

# **Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada**

## **Policy Procedures - Business-Related Travel and Expenses**

Following are the detailed procedures for business-related travel and expenses and are to be used in conjunction with the Policy Direction – Business-Related Travel and Expenses.

The procedures were approved by the Executive Team on June 18, 2009; revised and approved in September 2017.

### **Air Travel**

Acceptable air travel fare booking will be no greater than the Air Canada Flex category or equivalent no matter which airline is used.

For volunteers or employees who travel frequently, flight passes may be purchased. Executive approval is required in advance of the purchase.

The MS Society does not place a claim on any air miles earned by volunteers or employees when travelling on MS Society business.

Unless a number of flights are being booked for a specific conference, fees related to booking air travel through a travel agent will not be reimbursed. Individual flights should not be booked through a travel agent.

### **Train Travel**

When volunteers or employees travel by train instead of air, the VIA Comfort Class fare should be used for journeys of three hours and under in duration. The VIA One fare is permissible for journeys of more than three hours.

### **Use of Vehicles**

#### **Rental**

The preferred option is for volunteers or employees to rent a vehicle when travelling out of town or within a location where public transit is not available. The standard for a rental vehicle is mid size. Rental vehicles beyond this standard shall be authorized based upon factors such as but not limited to: safety, needs of the traveller and the bulk or weight of goods being transported.

Volunteers or employees traveling from the same community to the same destination should travel in the same rental vehicle rather than renting separate vehicles unless circumstances require them to arrive or depart at different times.

When volunteers or employees rent a vehicle, the rental company's insurance package must be purchased to prevent utilization of the MS Society's insurance policy in case of an accident. Fuel for rental vehicles is an allowable expense.

## Use of Own Vehicle

Generally, the maximum total allowance for own vehicle use should not exceed the cost of renting a vehicle. An approximate benchmark to consider is 200 kilometers traveled per day. Also, where use of own vehicle to travel between cities, the maximum total allowance should not significantly exceed regular economy air, bus or rail transportation and departure terminal parking fees, etc.

Some positions, e.g. Regional Directors, require multiple vehicular travel weekly to visit many offices. Renting a vehicle multiple times per week can be time consuming and inefficient. In these cases, employees with Executive Approval (see page 4 for definition) can make a judgement call whether to rent or use their own vehicle with the aim to minimize expenses.

If you use your personal vehicle for business purposes at least twice a month on a regular basis, it is strongly recommended that you purchase business insurance through your insurance company. The Society will not assume liability in the event of an accident while on business.

Own vehicle use will be reimbursed at **85%** of the posted reimbursement rate from the [Treasury Board of Canada](#). These rates will be updated semi-annually on January 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> to reflect any changes to the posted Treasury Board rates and will be updated on the expense submission form. Fuel for own vehicles is **not** an allowable expense as the reimbursement rates are intended to cover all expenses for operating the vehicle including fuel, insurance, wear & tear, etc.

Volunteers or employees using their own vehicle for MS Society business must have a minimum of \$1,000,000 liability coverage and must provide evidence of this to the MS Society upon request. The MS Society's insurance policy will only apply if the claim made as a result of an accident exceeds the volunteers or staff member's liability coverage of \$1,000,000.

## Distracted Driving

All MS Society employees are prohibited from using hand-operated electronic devices while operating any vehicle during MS Society business. Prohibiting the use of these devices will help minimize distractions that could prevent employees and volunteers from operating a vehicle in a safe manner.

Where the law prohibits, drivers may use a device in hands-free mode while operating a vehicle. Hands-free is a mode of use in which the driver is able to keep both hands on the wheel. A device is considered to be operated in hands-free mode if it can be used exclusively by voice commands or by touching the device only once to initiate or accept a telephone call and only once to end it, while all other actions in relation to the call are performed exclusively by voice commands.

Hand-operated electronic devices, including but not limited to the list below, can only be used in a hands-free mode where the law permits while operating a motor vehicle:

- Cell phones
- Smart phones
- Blackberries
- Computers / laptops / tablets
- Pagers
- Text message devices
- Global Positioning System (GPS) devices
- MP3 and DVD players and other portable entertainment device

### **Public Transit**

Volunteers or employees are encouraged to take public transit when possible when travelling on MS Society business within cities with adequate public transit infrastructure. The cost of bus or subway tickets or subway tokens will be reimbursed based on submission of information about the location of the meeting on the expense report. No receipts are required.

The MS Society does not reimburse the cost of public transit or other modes of travel for journeys to and from work from home.

### **Parking Charges**

Parking lot fees will be reimbursed on the basis of receipts for the charges. Parking meter charges will be reimbursed based on submission of information about the location of the meeting on the expense report. No receipts are required for parking meter charges.

Parking charges will generally not be reimbursed for volunteers or employees who travel to an MS Society office as part of their ordinary course of work with the following exceptions: (1) parking is part of the employment agreement and (2) volunteers or employees are transporting bulky or heavy goods.

### **Taxis**

Charges for taxis taken for MS Society business will be reimbursed based on submission of receipts.

## **Toll Routes**

In some cases, it may be more efficient for staff to drive along toll routes to save time even though there may be additional direct charges. Toll charges should only be incurred if it is unavoidable (e.g. the toll is situated on the only main highway to the destination, or there is a traffic jam on the toll-free highway alternative).

## **Accommodation**

When volunteers or employees travel for MS Society business not associated with a conference, the hotel should be in proximity to the office/location they are visiting. Volunteers or employees should book at hotels that are midrange in terms of room charges.

When volunteers or employees attend a conference, accommodation should normally be booked at the hotel where the conference is being held. If alternative accommodation is desired, the maximum reimbursement will be equal to the rate that would have been charged by the conference hotel at the conference rate.

Volunteers or employees are encouraged to share accommodation, when appropriate.

If volunteers or employees choose to extend a stay for personal travel at a destination required to visit for business purposes, the MS Society will reimburse only the costs associated with the business portion of the trip. Additional room nights would be a personal expense, however, travel to and from the destination would be a business expense since the travel cost is not affected by extending the stay.

The MS Society does not object to family members travelling with MS Society volunteers or employees. If volunteers or employees are accompanied by family members, no expenses related to family members will be reimbursed.

If volunteers or employees stay with family or friends while on MS Society business (instead of a hotel), reimbursement of \$30 per stay is allowed to provide a host/hostess gift. Receipts are required for reimbursement.

## **Meals**

For individual travel, the Society will follow the guidelines from the [Treasury Board of Canada](#) for reimbursement of expenditures on meals. The maximum amounts will be updated semi-annually on January 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> to reflect any changes to the posted Treasury Board rates and updated on the expense submission form.

If the cost of one meal (i.e., breakfast) is over the daily maximum limit, it can be offset by lunch or dinner being less than the daily maximum. Receipts are required for all meal reimbursement.

## **Alcohol**

**For individual claimants** – The maximum reimbursement listed above is not intended to cover expenses associated with alcohol. If a volunteer or employee chooses to consume alcohol, it will be not be reimbursed.

If a volunteer or employee is entertaining on behalf of the MS Society to advance its interests, particularly as it relates to sponsors, donors or volunteers, the Society will reimburse expenses associated with alcohol to the extent the amount claimed is reasonable.

In order to protect all employees, volunteers and third parties from the risks of driving under the influence, the MS Society adheres to a one-drink policy. This means that while attending an MS Society sponsored event or function where alcohol is being served, an employee or volunteer who will be driving a vehicle cannot consume more than one alcoholic beverage. For these procedures, “one alcoholic beverage” means:

- 341 ml (12 oz.) bottle of 5% alcohol beer, cider or cooler
- 142 ml (5 oz.) glass of 12% alcohol wine
- 43 ml (1.5 oz.) serving of 40% distilled

### **Dependent and Attendant Care**

Volunteers or employees who are caregivers and are responsible for providing daily care to a person with a disability shall be reimbursed actual and reasonable dependant care expenses.

Reimbursement of dependent care expenses shall apply only for expenses incurred as a result of travelling on MS Society business.

Volunteers or employees who require attendant care as a result of travelling on MS Society business shall be reimbursed actual and reasonable attendant care expenses.

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### **Definitions**

Executive approval - means approval by Division President or the appropriate member of the Senior Management Team at the national office.

Incidentals – includes tips or other minor expenditures to replace items that are normally available within your home (i.e., toothpaste, toothbrush, etc.).

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\\TravelProceduresRevisedJune2014  
\\TravelProceduresRevisedJuly2015  
\\TravelProceduresRevisedJanuary2016  
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