

## POLICY

<b>TITLE:</b>	Allowances (Elected Members)		
<b>DIRECTORATE:</b>	Council		
<b>ADOPTED BY:</b>	Council Resolution: OMC-24/355		
<b>DATE OF ADOPTION:</b>	29 November 2024	<b>DATE OF REVIEW:</b>	1 July each year
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	111		
<b>LEGISLATIVE REF:</b>	<p><i>Local Government Act 2019; Part 7.1, Section 106-109</i></p> <p><i>Assembly Members &amp; Statutory Officers (Remuneration and Other Entitlements) Act 2006; Determination of Allowances for Members of Local Councils</i></p> <p><i>Australian Tax Office Kilometre Rates</i></p>		

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Purpose

It is a requirement of the Local Government Act to have an established policy which addresses allowances to be paid to elected members. Members of Council are entitled to be paid allowances as determined through the above legislative references.

#### 1.2. Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors and the Principal Member (Mayor).

#### 1.3. Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for administering this Policy.

#### 1.4. Policy Objectives

Council is committed to ensuring that allowances and payments are made in accordance with legislated requirements and are administered in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

### 2. POLICY STATEMENT

#### 2.1 Policy

1) Allowances are to cover:

- Any costs to elected members of attending meetings and activities of Council where these costs are not reimbursed by Council;
- Contribution toward phone and internet usage;
- Contribution toward any home office and supplies; and
- Allowances towards costs incurred in servicing constituents in Ward or Council Areas.

2) Allowances include but are not limited to:

- Donations;
- Organisation sponsorship;
- Membership fees;
- Patron expenses; and
- Constituent support.

- 1) Allowances apply per financial year (1 July to 30 June) each year.
- 2) Wherever there is any discrepancy between this Policy and other sources, the legislated provisions will be followed.

### 3. COUNCILLORS ALLOWANCE

Elected members receive annual allowances as provided in legislation, and according to the role they hold.

### 4. DEPUTY PRINCIPAL MEMBER ALLOWANCE

The Deputy Principal (Deputy Mayor) will receive an allowance for undertaking the duties and responsibilities of this role, in accordance with the legislated amounts payable.

### 5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ALLOWANCE

- 1) A Professional Development Allowance of \$4000 per financial year (the amount is current as at publication of this policy) will be paid to all Principal Members, Deputy Principal Members and Councillors.
- 2) This is an inclusive allowance which covers costs associated with the professional development activities including registration and attendance fees and all travel relating to professional development activities.
- 3) Any course or professional development activity must be specifically related to the role of the Councillor and be approved by the Council.
- 4) Total amounts claimable each year are the total of two years, based on an annual allowance, plus on year drawn in advance; or one year's remaining balance from a previous year.
- 5) The maximum amount claimable by any individual is the total sum of one year for each year of the elected member's term.
- 6) Where applicable, proof of completion for each stage of the course is required before further payments can be claimed.
- 7) Subject to Council approval, the Allowance may apply to the following types of professional development or facilitated online. Examples include:
  - The AICD Company's Director Course;
  - Mandatory training relevant to being an elected member;
  - Professional development activities delivered by LGANT;
  - Course of study or other training course relevant to performance as an elected member;
  - Training, mediation, or counselling recommended or ordered as part of a decision relating to a Code of Conduct complaint;
  - Training, mediation, or counselling recommended by the Mayor or CEO; and/or
  - A conference, seminar, symposium, expo or other similar event on a topic or function related to local government ex. National General Assembly.
- 8) If an elected member wishes to attend a training course that exceeds the Allowance available in the current financial year:
  - any remaining Allowance in the current financial year is to be expended to partially pay for the training course; and
  - the outstanding cost of the training course may be expended against the Allowance in future financial years (and only within the term of the Council).
- 9) Access to reimbursement is subject to:
  - the elected member remaining as an elected member in the future financial year when a claim for reimbursement is made; and

- any changes in the maximum amount of Allowance available in the future financial year (which may reduce the reimbursement amount available).

## 6. TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

- 1) Principal Members, Deputy Principal Members and Councillors' who are required to stay away from home overnight on approved Council business will be entitled to a Travel Allowance.
- 2) The applicable rates to be paid are found in Table 1 of the Taxation Determination for the relevant financial year.

See: <https://atotaxrates.info/allowances/ato-reasonable-travel-allowances/#allowances-for-2024-25> for current rates.

- 3) This Allowance does not apply to overnight stays arising from a professional development activity.

## 7. VEHICLE ALLOWANCE

- 1) Council vehicles are preferred for official travel by elected members. Special circumstances must exist for an elected member to use their own private vehicle for Council business (for example, when no council vehicle is available). The use of the private vehicle must be communicated and agreed with the CEO prior to travel.
- 2) Where an elected member uses their own private vehicle to attend a Council meeting or to attend to Council business in accordance with a Council resolution, and the distance is more than 50km (100kms return), a kilometre allowance in accordance with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) cents per kilometre method can be claimed.
- 3) Kilometre allowances cannot be claimed by passengers.
- 4) Principal Members may claim this allowance if not in receipt of a Council maintained vehicle or a Vehicle Allowance for use of a private vehicle.
- 5) The vehicle allowance is capped at \$10,000 per year.
- 6) The council will not take responsibility for any damage relating to the use of private vehicles. It is the responsibility of the owner of the vehicle to ensure they have appropriate insurance prior to use.
- 7) The Vehicle Allowance Cap will not include:
  - Travel to/from Local Authorities Meetings within the ward that the Councillor represents; or
  - Travel involving professional development activities.
- 8) The Vehicle Allowance will be paid as a kilometre allowance which is paid at rates set out by the Australian Taxation Officer each year, and which is 88c per kilometre for the financial year 2024-2025.

## 8. PROVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLE

- 1) The Principal Member is entitled to a Council maintained vehicle.
- 2) If Principal Members choose not to be provided with a Council maintained vehicles, they are entitled to a Motor Vehicle Allowance, paid fortnightly or monthly, which will be \$40,000 for Regional Principal Members.

## 9. EXTRA MEETING / ACTIVITY ALLOWANCE

- 1) The maximum Extra Meeting/Activity Allowance per person is up to \$10,000 per year, payable in accordance with this Policy and the legislated provisions.
- 2) This Allowance is extended to cover the travel time taken to travel to such meetings and activities.
- 3) The extra meeting allowance may be accessed in relation to attendance at the following types of meetings or when attending approved functions of Council:
  - Special meetings of full Council or established sub-committees of Council;
  - Attendance at Local Authority Meetings within the Ward the member represents;
  - Attendance at any functions representing Mayor on official Council duties;

- Attendance at functions/meetings as an invited representative of Council and with Council's approval; and
  - Attendance at any approved extra meetings of Council for planning, briefing or information sessions of council meetings.
- 4) This Allowance may be paid as travel time when travelling to Council meetings and meetings of Local Authorities within the ward the Councillor represents, where the travel involves at least 50kms from the home base (at least 100kms return). This activity Allowance is not to be included in the cap of \$10,000.
- 5) Allowances to be paid to eligible members (not including Principal Members) are:
- Up to 2 hours \$200
  - Between 2 and 4 hours \$300
  - More than 4 hours \$500 (maximum payable for any one day)
- 6) Fee for attendance is the accumulated hours on any one day as outlined above.
- 7) *Extra Meeting Allowance Forms* are to be submitted to the Office of the CEO and within 30 days of the date the extra meeting was held in the form approved by the Council.

## 10. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

### 10.1 Travel Bookings

Air travel is to be by the most reasonably economic means available; which shall not include business, first class or premium economy. If air travel is required, it will be booked and paid by the CEO or by the CEO's delegate. Car rental reservations will be booked and paid by the CEO or by the CEO's delegate, who will select the most appropriate vehicle (taking into account best value and safety).

### 10.2 Taxi and Rideshare Services

If appropriate in the circumstances and in accordance with the approved process, elected members may use taxi or rideshare services for Council business on a reimbursement basis or in accordance with the *Accountable Forms Policy*.

### 10.3 Traffic infringement Notices and Fines

Traffic infringement notices and fines are the individual responsibility of the driver of the vehicle. Any traffic infringement notices or fines incurred while the vehicle is in control of the elected member must be paid by the elected member.

### 10.4 Travel Allowance

The amount payable for meals and incidentals (travel allowance) is to be in accordance with the ATO Taxation Determination, as outlined in this Policy.

All non-essential additional expenses such as telephone calls, room service or mini-bar supplies are the responsibility of the elected member. Meal allowances are not to be paid when the meal is included in the cost of the meeting, conference or other event.

### 10.5 Accommodation

If the elected member requires accommodation covered by this policy, it will be booked and paid for by the CEO or by the CEO's delegate. Every effort must be made to ensure that the accommodation cost is at, or below, the amount set by the ATO Taxation Determination for the destination.

### 10.6 Camping Allowance / Non-Commercial Accommodation

A Camping Allowance is payable to an elected member who is required to be away overnight at a location where no commercial accommodation is available and must stay in a camp. The applicable rate is \$31.25 per night. Personal procurement of camping equipment remains the responsibility of the elected member.

A travel allowance may also be claimed as applicable.

### 10.7 Registration Fees

Council will pay registration fees for any approved Council business attended.

### 10.8 Accompanying Partner

Travelling elected members may be accompanied by a spouse or partner, subject to Council not incurring any additional expense.

### 10.9 Cancellation and Non-Attendance

Where travel arrangements need to be changed or cancelled, the elected member must inform the CEO as soon as possible to minimise any financial loss to Council.

Where an elected member fails to attend all or part of the business for which travel has been paid, the elected member must notify the CEO as soon as practicable and provide the CEO with the reason(s) for non-attendance.

The CEO is to report any non-attendance at the next ordinary Council meeting.

## 11. RELEVANT POLICIES

Policies and procedures to be read in conjunction with this policy are:

- 1) Code of Conduct (Elected Members)
- 2) Accountable Forms Policy
- 3) Extra Meeting Allowances Form

## 12. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

### 12.1. Implementation

Relevant personnel will be made aware of this Policy, and it will be published on the Barkly Regional Council website.

### 12.2. Review

This policy will be reviewed on or before 1 July each year.

## 13. VARIATIONS, REVOCATIONS AND/OR CHANGES

Barkly Regional Council reserves the right to revoke and/or amend this policy from time to time as is considered necessary to better manage its business and/or to comply with any legislative requirements. Employees will be given sufficient notice of any such revocations, amendments, or changes.

## 14. APPROVAL

This policy is approved.

Chris Kelly  
Chief Executive Officer

  
Signature

29 Nov 2024  
Dated

**END**