

AP032 COUNCILLOR EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

OVERVIEW

Under section 237 of the *City of Brisbane Regulation 2012*, Council must adopt an expenses reimbursement policy.

This document outlines Council's policy concerning:

- (a) payment of reasonable expenses incurred, or to be incurred, by Councillors for discharging their duties and responsibilities as Councillors; and
- (b) provision of facilities to Councillors for that purpose.

All Councillor expenses will be published in Council's Annual Report as per the requirements of section 178 of the *City of Brisbane Regulation 2012*.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all Brisbane City Council Councillors. This policy is supported by *AP032A Ward Budget Procedure* and *AP176 Councillors Publicity Material Procedure*.

These procedures and guidelines apply to:

- all Councillors; and
- such other Council officers who perform the function of submitting, reviewing or approving expenses.

PRINCIPLES

This policy is consistent with the local government principles of:

- transparent and effective processes and decision-making in the public interest;
- good governance of, and by, local government; and
- ethical and legal behaviour of Councillors and local government employees.

POLICY

General

Councillors should be equipped with adequate and appropriate facilities to enable them to represent their Ward and the City of Brisbane.

Additionally, Councillors should not be financially disadvantaged when carrying out the requirements of their role, or while carrying out official duties in which they have an active representative role, and should be fairly and reasonably reimbursed in accordance with statutory requirements and community expectations.

Any party political activities undertaken by Councillors or their staff will not be reimbursed. *AP176 Councillors Publicity Material Procedure*, *AP032A Ward Budget Procedure* and *CC026 City Communication Policy* provide definitions and guidance on this topic.

Failure to comply with this policy, and with the policies, guidelines and procedures referred to in this policy, may constitute inappropriate conduct, misconduct or corrupt conduct.

Payment of Expenses

The request for payment and/or reimbursement of expenses by Councillors or their administrative or policy support staff shall be reviewed for approval of expenditure by the appropriate Council delegate and must be for the actual cost of items or services required for legitimate Council business use only.



Spouses, partners and family members of Councillors are not entitled to reimbursement of expenses, or to the use of facilities, allocated to Councillors.

Responsibility and accountability for all Council business-related expenditure rests with the Councillor who incurred the expense. It is the responsibility of Councillors to ensure that all proposed expenditure meets the following policies, guidelines, and procedures:

- *Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland*
- *AP032A Ward Budget Procedure*
- *AP108 Petty Cash Procedure*
- *AP161 Travel Policy*
- *AP176 Councillors Publicity Material Policy*
- *AP181 Entertainment and Hospitality Policy*
- *CC026 City Communication Policy*

Councillors shall immediately provide information on their expenditure upon request from:

- (a) The Lord Mayor, or
- (b) Civic Cabinet Chair responsible for Finance, or
- (c) Governance, Council and Committee Services, Governance and Legal Services, or
- (d) Chief Executive Officer, or
- (e) Group Executive and General Counsel, Governance and Legal Services.

Facilities

Councillors will be provided with an appropriately equipped Ward Office distinct from their residence, in which to conduct their work on behalf of Council and their constituents. Standard equipment will be provided for each office.

All Councillors will be provided with a fully maintained Council vehicle. Additionally, the Lord Mayor will be provided with a chauffeur-driven vehicle.

Office Facilities – Councillors

Council will provide a Ward Office in every Council Ward. Council will provide an area or areas external to, and close to, the Council Chamber for use by all Councillors.

Office Facilities – Civic Cabinet Chairs and Chair of Council

In addition to a Ward Office, Council will provide a Civic Cabinet Chair's Office.

Office Facilities – Leader of the Opposition

In addition to a Ward Office, Council will provide a Leader of the Opposition's Office.

Office Facilities – Deputy Mayor

If the Deputy Mayor is not a Civic Cabinet Chair, then, in addition to a Ward Office, Council will provide a Deputy Mayor's Office. If the Deputy Mayor is a Civic Cabinet Chair, then they will occupy the Civic Cabinet Chair's Office.

Office Facilities – Lord Mayor

Council will provide an appropriate suite of rooms for the Lord Mayor.

A Civic Cabinet Chair's Office, the Leader of the Opposition's Office, the Deputy Mayor's Office (in the case where the Deputy Mayor is not a Civic Cabinet Chair) and rooms for the Lord Mayor will be located either in the public office of Council, or in City Hall, or in such other building as may be occupied by the Council Chamber.