

ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY



Expenses (Travel, Meals, and Hospitality)

Institutional Manual

Approving Authority: President (Vice Chancellor)

Established: December 1, 2011

Date of Last Review/Revision: August 1, 2022, replaces May 16, 2019

Office of Accountability: Executive Director, Finance and Administration

Administrative Responsibility: Finance and Accounting

Policy Statement

St. Jerome's University is accountable for the effective and efficient stewardship of its resources, and for ensuring that these resources are deployed in a responsible manner in support of its mission. As such, St. Jerome's University will reimburse for travel, meal and hospitality costs for University-related business, regardless of source of funding, provided all expenses are incurred in an appropriate and reasonable manner, and are consistent with the Broader Public Sector (BPS) Expenses Directive and all applicable guidelines and legislation. See the appendix for information on eligible expenses.

A University approving authority will approve the reimbursement of expenses that are reasonable and appropriate for the type of activity, and clearly relate to University business.

The University will be accountable and transparent in the oversight and administration of its reimbursed expenses.

Scope

This policy applies to expenses from all funding sources including operating, research (e.g., SSHRC, CIHR, NSERC), ancillary, restricted, or trust accounts. In cases where funds provided by external sponsors require more restrictive terms and conditions, the more restrictive terms and conditions apply. In cases where external sponsors' terms and conditions are less restrictive, this policy will apply.

For purposes of this policy and the reimbursement of expenses, the following persons are considered "internal":

- SJU employees
- SJU Board of Governors members
- Consultants and contractors engaged by SJU

In some cases, manager discretion may need to be applied.

Where an expense is not clearly denoted in this policy, and uncertainty exists about the ability to reimburse for the item and/or any tax implications, consultation with the Director, Finance and Accounting, in advance, is recommended.

Contact Finance and Accounting for advice on ensuring that the decision is reasonable, equitable, and properly explained and documented.

Appendix Procedures and Supplementary Information

1. Hospitality

Hospitality is the provision of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation, and other amenities to people who are not engaged in work for the University (i.e., not internal). While internal members may participate, functions involving only internal members are not considered hospitality.

In the event that services are to be provided by the University's contracted food service provider, documentation outlining the services and costs must be submitted to Finance and Accounting so that the record is available for audit and/or compliance verification.

Claimants must indicate on the backside of the original receipt, those in attendance, those who are internal to the University, and the purpose of the hospitality. Any other documentation in support of the claim should also be submitted.

Alcohol

Hospitality may include the consumption of alcohol. A business case must be made and alcohol must be served in a responsible manner. Food must always be served when alcohol is available. Prior written approval by the President is required for hospitality events where alcohol will be served and the guest list is greater than 13 and must be submitted with the expense claim.

Public Relations, Fundraising, and Recruitment Events

Events that relate to public relations, fundraising, and recruitment (donors, students) are considered hospitality. An event file must be maintained and, if persons internal to the University are required to participate, that information (name, reason for participation) must be retained in the event file. It is the responsibility of the event organizer to ensure the event file is maintained for audit purposes.

Volunteer Appreciation

With respect to hospitality, members of the Board of Governors are considered volunteers.

It is a permitted expense to recognize the efforts and time provided by volunteers provided that the Broader Public Sector expense principles are followed.

Expenses for Consultants and Contractors

In no circumstances are hospitality, incidental or food expenses considered allowable expenses for consultants and contractors. Reimbursement for allowable expenses will be made only when the contract specifically provides for it. All contracts are to be reviewed by the Executive Director, Finance and Administration, prior to approval.

2. Internal Expenses (Not Hospitality)

Normally, food, beverage, and accommodation costs during the normal conduct of business for internal members are not reimbursable.

Circumstances when these costs may be permitted include:

- a) time limitation (when an internal member is required to work an extended day);
- b) when an internal member is required to work over a meal time (due to scheduling conflicts or the nature of the discussion).

Alcoholic beverages are not permitted expenses in any circumstance.

University Business Meetings

Meals or refreshments served during meetings related to University business (e.g., Staff meetings, committee meetings, department meetings) are considered internal expenses and are normally not reimbursable (these are meetings at which normally only internal members are in attendance). When a member external to the University participates in a University business meeting, food and/or beverages may be permitted as a Hospitality expenses provided they are reasonable and appropriate to the meeting.

Employee Appreciation/Recognition Events

Modest recognition of internal members recognizing significant milestones are permitted. Event expense cannot include alcohol.

3. Gift-Giving

Gifts of alcohol or cash are not permitted in any circumstance.

Gifts for Persons External to the University

Appropriate gifts of appreciation may be offered in exchange for donations of service or expertise to people who are not internal. Gifts must be commensurate with the donation of time or expertise.

Gifts for Persons Internal to the University

Where a gift (e.g., flowers) is to be given to an internal member for a special occasion or in sympathy, the gift is considered a token of appreciation and should be of modest value. Refer to the Policy on Acknowledgements for further detail. Gift certificates are considered the same as cash and, therefore, due to income tax implications, cannot be given.

4. Travel

A University approving authority will approve the reimbursement of travel expenses for internal members provided the expenses are business related.

Whenever possible, employees should use the services of the University's designated vendor of record service providers or the system-wide negotiated plans (Visit the [University of Waterloo Travellers' website](#) for information about preferred rates established by the University of Waterloo).

Employees are responsible for ensuring the necessary passports, visas, and vaccinations are obtained in preparation for travel. If vaccination is required for business travel, the University will reimburse any vaccination expense not already covered through the University of Waterloo Extended Health Insurance Plan. Please refer to the Personal Expenses Not Eligible For Reimbursement section below (section 5) for information regarding the reimbursement of travel related items as all expenses may not be considered for reimbursement.

Use audio or video conferencing whenever possible, as an alternative to travel.

Airplane or Train Travel

Airplane or train travel is permitted if it is the most practical and economical way to travel. Economy (coach) class is the standard option for ticket purchase. Travel outside Canada and the continental United States should be at the Canadian equivalent to economy/coach.

Only out-of-pocket expense is reimbursable. Due to tax implications, no reimbursement will be provided for airfare purchased with frequent flyer points.

Cancellation of a trip and requesting reimbursement is not normally permitted. In the event of cancellation, the individual must provide the details of the circumstance for cancellation to the approving authority. The individual may not be reimbursed or, if already reimbursed, may be invoiced for the amount.

Vehicle Travel

a. Renting a Vehicle

When using the services of a car rental company included in the University' of Waterloos group contract services, identify yourself as a SJU/Waterloo employee to arrange for the necessary insurance coverage, preferred rate, and correct billing process. Visit the [University of Waterloo Travellers' website](#) for information about preferred rates established by the University of Waterloo.

Insurance must never be declined.

Normally, a compact model or its equivalent should be reserved. Luxury and sports vehicles are prohibited. Also, to avoid higher gasoline charges, refueling your rental car before returning it is required.

b. Using a Personal Vehicle

Mileage will be paid at a rate of \$0.65 per kilometer. Mileage for round trips less than 20 kilometres will not be reimbursed. Confirmation of trip distance (e.g., Google Map Trip Planner) must be submitted with claim.

The University assumes no financial responsibility for personal vehicles. The University will, however, pay the kilometric rate if you are using your own vehicle for University business. If you will be driving more than 200 kilometres in a day, you should consider using a rental vehicle. If you are going to drive your personal vehicle for more than five days within a single calendar month, even if you are not exceeding 200 kilometres in a single day, you should consider lower cost options.

The approver must make a decision on the type of vehicle used for travel (personal or rental) based on the frequency of travel as well as the distance per trip. If a decision is made to continue using a personal vehicle, the reason for that decision must be documented by the approver.

If using a personal vehicle, records to track the business use are required and the following apply:

- the vehicle must be insured at the vehicle owner's expense for personal motor vehicle liability
- it is the driver/owner's responsibility to ensure that the motor vehicle insurance includes coverage for casual business use of the vehicle
- the University will not reimburse the costs of insurance coverage for business use, physical damage or liability
- the University is not responsible for reimbursing deductible amounts related to insurance coverage
- in the event of an accident, you will not be permitted to make a claim to the University for any resulting damages
- employees are not permitted to transport students in their personal vehicles

c. Parking and Tolls

Reimbursement is provided for necessary and reasonable expenditures for parking, as well as tolls for bridges, ferries, and highways. Costs incurred as part of a regular commute to work will not be reimbursed. There is no reimbursement for traffic or parking violations.

d. Taxis

Taxis may be justified in cases where: group travel by taxi is more economical than the total cost of having individuals travel separately by public transit or shuttle; or taking a taxi allows you to meet an unusually tight schedule for meetings.

e. Public Transit

Local public transportation including hotel/airport shuttles should be used when reasonable.

Accommodation

In the normal conduct of business, reimbursement for overnight accommodation within Waterloo Region will not be reimbursed. However, in emergency or highly unusual situations, exceptions will be considered (e.g., your services are deemed necessary and approved accordingly) for the purposes of emergency or crisis management).

When travelling for business-related purposes, reimbursement will be for single accommodation in a standard room. There will be no reimbursement for hotel suites, executive floors, or concierge levels when traveling. Penalties incurred for cancellation of guaranteed hotel reservations are the claimant's responsibility and may be reimbursed only in exceptional circumstances (and approved accordingly).

The accommodation period must match the period of travel on university business, with an allowance of 1 day before and after to allow for travel schedules.

CRA may determine that an extended stay is considered a change in residence and this may have personal tax implications that are not the responsibility of the University.

Cash Advances

Cash advances are normally not available. In extenuating circumstances, the provision of a cash advance may be approved. Requests should be made in writing to the Executive Director, Finance and Administration.

Tips/Gratuities

You may be reimbursed for reasonable gratuities for porter, hotel room services, and taxis. Keep a record of gratuities paid. Examples of reasonable amounts for gratuities include: 15%-20% on a restaurant meal; 15% on a taxi fare; \$2-\$5 for housekeeping for up to two nights in a hotel, up to \$10 for a longer stay; \$2-\$5 per bag for a porter.

Telecommunication

Wherever possible, you are expected to use the least expensive means of communication, such as: calling cards, and internet access through EDUROAM, or available wireless networks.

If you are away on University business, reimbursement will be made for:

- reasonable, necessary personal calls home for each night away
- emergency calls from air or rail phones
- additional business expenses, such as: business calls, internet connections and computer access charges, facsimile transmissions, word processing and photocopying services, rental and transportation of necessary office equipment

Meals

Meals and food expenses are managed through a per diem rate. The Canadian dollar amount for permitted per diem rates are as follows:

Meal	Within Canada * (No Original Receipt Required)	Outside Canada & Within North America * (No Original Receipt Required)	Outside North America* (No Original Receipt Required)
Breakfast	\$21.00	\$26.00	\$36.00
Lunch	\$21.00	\$26.00	\$36.00
Dinner	\$42.00	\$52.00	\$72.00
TOTAL	\$84.00	\$104.00	\$144.00

You may claim a meal expense provided you are on University business and travelling during the normal meal period.

Per Diem Rate Chart Notes:

- * Submitting an original receipt for meal expenses will not result in a different per diem rate.

Documents required to support per diem claims:

- Conference/ Seminar/ Workshop program/ schedule/ agenda confirming meal cost inclusive of registration fee
- If a program, schedule, and/or an agenda are not available or they do not specify provision of meals, the employee is to attach a signed note stating they were not provided meals

Travel at the Request of the Employer

When the employer requests that the employee represent or participate in an external event where expenses would be incurred, the requesting administrator will clarify reimbursable expenses, personal expenses and ineligible expenses, prior to the employee being required to confirm their acceptance of the offer.

Only the President, Vice President Academic and Dean, or Executive Director, Finance and Administration may request an employee to represent or travel on behalf of the institution where expenses will be incurred. Where a request to travel on behalf of the employer is made by a senior administrator, the respective administrator's office will coordinate and facilitate the required arrangements for travel.

5. Personal Expenses Not Eligible for Reimbursement

Personal expenses will not be reimbursed. While not intended to be exhaustive, the following is a list of items considered personal expenses and not eligible for reimbursement. If in doubt, contact Finance and Accounting.

- articles of clothing, except when required for safety
- childcare expenses
- vehicle allowance (i.e., flat rate) (deemed by Canada Revenue Agency as a taxable benefit)
- fuel for claimant's owned vehicle (fuel for a rented vehicle is eligible)
- passport fees
- per diem or meal allowances, where meals are included in another reimbursable item (e.g., conference fees, transportation, or accommodation)

- overweight baggage fees
- personal entertainment expenses (including, but not limited to, shows, movies, exercise facilities, sporting events, magazines)
- personal use of recreational facilities, recreational memberships, and spa services
- repair, maintenance, or service of a vehicle not owned by the University
- service charges or late payment charges on credit cards, etc.
- stopover costs, where the stopover was unnecessary
- transit passes to commute to and from home and place of employment (e.g., bus, streetcar, subway, commuter train)
- travel expenses for family members
- vaccinations not specifically required for business travel
- personal utilities (including personal phone, hydro, natural gas)
- parking and/or traffic fines
- parking at place of employment

6. Claiming Expenses

All expense claims must be submitted on an “Expense Claim Form” and include original receipts (not debit transaction receipts or credit card approval slips), be dated, and signed by the claimant and the approver.

Approved claims normally should be submitted to Finance and Accounting within one month of the incurring the expense or before the University’s fiscal year end (April 30), whichever is sooner.

The University is required to retain all documentation to support compliance with this policy. Claims that do not have the required documentation will not be processed.

In the event of overpayment, claimants must repay the amount over payed.

Submitting Reimbursement Claims

All expenses must be documented and include original itemized receipts.

The claim must include details regarding:

- purpose
- date(s)
- location
- type of hospitality (e.g., breakfast, lunch, dinner, reception)
- attendees (listed by name and organization)
- appropriate prior approvals

7. Authorized Approval Structure

If more than one employee is involved in the expense, the most senior employee in attendance will be required to make the expense claim.

The following table summarizes the required authorizations.

Activity/Expense	Requestor	Approver
Hospitality/Alcohol > 13	Any	President (written prior)
Cash Advances	Any	Executive Director, Finance and Administration
Expense Claim Forms	Staff	Direct Supervisor, or Official Signing Officer of the University.
Expense Claim Forms	Academic Staff	1. Expense Claim Forms: <i>Vice President Academic and Dean</i> 2. Expense Claims For Approved Budget Items: <i>Department Chair or Vice President Academic and Dean</i>
Expense Claim Forms	Executive, Director Finance and Administration	President
Expense Claim Forms	Vice President Academic and Dean	President
Expense Claim Forms	President	Chair of the Board
Expense Claim Forms	Board Chair	Chair of Finance and Audit

The employee submitting the expense claim has an obligation to:

- verify sufficient resources are available, unless employee is responsible for the budget;
- gather all necessary support documentation; and
- submit an accurate and complete claim.

It is the approver's responsibility to ensure approved expenses and supporting documentation are in compliance with the policy.

Expenses submitted that do not align with the policy will not be processed by Finance and Accounting and will be brought to the attention of the approver.

All expenses may be subject to subsequent audit including, but not limited to, internal audits conducted by the University and external audits conduct by the government or third party funders. The Finance and Accounting department, as part of its pre-audit due diligence process, will issue a report each academic term to the President, Vice President Academic and Dean, and Executive Director, Finance and Administration to identify non-compliance or policy issues.