

Election Worker Expense Claim Policy

Policy Statement

The Nova Scotia *Elections Act* (the *Act*) and the Tariff of Fees and Expenses sets the framework for financial reimbursements to election workers. Elections Nova Scotia has developed this policy to provide guidance and detail regarding the reimbursement of expense claims for election workers. The intent of this policy is to ensure that all election workers are treated fairly and equally when being compensated for expenses related to their work within the electoral process.

Scope

This policy provides guidelines for election worker expense claims. It applies to the following election workers:

- Returning office core staff (RO, ARO, EC, RA, PO, DPO)
- Election officer liaison (EOL)
- Write-in ballot coordinator and assistant write-in ballot coordinator
- Enumerators
- Ballot box couriers
- Mobile poll deputy returning officer and poll clerk
- Field election workers who attend training
- Field election workers who pickup and return election materials
- Field election workers who travel to voting locations

This policy provides guidelines for the election workers to claim the following types of expenses:

- Meals or accommodations
- Kilometrage, bridge tolls, and parking
- Personal cell phone usage
- Criminal records checks
- Tips
- Personal use of printers
- Incidental expenses for meetings required by ENS
- postage

For the purposes of this policy the following items are out of scope:

- Expense claims of \$2 or less
- Flat rates for meals
- Tips for taxis

Authority

Elections Act (the Act)

Tariff of fees and expenses

- 355 (1)** Upon the recommendation of the Chief Electoral Officer, the Governor in Council may make
- (a) a tariff of fees and expenses to be paid by Elections Nova Scotia
 - (i) to any person for services and expenses under this Act, and
 - (ii) to any person for services, including payment for accounting programs or software, to registered parties, electoral district associations, official agents, and candidates to assist in complying with this Act; and
 - (b) a tariff of fees to be paid to Elections Nova Scotia for products created or supplied by Elections Nova Scotia and may revise and amend the tariffs.
- (2)** Where it appears to the Chief Electoral Officer that
- (a) the fees and expenses provided for by the tariffs are not sufficient remuneration for services required to be performed or expenses required to be incurred;
 - (b) a claim for any necessary services performed or expenses incurred is not covered by the tariffs; or (c) the tariffs do not provide for fees and expenses for additional election officers appointed under subsection 81(12), the Chief Electoral Officer may authorize the payment of such remuneration, fees for services or payment of expenses as the Chief Electoral Officer considers just and reasonable.
- (3)** An account for services or expenses payable under this Section must be
- (a) accompanied by satisfactory vouchers showing disbursements made, if any;
 - (b) certified by the returning officer for services and expenses under clause (1)(a); and (c) authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer in accordance with the tariff of fees and expenses or pursuant to clause (1)(b) or subsection (2).
- (4)** The fees, expenses, and compensation authorized under this Section, and expenses incurred by the Chief Electoral Officer under this Act, must be paid out of the General Revenue Fund of the Province.
- (5)** The tariff of fees and expenses made pursuant to the former Act continues in force until amended or repealed. 2011, c. 5, s. 355.

Tariff of Fees and Expenses

Authorized Expenses - Allowances for travel, meals, and accommodation

- 14 (1)** Subject to the limits in subsection (4) for specified election officers, the Chief Electoral Officer may authorize a kilometrage allowance and expenses for meals and accommodation to be paid to any election officer or worker included in this tariff.
- (2)** All travel by election officers or workers must be in accordance with policies set by the Chief Electoral Officer, but any kilometrage allowance must be in accordance with the travel policy governing public servants of the Province.
- (3)** A claim for payment under this Section must be supported by the following:
- (a) for meal or accommodation expenses, a statement of expenses, including itemized receipts;

(b) for a kilometrage allowance, an online-generated map or other form of documentation, as directed by the Chief Electoral Officer, that evidences the distance travelled.

(4) The following election officers may be paid only the allowances and expenses specified:

(a) returning office core staff may be paid a kilometrage allowance for all the following:

- (i) travel necessary to attend a meeting, a course or training at the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer,
- (ii) travel for business-related purposes within their electoral district at the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer,
- (iii) if their place of residence is more than 20 km from returning office headquarters, the portion of the distance traveled between the place of residence and the returning office headquarters that is in excess of 20 km;

(b) returning office core staff may be reimbursed for reasonable meal and accommodation expenses incurred

(i) while attending a meeting, a course or training at the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer, and

(ii) as approved by the Chief Electoral Officer;

(c) a write-in ballot coordinator or an assistant write-in ballot co-ordinator may be paid a kilometrage allowance and be reimbursed for reasonable meal and accommodation expenses, as approved by the Chief Electoral Officer, for

(i) travel necessary to attend a meeting, a course or training at the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer, or

(ii) travel on business-related purposes at the direction of the returning officer;

(d) an enumerator may be paid a kilometrage allowance for travel necessary to carry out their duties, as directed by the returning officer;

(e) a ballot box courier may be paid a kilometrage allowance for travel necessary to collect election documents following the close of the polls at the direction of the returning officer;

(f) a deputy returning officer or poll clerk for a mobile poll may be paid a kilometrage allowance for travel necessary to carry out their duties on election day, as directed by the returning officer;

(g) any of the following election officers whose place of residence is more than 20 km from the location of any meeting, course or training they are attending at the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer may be paid a kilometrage allowance for the portion of the distance traveled between their place of residence and the location of the meeting, course or training that is in excess of 20 km:

(i) an enumerator,

(ii) a supervising deputy returning officer,

(iii) a deputy returning officer,

(iv) a poll clerk,

(v) an election officer appointed to count ballots on election day,

Authority for this policy also comes from the Nova Scotia Government's Travel Policy which sets the kilometrage rate for public civil servants.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Claim	A request to be paid back for money spent for business purposes.
Election worker	Workers hired by Elections Nova Scotia or its agents to do work related to a provincial election or by-election. For purposes of this policy election worker includes the following: Returning office core staff (RO, ARO, EC, RA, PO, DPO), Write-in ballot coordinator and assistant write-in ballot coordinator, Enumerators, Ballot box couriers, Mobile poll deputy returning officer and poll clerk, Field election workers who attend training, Field election workers who pickup and return election materials, Field election workers who travel to voting locations.
Expense	The cost required to be paid for good or services; the money spent on good or services.
Flat rate	A set amount that can be spent on a specific item as set or determined through policy. For purpose of this policy any flat rates specified are in line with the provincial travel policy and flat rates for meals are not permitted.
Itemized receipt	An itemized receipt is a bill of sale that lists each individual item purchases including the tax and tip. For purposes of this policy, meals cannot be claimed without an itemized receipt showing meal, tax, and tip.
Kilometrage	Kilometrage is the total distance travelled, in kilometers. For purposes of this policy the kilometrage rate is aligned with the provincial travel policy.
Postage	Postage is the amount required to send a letter or parcel by mail or courier.
Reasonable cost	Reasonable cost means a cost that is, in nature and amount, not more than what would be incurred by an ordinary prudent person in the conduct of a business. For purposes of this policy amounts are given for reasonable costs for meals and are in line with provincial guidelines.
Tip	A tip is a gratuity paid on top of the total of a bill for recognition of service. For purposes of this policy a tip on a meal may be claimed up to 15% of the receipted (subtotal) of the meal and tips for taxis are not allowed and will not be reimbursed.
Tolls	A toll is the charge payable for permission to use a particular bridge or road.

Policy Overview

During electoral events in Nova Scotia, election workers will incur expenses in the execution of their duties and tasks. It is unreasonable to expect election workers to bear the cost of business expenses with personal funds and they should be fairly and reasonably compensated for legitimate expenses. It is important for election workers to understand what expenses they can claim for reimbursement, the claim process and appropriate documentation, and the maximum expense amounts that can be claimed.

Elections Nova Scotia (ENS) is responsible for the administration of both the *Elections Act* and the Tariff of Fee and Expenses and has developed this policy to provide clear guidance on expense claims for elections workers.

Accountability and Responsibilities

Elections Nova Scotia (ENS)

- ENS is responsible for the administration of the *Elections Act*.
- ENS is responsible for the administration of the Tariff of Fees and Expenses
- ENS is responsible for the development and maintenance of this policy.

The following are the major roles and responsibilities under the Election Worker Expense Claim Policy

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

- The CFO is responsible to ensure the expense claim process for election workers is administered as required in a fair and equal manner.
- The CFO is responsible for managing and responding to any issues that may arise with the administration of election worker expense claims in accordance with this policy.

ENS Staff – Finance Division

- ENS staff in the Finance division are responsible for the administration of the election worker expense claim process in accordance with this policy.
- ENS staff in the Finance division are responsible to ensure that election workers receive fair and equal reimbursement for legitimate expense claims that meet the criteria of this policy.
- ENS staff in the Finance division are responsible to report to the CFO any issues that may arise with the administration and processing of election worker expense claims.

ENS Staff- Operations Division

ENS staff in the Operations division are responsible for the approval of the election worker expense claims in accordance with this policy prior to payment. The approval may be delegated to a returning officer or another individual at the discretion of the CEO.

Election Workers

- Election workers are responsible for ensure the expenses they incur are in line with the guidance provided in this policy.
- Election workers are responsible for providing the proper documentation when submitting an expense claim for reimbursement.

Policy Directives

Total claims of \$2 or less will not be processed for payment.

All expense claims must be supported by the following:

- For meal or accommodation expenses, a statement of expenses F1301, including itemized receipts. Flat rates for meals are not permitted; reasonable meal expenses will be reimbursed with an itemized receipt, showing meal purchased, tax & tip. Maximums per meal are outlined below.
- For any kilometrage where EMS does not -calculate KM distance, an online-generated map, such as <http://www.mapquest.ca> or <http://maps.google.ca> must be printed and included with the expense claim.

KILOMETRAGE, BRIDGE TOLLS, AND PARKING

Where a personal vehicle has been used, kilometrage will be reimbursed at the kilometrage rate identified in the travel policy governing public civil servants of the Province. Claims per kilometer travelled will be based on the most efficient (shortest) route for travel between the departure address and the destination. ENS does recognize travel by other routes (e.g. major highways may afford longer but more efficient and/or safer routes). In these instances, the ENS staff may consider alternate routes taken. Necessary tolls and parking may be claimed only when approved by ENS. All other modes of transportation (e.g. train, bus, taxi, air) must be approved in advance by ENS. Kilometrage rates include costs to operate a motor vehicle such as insurance, registration, maintenance, etc.

Returning office core staff (RO, ARO, EC, RA, PO, DPO)

Returning office core staff may be paid a kilometrage for travel:

- necessary to attend a meeting, a course or training at the direction of a member of ENS' Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- for business-related purposes within their electoral district during an election, and for projects at the direction of a member of ENS' SLT

- If their place of residence is more than 20 km (one-way) from the returning office headquarters, only the portion that is more than 20 km will be paid. *

Write-in ballot coordinator and assistant write-in ballot coordinator

The write-in ballot coordinator and assistant write-in ballot coordinator may be paid a kilometrage allowance where directed by ENS for travel:

- necessary to attend a meeting, a course or training at the direction of ENS
- during an election, travel on business-related purposes at the direction of the returning officer

Enumerator

An enumerator may be paid a kilometrage allowance for travel necessary to carry out their duties, as directed by the returning officer.

Ballot box courier

A ballot box courier may be paid a kilometrage allowance for travel necessary to collect election documents following the close of the polls at the direction of the returning officer.

Mobile Poll deputy returning officer and poll clerk

A deputy returning officer or poll clerk for the mobile poll may be paid a kilometrage allowance for travel necessary to carry out their duties on election day, as directed by the returning officer.

Field election workers who attend training

Field election workers who attend training may be paid kilometrage for travel if their place of residence is more than 20 km (one-way) from the training site. Only the portion that is more than 20 km will be paid. *

Field election workers who pickup and return election material

Picking up election material If directed by the RO, the field election worker may be paid kilometrage for travel if their place of residence is more than 20km (one-way) from where they are picking up the election material (most likely the returning office headquarters). Only the portion that is more than 20 km will be paid. *

Returning election material

If directed by the RO, a field worker who returns election material may be paid kilometrage for travel:

- From the voting location to returning office headquarters
If the distance from the voting location to the returning office headquarters is more than 20 km (one-way). Only the portion that is more than 20 km will be paid.

And

- From returning office headquarters to their place of residence.
If the distance from the returning officer headquarters to their place of residence is more than 20 km (one-way). Only the portion that is more than 20 km will be paid.
*

Field election workers who travel to voting location

Field election workers who travel to a voting location may be paid kilometrage for travel if their place of residence is more than 20 km (one-way) from the voting location. Only the portion that is more than 20 km will be paid. *

PERSONAL CELL PHONE USAGE

If directed by the RO, an assigned worker may claim for personal cell phone usage by completing a statement of expenses F1301 for:

- Early voting location
The assigned worker (typically poll supervisor) may claim \$5 per day that they use their cell phone for contacting the returning office.
- Write-in Ballot Team
The assigned worker may claim \$5 per day that they use their cell phone for contacting electors and/or the returning office.
- Election day voting locations
The assigned worker (typically poll supervisor or lead DRO) may claim \$10 for the day if they use their cell phone for contacting the returning office.

Should an assigned worker incur more charges than the total allowable amount paid out, the worker may submit their itemized cell phone bill with election related telephone call highlighted and summarize amount they are submitting for reimbursed. The returning officer must seek approval from ENS, prior to approving an election worker claim under these circumstances.

CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK

When election workers are requested by ENS headquarters or a returning officer, the workers will be reimbursed the amount they paid. Claim must be supported with an itemized receipt.

MEALS

Only eligible returning office staff may claim a meal expense and will be reimbursed for the actual and reasonable cost of the meal (within the provincial guidelines) with the submission of an itemized receipt attached to their claim. Maximum amounts for reimbursement are based on the travel policy for public civil servants:

**Meals cannot be claimed without an itemized receipt showing meal, tax, and tip.
Alcohol purchases will not be reimbursed.**

If a meal is provided by ENS during a meeting or training session, do not claim for the same meal as it will be denied.

Claims without itemized receipts WILL NOT be reimbursed.

Reasonable Costs and Requirements to Claim a Meal

- Breakfast, maximum \$8 (including tax and tip)
The cost of breakfast may only be claimed when traveling on ENS' business for more than one hour before the recognized time for the start of the day's work.
- Lunch, maximum \$15 (including tax and tip)
The cost of lunch may be claimed only when traveling on ENS' business.
- Dinner, maximum \$20 (including tax and tip) *Same criteria as above.
The cost of the evening meal may only be claimed when the individual is not expected to return to their place of residence before 6:30 pm.

Returning office core staff

Core staff may be reimbursed for reasonable meal expenses incurred:

- while attending a meeting, a course or training at the direction of a member of ENS' Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- during an election where they meet the requirements outlined above to claim a meal.

Write-in ballot coordinator and assistant write-in ballot coordinator

Write-in ballot coordinator and assistant write-in ballot coordinator may be reimbursed for reasonable meal expenses incurred:

- while attending a meeting, a course or training at the direction of ENS
- during an election where they meet the requirements to claim a meal

TIPS

Meals

You may claim a tip up to 15% of a receipted (subtotal) meal. If the tip amount paid is over 15%, the amount over 15% will be deducted from the claim.

Example: If an evening meal is \$15 before HST, the tip amount should not be greater than \$2.25 (15% of \$15).

Subtotal	\$15.00
HST	<u>\$ 2.25</u>
Total receipt	\$17.25
Plus, tip	<u>\$ 2.25</u>
Total paid	\$19.50

Taxi

Tips for taxis **are not** allowed and will not be reimbursed.

PERSONAL USE OF PRINTER

Returning officers and EOLs may claim \$30 once per fiscal year (April-March) to cover the usage costs (ink and paper) of their personal printers. Any additional claims related to printing will be reviewed case-by-case, and only if they have already claimed their \$30 for the fiscal.

INCIDENTAL EXPENSES FOR MEETING REQUIRED BY ENS

When ENS requires a returning officer to meet with their core staff, or an electoral district association or candidate representative, the returning officer may claim a maximum of \$5.00 per participant for coffee and small snack (e.g. coffee and a muffin at Tim Hortons or Robins). **Itemized receipts, and a list of attendees are required.**

POSTAGE

Returning office staff may claim postage for mailing expense to ENS to a maximum of the Canada Post standard of shipping. As of November 2020, the standard postage rate is \$1.23 including HST. Receipts are not required.

*Example- if a worker travels 25 km from their place of residence to the returning office headquarters, they would be paid for 5 km each way, for a total of 10 km being paid (the first 20 km each way will not be paid).

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