

Travel and Accommodation Policy

Number:	Admin. 14
Responsible Manager:	Executive Manager Finance
Head Policy:	N/A
Legislation:	N/A

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To ensure consistency, accountability, transparency and efficiency in the payment of travel and related expenses.
- 1.2 This policy will also ensure Council meets its auditing obligations as well as obligations as detailed in the "Fraud and Corruption Control Plan".

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors, CEO, Executive Managers, Line Managers, employees, contractors and volunteers.

3. Definitions

Employee - CEO, Executive Managers, Line Managers, employees, contractors and volunteers

Councillors – Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors

Departmental Executive Manager – The responsible Executive Manager as noted on the Corporate Structure

Departmental Line Manager - The responsible Line Manager as noted on the Corporate Structure

Normal working hours – as defined with the employee's contract, or between 8.00am – 5.00pm

Officers – Purchasing Manager, Accounts Payable Officer or Executive Assistant

Physical location of the meeting – the primary location of the meeting (which does not include attendance via videoconference or teleconference)

Work Purposes:

- Employee - Training, conferences, events and meetings required by the employee's role and as approved by the Line Manager and Executive Manager

- Training, conferences, events and meetings required to undertake the obligations being a Councillor as agreed by the CEO

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 The Purchasing Manager is responsible for all employee and Councillor flight, car hire and accommodation bookings
- 4.2 The Accounts Payable Officer is responsible for travel allowance reimbursements
- 4.3 The Executive Assistant is able to book travel and accommodation for Councillors and the CEO, in line with this policy
- 4.4 The Business Development and Grants Manager is responsible for all requests resulting from Community Grants

5. Submitting Requests

- 5.1 Requests for Travel, Accommodation and Travel Allowance must be submitted to both the Purchasing Manager and Accounts Payable Officer.
- 5.2 Employee and Councillor travel, accommodation and travel allowance requests must:
 - Be requested using the “Travel and Accommodation Reimbursement Form”
 - Be submitted two full working days prior to travel (for example, if travel is needed on a Tuesday morning, the approved request must be received by Accounts Payable by Wednesday the week before by close of business).
 - Be supported by documentation detailing:
 - The work activity the travel is required for (such as an agenda or meeting appointment)
 - Detail all relevant information including:
 - bank details (not “*as per payroll*”)
 - travel times
 - the cost code the travel costs should be expended from

6. Approving Requests

Note: “Approving” means that the approver has checked the information and is satisfied it is fully and accurately completed.

Levels of approval are:

- For an employee

Be approved by the employee’s departmental line manager, departmental Executive Manager and CEO

- For a Line Manager
Be approved by the departmental Executive Manager and CEO
- For an Executive Manager
Be approved by the CEO
- For a Councillor, Mayor or Deputy Mayor
be approved by the CEO
- For the CEO
be approved by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor

7. Rejecting Requests

It is the Officers' duty to ensure Travel requests are compliant with this policy. If Officers are not satisfied that the form has been accurately completed the request will be returned to the CEO and Executive Manager detailing the reasons why the request can not be processed at that time, and detail the additional information required.

In the spirit of resolving travel requests disputes, rejections should be notified within one working day of the travel.

8. Emergency Requests

Travel, accommodation and Travel Allowance requests may be processed at the request of the Chief Executive Officer. Requests should be cognizant and respectful of officers' workloads and any required overtime needed to process the requests.

9. Vehicle Cost Reimbursements

- 9.1 A rate of \$0.77c per km is allowable for the use of personal vehicles. This covers all costs such as repair, maintenance, depreciation and fuel. Council vehicles are not applicable for these costs. If a Councillor or employee uses a council vehicle then only fuel is to be reimbursed
- 9.2 If a Councillor or employee has an allocated work vehicle they should use the work vehicle for any work related travel.
- 9.3 Private vehicles costs can only be reimbursed if the work vehicle is not usable at the time of the travel or no flights are available.
- 9.4 If Councillors or employees choose to use their own vehicles they are responsible for all damages, repair and maintenance.

10. Restrictions and Minimum Standards

10.1 Travel times

- Where possible, travel should occur as close as possible within normal working hours.
- Travel outside normal working hours may occur if the CEO is confident that the travel hours will not detrimentally impact the employee or Councillors' health, well-being and productivity.

10.2 Flights

Councillors and employees:

- Will be provided economy class flights. Premium Economy or Business Class flights will only be provided if the economy class flight is not available. For employees this must be approved by the CEO, if for the CEO this must be approved by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor.
- May upgrade their flights using their own personal funds. Council funds cannot be used for upgrades.
- May receive frequent flyer points benefit from their flights.

10.3 Accommodation

Council recognizes that the health and wellbeing of employees and Councillors is paramount and rest is vital to work productivity. Therefore employees and Councillors should be provided safe, peaceful and well-maintained accommodation when they are required to travel for work purposes.

The minimum accommodation standards are:

- A sole occupancy room with own bathroom facilities (shared rooms and shared bathroom facilities should only be allocated if agreeable by the employee or Councillor)
- 3 star accommodation standard

10.3.1 Councillors and employees may request preferred accommodation if the costs are in line with the acceptable accommodation costs for the region.

10.3.2 Requests for additional rooms to accommodate family members can be booked through the accommodation booking process but the gap in costs must be paid by the employee or Councillor.

10.4 Vehicle Use

- Councillors and employees must adhere to the Vehicle Usage Policy.
- Vehicles must be to a good standard before they are driven, unless they are being driven to attend repairs.
- Council recognizes the dangers of driver fatigue therefore will allow breaks to be included in travel times - 15 minutes every two hours.
- Employees and Councillors should not drive more than 8 hours in one day.
- If a Council fuel card is used for Council vehicle, receipts must be provided to Accounts Payable upon completion of travel. The fuel card must not be used for any other vehicle.

10.5 Cab Charges

- Cab Charge Vouchers can be provided if no other reasonable form of transport is available.
- Cab Charge requests should be included on the Travel and Accommodation form.
- Once approved, Cab Charge vouchers can be issued by Kowanyama or Cairns office reception.
- Cab Charge Vouchers must only be used for the purpose as noted on the approved Travel and Accommodation form. The value of any Cab Charge trips not used for the approved purpose must be repaid to Council within 10 working days.
- All Cab Charge receipts, and unused vouchers, should be returned to the place of issue within two working days (from the date of travel) and not kept for future use, or provided to another employee or person.
- Employees exiting council must return any unused Cab Charge vouchers

10.6 Travel Allowance and additional charges

10.6.1 Travel Allowance is to cover all food and incidental costs resulting from travel. Any additional charges, such as room charges, must be paid by the employee or Councillor.

10.6.2 If final travel plans differ from those noted on the original Travel and Accommodation form, Accounts Payable must be informed and any overpaid Travel Allowance must be repaid to council within 10 working days. Repayment can be via eftpos, payroll deduction or debited to the next Travel Allowance claim.

10.7 Location of Travel

Travel, Accommodation and Travel Allowance requests for work purposes can only be authorised under the following circumstances:

- Councillors, Deputy Mayor and Mayor - If the 'work purpose' physically occurs outside of the **Kowanyama Local Government Area** and it would not be appropriate to attend via videoconference or teleconference.
- For Kowanyama based employees - If the 'work purpose' physically occurs outside of the **Kowanyama Local Government Area** and it would not be appropriate to attend via videoconference or teleconference.
- For Cairns based employees - if the 'work purpose' physically occurs outside of **Cairns Local Government Area** and it would not be appropriate to attend via videoconference or teleconference.

Example: a Cairns based employee could not receive Travel Reimbursement to attend a meeting within the Cairns Local Government Area

Review

This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.

Resolution

Adopted by Council on the 25 October 2017, commenced on 25 October 2017

Approval

This policy was duly authorised by Council as the Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council Travel and Accommodation Policy and shall hereby supersede any previous policies of the same intent.

Chief Executive Officer, Fabian Williams



Date 25 October 2017

Related Policies

- **Community Grants Policy**
- **Fraud and Corruption Control Plan**
- **Fraud Policy**
- **Vehicle Usage Policy**