication Expenses for Councillors

All use of Council provided electronic equipment is governed by the Organisational Electronic Communications Policy.

#### Mobile Phone

Council will provide Councillors with a smartphone for which Council will be billed. Reasonable personal use for use of the phone will apply<sup>2</sup>.

Councillors who choose to use their own phone may submit an itemised bill for reimbursement. Alternatively, Councillors using their own phone may choose to be reimbursed each month an amount not more than 50% of the phone plan capped at \$50 per month, with evidence of the plan to be provided prior to payments commencing.

#### Stationery

Council will, upon request, provide Councillors and independent Audit and Risk Committee members with standard stationery items, including paper, business cards, writing implements, diaries, writing pads/books and covers for smartphones and tablets.

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<sup>2</sup> International Roaming not included, unless approved by the CEO before travel.

### Tablet or Equivalent

Council will provide all Councillors with the use of an electronic tablet (or equivalent). These are for use for Council business purposes. Reasonable personal use is permissible however use for private business purposes is not.

### Internet Connection/Data

Council issued smartphones and tablets (or equivalent) will have an internet connection/data plan. Reasonable personal use of data will apply.

### Incidental (General) Reimbursement

Claims by Councillors and members of a delegated committee for incidental out-of-pocket expenses will be assessed against the valid expenses criteria within this policy.

### Legal Costs for Councillors

Council will only meet legal expenses incurred as a result of a Councillor executing their official duties and in accordance with *Local Government Act 2020*.

A Councillor is entitled to be indemnified for costs not exceeding \$10,000 incurred by the Councillor to obtain representation considered necessary under section 141(2)(c) or 163(2)(b) of the Local Government Act. Amounts in excess of \$10,000 require a resolution of Council.

A Councillor is not able to be indemnified for legal costs described in section 43A of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

### Payment of Expenses Procedure

Councillors, independent Audit and Risk Committee members, and members of Delegated Committees wishing to claim expenses related to their duties should complete the relevant Reimbursement Request Form and submit it to the Governance office with receipts for any expenses incurred. Receipts for fuel purchases are not required, however mileage travelled for each applicable journey must be noted on the claim form and will be cross referenced with the Civic Calendar.

The expenses, unless authorised by the Chief Executive Officer or the Director Corporate and Community Services, will be paid in arrears.

Claims for reimbursement are to be submitted monthly.

### Reporting

Details of all reimbursements will be reported to the Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Councillors will be provided with a copy of the report provided to the Audit and Risk Committee.

**Gender Impact Assessment**

It is considered that this Policy does not adversely impact community members or employees of different genders and has been developed in accordance with the Gender Equality Act 2020.

**Charter of Human Rights Compliance**

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified In the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act

**Review Date**

December 2028