



## TRAVEL POLICY

### PURPOSE:

- To ensure that CUPEU's funds are spent in a responsible and accountable manner.
- To outline the procedure for having a trip authorized.
- To outline the procedure for requesting a travel advance.
- To define what are allowable expenses and what are considered personal expenses.
- To outline how expenses incurred in foreign currencies will be reimbursed.
- To define the supporting documents required for each kind of expense.
- To outline the procedure for claiming allowable expenses.

### SCOPE:

This policy applies to all CUPEU members traveling on an authorized CUPEU trip more than 40 kilometers from the union office. For expenses incurred within 40 kilometers of the union office, please see the Local Expenses Policy.

Note that this policy does NOT cover travel by CUPEU members who have received professional development allocations under the professional development section of the collective agreement. These members must refer to and follow the relevant university policies.

### DEFINITIONS:

- "Authorized CUPEU Trip" are those involving executives, union councilors or general members which have been authorized by a majority vote of the executive. This shall include, but not be limited to, CSN conferences and courses, other courses on union related topics, such as negotiations, health and safety, etc., and executive development.
- "Allowable Expenses" are Eligible Travel Expenses, as detailed in this policy. When they are incurred by the traveler, appropriate for the trip, supported by the required documentation, and within the approved budget, they will be reimbursed by CUPEU.
- "Personal Expenses" are those which may be incurred on a trip, but which are of a personal nature and are not essential for the trip from CUPEU's point of view. They may also relate to expenses incurred for a companion traveler. They are not allowable expenses.
- "Traveler" or "Claimant" are terms used interchangeably, and refer to the person who incurs the allowable expenses on an authorized CUPEU trip, and who signs an expense claim for such a trip.
- "Approved Expense Claim" is one which has been accepted by the VP Finance after scrutiny and adjustment, if necessary.

## **POLICY:**

All members must make responsible and economical use of CUPEU's funds. They should remember that it is not their own money they are spending, but instead has been contributed by all CUPEU members, who are entitled to expect their money is spent in a prudent manner.

Sustainable choices are encouraged where possible.

### **Authorization of the Trip**

Before incurring any allowable expenses, the traveler must have his/her trip authorized by a majority vote of the executive. If the traveler is a member of the executive, he/she shall abstain from the vote. At the time of the authorization, a budget for the trip will be set. This authorization shall be recorded in the minutes of the executive meeting where the decision was taken. The amount reimbursed to the traveler will not exceed the overall budget authorized by the executive.

To obtain authorization, the traveler shall present an itemized budget for the trip. In the case of executive development, the executive shall complete the CUPEU Executive Development Request form. All other travelers should present an itemized budget in \$CAN which includes long distance travel, baggage fees, local transit, accommodation, meal per diem, event registration and any other allowable expenses they expect to incur. Sales tax should be included in each amount where applicable. Travelers are reminded to allow for variations in foreign exchange rates for trips outside Canada. The budget should contain a reasonable amount of additional space for things like unexpected (but allowable) expenses, currency fluctuations, local taxes, etc. The budget presented by the traveler may be modified by the executive before authorization.

In the exceptional event a decision is needed urgently, a vote may be requested on the executive mailing list, provided any required documents have already been submitted, or are attached to the email request. If the trip is authorized in this fashion, the VP Finance will request it be documented in the minutes of the next executive meeting held.

Any expenses incurred before a trip is authorized will not be reimbursed, even if they meet the definition of allowable expenses.

### **Travel Advance**

In order to allow travelers to take advantage of early registration discounts, cheaper advance-purchase airfares, etc., without being out-of-pocket for a long time, a traveler on an authorized CUPEU trip may request a travel advance for such expenses.

The traveler should be aware that the issuing of a travel advance does not constitute final acceptance of any particular expense. It is not an expense claim. It is an interest free loan from CUPEU which will eventually be deducted from the traveler's approved expense claim.

To request a travel advance, the traveler must submit the CUPEU Travel Advance Request form to the VP Finance. The form should itemize the expenses to be paid in advance, or which have already been paid. It should be accompanied by website printouts outlining the fee structure, or copies of receipts for items already purchased. (Original receipts should be retained for the expense claim.)

Items for which a travel advance would normally be granted include advance payment of conference/course fees, and transportation tickets paid in advance, such as airfare. Hotels are generally not eligible, unless a deposit is required. Per diems are not eligible for an advance.

Only one travel advance request per trip will be accepted. It should include estimates of all expense to be paid in advance.

To minimize extra administration, travel advances should only be requested when the amount of the prepaid expenses exceeds \$500.

Following the trip, the traveler will file a CUPEU Expenses Claim form within the normal delays outlined in this policy.

The VP Finance will calculate the amount of the approved expense claim. In the event the travel advance exceeds this amount, the VP Finance will notify the claimant in writing of the amount that needs to be repaid. The claimant will submit a cheque, payable to CUPEU, within 10 days of receiving the request from the VP Finance, or within 10 days of being notified of the final decision of the executive, should a dispute as to the amount of the approved expense claim arise.

Should the traveler fail to file an expense claim within the required delay, the entire amount of the travel advance will become due and payable to CUPEU immediately. In exceptional circumstances, where the traveler has a valid reason for the delay, the VP Finance may exercise discretion in granting an extension.

### **Eligible Travel Expenses**

#### Conferences, Seminars and Courses

- The actual cost of the event is allowable.

#### Airfare and Related Expenses

- Economy class airfare is allowable for trips where the total flying time is less than or equal to 9 hours.
- Premium economy airfare is allowable for trips where the total flying time exceeds 9 hours.
- Higher class fares are allowable provided the traveler provides proof that the fare was not more expensive than the applicable fare above for the same time and destination (in the case of a promotion for the higher fare, for example). A quote for the applicable airfare above will be required.

- If a traveler chooses a higher class airfare than those allowable, he/she must provide a quote for the applicable allowable airfare for the same time and destination, and will be reimbursed for the allowable rate only.
- Flight cancellation insurance is allowable.
- Additional medical insurance is allowable only where the coverage provided by Concordia's health care provider is insufficient, or if the member is not eligible for this coverage.
- Fees to change the time/date of the original flight(s) will be reimbursed when circumstances warrant and where the need to change is not due to the traveler failing to observe reasonable travel precautions, such as arriving at the airport within the guidelines provided by the airline. A written explanation of why such fees were needed will be required.
- A fee required to select a seat upon booking is allowable.
- Fees required by the airline for either checked or in-cabin baggage for a quantity of bags reasonable for the length of the trip are allowable.

#### Train Fare

- Economy class fare is allowable.
- Business class fare is allowable provided it does not exceed the value of economy airfare to the same destination and it is reasonable to take the train to the destination. A quote for economy class airfare will be required.
- If a traveler choose a higher class train fare than those allowable, he/she must provide a quote for the applicable allowable train fare for the same time and destination, and will be reimbursed for the allowable rate only.

#### Other Transportation

- Taxi (or similar) fares, airport shuttle buses and public transportation are all allowable.

#### Accommodation

- Standard room rates for a recognized hotel, motel, inn or B&B, which is comfortable and reasonably convenient to the event is allowable. Travelers should try to find a reasonably economical choice which meets these requirements.
- Local taxes are allowable.
- Extras, including extra charges for wifi, or anything else not provided as part of the standard room rate are not allowable.
- Use of Airbnb or similar service is not encouraged due to the variability of the experience. Accommodation for space equivalent to that provided in the establishments above is allowable, provided it is not more expensive. However, any out-of-pocket expenses incurred because the accommodation turned out to be unsuitable or non-existent will not be reimbursed.

#### Meals

- A per diem meal allowance is provided, based on the rates posted by the National Joint Council. As they post updated rates, CUPEU will adopt them.
- If the event the traveler is attending includes some meals, the per diem for those particular meals is not allowable.

- In the event a meal, such as breakfast, is included in the accommodation rate, the per diem for those meals is not allowable.
- If a meal is included in the transportation cost, the per diem for those meals is not allowable. The per diem is allowable when food is available during transport, but must be purchased separately.
- If a traveler is unable to eat a meal provided as part of another expense, written justification and an itemized meal receipt must be provided. In such a case, the per diem for the meal will be paid, not the amount of the receipt provided.
- On the first and last days of the trip, the per diem is based on the meals the traveler would have needed to have away from his/her home. As an example, a traveler leaving town in mid-afternoon would not receive the breakfast and lunch per diems for the first day.
- As of October 2018, the rates for Canada are:

breakfast	\$20.25
lunch	\$19.85
dinner	\$50.00
complete day	\$90.10

- The rates for the United States are the same as those for Canada, but in \$US. The actual rate paid will be converted to \$CAN.
- For all other countries, consult the National Joint Council website located at [https://www.njc-cnm.gc.ca/directive/app\\_d.php?lang=en](https://www.njc-cnm.gc.ca/directive/app_d.php?lang=en). The rate used will be the one listed after “C-Day 1-30”. If the city visited is specifically listed, that rate will be used, otherwise the “other” rate will be used. In all cases, foreign currencies will be converted to \$CAN.
- Actual meal receipts are not allowable.

#### Rental Vehicles

- Travelers are encouraged to use the various forms of public transportation available to them rather than renting a car. In cases where public transit is insufficient (or non-existent), costs associated with a rental car are allowable. Travelers are expected to choose the least expense vehicle class appropriate for the trip.
- Travelers MUST purchase comprehensive insurance from the rental company. Failure to purchase insurance will result in all risks being assumed by the traveler.
- Rental fees, mileage charges, fuel charges and insurance fees charged by the rental company are all allowable.
- Gasoline purchases are allowable.

#### Private Vehicles

- The use of private vehicles is discouraged, and should be limited to trips where no other suitable form of transportation is available or where a private vehicle is more efficient considering all costs, time, availability and itinerary.
- The traveler must ensure that his/her personal vehicle insurance is adequate. A minimum of \$1,000,000 third party liability insurance is recommended.
- The traveler accepts all risks, and any financial, material or other loss due to an accident or any other unforeseen event will not be covered by CUPEU.

- A per diem allowance is provided per kilometer traveled. This rate reflects all costs incurred, such as fuel, wear and tear and insurance. The rate is CAN \$0.49/kilometer.
- When carpooling with one or more CUPEU members attending the same event, the per diem rate is CAN \$0.59/kilometer.

#### Expenses Related to Rental and Private Vehicles

- Charges for parking lots and metered parking are allowable.
- Tolls for roads and bridges are allowable.
- Toll vignettes in countries where it is required, or where it is more economical than paying individual tolls are allowable.

### **Ineligible Expenses**

Expenses which are personal in nature, not required for the trip, or related to a companion traveler are not allowable expenses. The following are examples of ineligible expenses. Note that the list is not comprehensive and other expenses, which have not already been listed as allowable, may be deemed ineligible.

- Expenses reimbursed by another funding source, such as, but not limited to, Concordia University. Jointly funded trips are permitted, but each expense must be submitted to only one of the funding sources.
- Fees arising from failure to cancel transportation tickets, conference/seminar registrations or hotel reservations.
- Hotel “extras”, such as use of a minibar, in-room movies, room-service, garment cleaning or additional charges for wifi.
- A higher accommodation room rate required because of a companion traveler.
- The difference in cost between an allowable air or train fare and a higher class fare the traveler chooses to purchase.
- Fines for traffic violations (moving or parking) related to the use of a rental or private vehicle.
- Fines for failure to purchase a required toll vignette.
- Purchase of any equipment, such as computers or peripherals, software, books, etc. unless such a purchase has been authorized before the trip.
- Customs’ duties and taxes for exceeding the allowable personal exemption on trips outside Canada.

### **Foreign Exchange**

#### Credit/Debit Card Transactions

- The actual amount in \$CAN charged by the credit/debit card company will be reimbursed.

#### Cash Transactions and Per Diems

- An average exchange rate for the trip will be calculated by using the Bank of Canada’s Daily Exchange Rates Lookup page at <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/exchange/daily-exchange-rates-lookup/>

- Enter the currency and under dates, select “custom dates”. Choose the beginning and ending dates of your trip and get the daily rates for each day.
- Since no rates are provided for weekends, the Friday rate is used for both Saturday and Sunday.
- In the case of holidays, where no rate is available, the rate of the day immediately preceding the holiday is used.
- Add the daily rate for each day and divide by the number of days of the trip. This rate will be used for all cash transactions and per diems.

### **Required Documentation**

In order to claim an allowable expense, a traveler must submit proof that an expense was incurred and that it has been paid. If an invoice does not indicate that it has been paid, the traveler should attach a credit/debit card receipt. If the traveler paid cash, he/she can request a reprint of the invoice after payment, showing it has been paid. Different kinds of receipts are required depending on the expense.

#### Conferences, Seminars and Courses

- A receipt showing the name of the event, the location, the dates and the cost.
- An outline of the event should also be submitted, indicating the general schedule and whether any meals are provided. Comprehensive conference outlines which describe each session available to participants are not required.

#### Airfare and Related Expenses

- A copy of the ticket showing the passenger’s name, origin and destination, dates, flight numbers and total cost.
- Boarding passes (either paper or printouts of electronic passes).
- Baggage charge receipts.
- Receipts for cancellation or medical insurance if these are not included in the main ticket.

#### Train Fare

- A copy of the ticket showing the passenger’s name, origin and destination, dates and total cost.
- Tickets given at the time of boarding (if any).

#### Other Transportation

- A receipt. If the receipt does not already indicate the starting point and destination, the traveler must write them on the receipt.
- In the case of a multi-use transit pass, only a receipt is required.

#### Accommodation

- An itemized hotel bill.
- If Airbnb has been used, a receipt from the Airbnb website. Receipts from hosts will not be accepted.

#### Meals

- No receipts are required to claim the meal per diem.

#### Rental Vehicles

- The vehicle rental contract.
- Receipts for gas purchases.

#### Private Vehicles

- Google maps (or similar) printout of the most direct route, showing the starting point, the destination and the total distance in kilometers.
- If the carpooling rate is being claimed, the name(s) of other CUPEU travelers using the same vehicle.

#### Expenses Related to Rental and Private Vehicles

- Receipts for lot or metered parking.
- Receipts for tolls or toll vignettes.

#### Foreign Currency Expenses on Credit/Debit Cards

- A copy of the relevant credit/debit card statement which shows the amount charged in \$CAN. All details not relevant to the CUPEU trip, such as other transactions, total balance, etc may be blacked out to protect the traveler's privacy. If the credit/debit card statement is not submitted, the foreign currency transaction will be reimbursed at the applicable cash rate.

#### Jointly Funded Trips

- If a trip is jointly funded from more than one source, the claimant must submit a copy of the expense claim to the other source so it can be verified that no amount has been claimed twice.

### **Claiming Travel Expenses**

Claimants will submit a CUPEU Expenses Claim to the VP Finance within 45 days of the final day of their trip. The university expense claim form or online system is not to be used. All trip expenses will be submitted on the same claim. It is not permissible to request a refund for part of the expenses at any time. If significant expenses are being incurred before the trip, the traveler should look at the Travel Advance section of this policy. It is preferable not to mix other expenses with trip expenses on the same form.

All supporting documents and receipts must be submitted with the claim form. Each expense receipt must be itemized on the claim form. Expenses of the same type should not be added up and put on a single line. For example, baggage receipts for outbound and inbound flights should be entered separately on the date they were incurred.

If the claimant received a travel advance, this should be entered as the last item and subtracted from the amount of the claim. If the amount of the travel advance is greater than the amount of the claim, the claimant is asked not to attach a cheque immediately, but to wait until the VP



Finance has approved the expense claim and contacts him/her with the exact amount of the required refund to CUPEU.

As much as possible, claimants taking a trip near the end of a fiscal third should try to comply with the policy governing submission of expenses for a fiscal third. However, where compliance is not possible, claimants will not be penalized provided they respect the delay of 45 days from the final day of their trip. Such claimants are warned that they must submit any non-trip expenses in compliance with the policy governing submission of expenses for a fiscal third. Such claimants should not break up their travel claim in order to submit part of it in time for the fiscal third deadline, but should keep all trip expenses together on one claim.

After receiving an expense claim for travel, the VP Finance will scrutinize each expense, check the supporting documents, remove personal expenses, adjust exchange rates, etc. to bring the claim in line with this policy and the budget approved at the time of authorization. While the overall amount of the approved budget must be respected, some variation in the line items is permitted. At the end of this process, the claim shall be considered an approved expense claim. The VP Finance will either issue the claimant a cheque, or a notice of the amount which must be refunded to CUPEU, as described in the Travel Advance section of this policy. Barring exceptional circumstances, the VP Finance will complete the processing of the travel claim within 30 days of receiving the claim and all required supporting documents.

In the event of a dispute between the VP Finance and the claimant over the interpretation of this policy, the matter will be settled by a majority vote of the executive.