

Business Travel & Expenses

Number:	1.5.2
Responsible Executive:	President
Approval Authority:	Senior Leadership Team
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Category:	Administrative

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent standards and procedures for business travel and related expenses at Coquitlam College (“the College”). The policy ensures that all travel is necessary, cost-effective, aligned with the College’s goals, and managed in a manner that protects financial integrity, personal safety, and institutional reputation.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and representatives of the College who travel or incur expenses on behalf of the College, including international travel primarily for marketing and recruitment purposes. The policy does not apply to personal travel, even if such travel occurs alongside business activities, unless otherwise specified.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. The College is committed to managing travel and business expenses in a responsible and transparent manner, ensuring that all expenditures are reasonable, necessary, and properly documented.
2. All travel must be approved in advance through the College’s designated process, including risk assessment for international destinations.
3. Employees, contractors, and representatives of the College are expected to follow established procedures for reconciliation and reimbursement.
4. Eligible expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with this policy and related procedures. Non-eligible expenses will not be reimbursed.
5. International travel must include a documented risk assessment and follow Canadian government advisories to safeguard travellers and the College.
6. The College will reimburse travel expenses only to the extent permitted by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) guidelines.
7. Any misuse of College funds, including fraudulent claims may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination, as well as repayment of the funds.

PROCEDURES

Pre-Travel Approval

8. All travel requests must be approved in advance as follows:

- a. Local travel within the Lower Mainland that does not require an overnight stay may be approved by a direct supervisor or contract administrator using a simplified process (email confirmation is acceptable).
- b. Travel involving overnight stays, airfare, or international destinations requires completion of the Travel Request Form (available from Accounting) which includes the purpose of travel, itinerary, estimated costs, funding source, and an international risk assessment if applicable. Travel may not be booked until written approval is received from the President or designate.
- c. College-led agency meetings, whether local or international, that involve meals and/or alcohol.

Local Travel (Mileage, Parking, Short-Term)

9. Employees, contractors, and representatives of the College undertaking day trips within the Lower Mainland for College business may claim mileage, parking, and reasonable public transit costs.
10. Mileage is reimbursed at the College's established rate per kilometre, consistent with CRA guidelines.
11. Parking expenses must be supported by receipts.
12. Meals are not normally reimbursable for local day trips unless the travel extends beyond normal working hours or involves hosting a business meeting.

Booking and Standards of Travel

13. Travel arrangements must be made using the most economical and practical options available while ensuring safety and reasonable comfort:
 - a. Air travel is to be booked in economy class as the standard. Premium economy may be approved for principal representatives of the College when international travel exceeds five hours in duration and the fare is not more than 20% of the lowest available economy rate.
 - b. Accommodation should be booked in standard class hotels or equivalent, at reasonable rates appropriate to the destination and purpose of travel.
 - c. Ground transportation should be limited to public transit, rideshare services, taxis, or compact rental cars, unless otherwise authorized for business reasons.
14. Any travel arrangements that exceed these standards must receive prior written approval from the President or designate and must be supported with appropriate justification and documentation.

International Travel Risk

15. International travel requires completion of the Travel Request Form, including the International Risk Assessment section, and must be approved in advance by the President or designate. Employees, contractors, and representatives of the College must document the Government of Canada advisory level for the destination. Travel to Level 4 countries ("Avoid all travel") is

prohibited. Travel to Level 3 countries (“Avoid non-essential travel”) requires the approval of the President or designate.

16. Employees, contractors, and representatives of the College travelling internationally must provide emergency contact information and register an itinerary with the College.
17. Confirmation of adequate travel medical insurance coverage must also be provided. The College’s group benefits plan may include limited coverage for emergency medical care while abroad. Employees are responsible for verifying their coverage prior to travel and obtaining additional travel medical insurance if required.
18. Where applicable, travellers must also register with the Government of Canada’s Registration of Canadians Abroad service. College data and devices must be securely handled while travelling.
19. During long-term travel, employees are required to check in with the College at least once every five business days. Acceptable methods of contact include email, text message, or telephone.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

20. Eligible travel expenses include airfare, accommodation, ground transportation, meals, travel insurance, out of country cell phone costs, and visas.
21. Ineligible expenses include companion travel, personal entertainment, personal side-trips, alcohol unless specifically pre-approved for hospitality purposes, and any items not directly connected to College business.

Meals

22. The College will reimburse reasonable, necessary costs for meals and incidentals when accompanied with receipts.
23. When meals are provided by a conference, airline, or host, no claim may be made for that meal.

Reimbursement and Receipts

24. Employees, contractors, and representatives of the College must complete a Travel & Expense Claim Form (available from Accounting) within 30 days of returning from travel and include a summary of expenses, with attached receipts.
25. Original, itemized receipts are required for all expenses. Claims submitted without receipts or beyond the deadline may be denied unless an exception is approved by the President or designate.
26. For international travel expenses paid by credit card, submit a copy of credit card charge for reimbursement of exact amount. Cash receipts not included on a credit card statement, should be calculated at the Central Bank of Canada exchange rate at the time of travel.
27. Local travel reimbursements may be submitted monthly or after the trip using the Travel & Expense Claim Form, with mileage logs and receipts attached.

Marketing Travel Accountability

28. Employees, contractors, and representatives of the College undertaking marketing or recruitment travel must outline objectives in their Travel Request Form and submit a post-trip report summarizing meetings, contacts, and outcomes.

Fraud, Misuse, and Discipline

29. Misuse of College funds or failure to comply with this policy will result in denial of reimbursement and may lead to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

DEFINITIONS

Business Travel: Travel undertaken by an employee, contractors, or representative of the College for official College purposes.

International Travel Risk Assessment: The process of evaluating the safety, health, and political risks associated with international travel, including review of Government of Canada travel advisories.

Eligible Expenses: Costs that are reasonable, necessary, and directly related to College business.

Ineligible Expenses: Costs that are personal, excessive, or not directly related to College business and therefore not reimbursable.

RELATED RESOURCES

- [Employee Professional Standards and Conflict of Interest Policy 3.1.2](#)
- [Government of Canada Travel Advice and Advisories](#)
- [Registration of Canadians Abroad Service](#)
- Travel Request Form (available from Accounting)
- Travel Expense Claim Form (available from Accounting)