

# Council Expenses Policy

<b>Date amended:</b>	May 2022
<b>Date of next review:</b>	June 2025
<b>Adopted by:</b>	Council
<b>Date adopted:</b>	June 2022
<b>Responsible officer:</b>	Director Corporate & Community Services

## 1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Section 41 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) requires a council to adopt and maintain an expenses policy.

This policy ensures that the reimbursement of expenses is in accordance with the Act and meets the Act's principles of public transparency, achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, and ensuring the ongoing financial viability of the Pyrenees Shire Council.

This policy supports Councillors, members of delegated committees and Council staff to perform their role, by ensuring that expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of their role are reimbursed and they are supported to perform their duties without disadvantage. The policy also provides guidance on:

- entitlements
- processes for reimbursement
- reporting requirements

This policy applies to both Councillors, members of delegated committees and Council staff, and applies to the reimbursement of out of pocket expenses where Council is satisfied that:

- the claim is for bona fide expenses,
- the expenses have been reasonably incurred in the performance of the role of Councillor, member of a delegated committee, or member of Council staff, and
- the expenses are reasonably necessary for the Councillor, delegated committee member, or Council staff member to perform that role.

Members of a delegated committee may combine with delegated committees from one or more other councils to form a joint delegated committee.

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## 2 POLICY

### 2.1 Mayor and Councillor resources and facilities

Appropriate resources and facilities are made available to the Mayor and Councillors, reasonably necessary to enable them to effectively perform their role. These resources include, but are not limited to:

- Administrative support to the Mayor and Councillors
- Vehicle assigned to the Mayor during their term, for full private use
- Computer and IT facilities
- Internet accessibility
- Mobile phone
- Workspace and facilities where required
- Stationery
- Access to printer and photocopier

Where required, additional considerations will be made in the provision of resources and facilities where support is needed because of a disability or other special needs.

### 2.2 Expenses

Councillors, delegated committee members, and members of Council staff are entitled to be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses that meet provisions under this policy. Reasonable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Travel – including reimbursement of public transport costs, flight costs and reimbursement of authorised private vehicle use expenses,
- Council approved conferences and interstate travel,
- Councillor development training expenses,
- Council approved professional development expenses incurred by Council staff (in accordance with the Staff Development Policy), and
- Accommodation associated with relevant conferences, training or representing Council at an event.

Approval of overseas travel expenditure requires the resolution of the full Council.

### 2.3 Carer and dependent-related expenses

In accordance with s.41(2)(c) of the Act, Council will provide reimbursement of costs where the provision of childcare is reasonably required for a Councillor or member of a delegated committee to perform their role.

This applies to the care of a dependent, while the Councillor or delegated committee member is undertaking their official duties and may include expenses such as hourly fees and booking charges, if applicable.

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Council will provide reimbursement of costs where the provision of carer services is reasonably required when a Councillor or delegated committee member who is a carer incurs reasonable expenses in the performance of their duties.

Payments for carer and childcare services will not be made to a person who resides with the Councillor or delegated committee member, has any financial or pecuniary interest with the Councillor or delegated committee member,, or has a relationship with the Councillor, delegated committee member or their partner.

## 2.4 Access to shared resources

Where Councillors, in the course of Council business, require access to available shared resources, arrangements will be made (subject to availability) to accommodate the particular need following advance notice given by the Councillor to the Chief Executive Officer or a director.

Shared resources available include:

- Access to a Council pool car for a Councillor appointment, and / or
- Office space for meetings with ratepayers, members of the community or other Council business-related contacts.

## 2.5 Insurance

The Pyrenees Shire Council will indemnify each Councillor, member of delegated committee, and member of Council staff against all actions or claims arising during their term of office in respect of any act or thing done or omitted to be done in good faith, in the exercise or purported exercise of any function or power conferred on the Council, Councillor, delegated committee, member of a delegated committee, or member of Council staff, by or under the Act or any other Act.

# 3 PROCEDURES

## 3.1 Making a claim for reimbursement of expenses

- All claims must be made on the relevant reimbursement form available as Appendix A to this policy or on the [Council staff intranet](#).
- Original receipts must be attached for all claims (credit card receipts alone will not be accepted).
- Where the provider of the goods or service is registered for GST, a tax invoice and be obtained and provided (without this the GST component of the cost cannot be reimbursed).
- Claims should include the following information:
  - Name of the person making the claim
  - Detail of the claim (e.g. event, travel destination etc)
  - Date the claimed expenditure was incurred

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- Vehicle make (if applicable)
- Claim amount in AUS\$
- GST

Reimbursement will be provided monthly by electronic funds transfer.

## 4 DEFINITIONS

Members of a delegated committee	A person who has been appointed to a delegated committee of Council. Many of the provisions of the Act that apply to Councillors, apply equally to members of delegated committees.
Delegated committee	A committee given delegation by Council to exercise powers, duties, or functions in accordance with that delegation. Delegated committees are defined under s.63 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> .
Joint delegated committee	A committee created by existing delegated committees from two or more councils forming a single committee.
Duties	Councillor duties are those performance by a Councillor as a necessary part of their role, in achieving the objectives of Council. These duties may include (but are not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● attendance at meetings of Council and its committees,</li> <li>● attendance at briefing sessions, workshops, civic events, or functions convened by Council,</li> <li>● attendance at conferences, workshops and training programs related to the role of Councillor, Mayor or Deputy Mayor,</li> <li>● attendance at meetings, events or functions representing Council,</li> <li>● duties in relation to constituents concerning Council business.</li> </ul> Members of delegated committees exercise powers of Councillors, under delegation. This policy also applies to those members whilst undertaking their role as delegated committee members.
Carer	A carer is defined under section 4 of the <i>Carers Recognition Act 2012</i>

## 5 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Quarterly reports of all Councillor and delegated committee member expenses will be provided to Council, and Council's Audit & Risk Committee.

Council commits to monitoring processes and decision-making to understand the overall success of the policy's implementation. A periodic review of the policy will be undertaken to ensure any changes required to strengthen or update the policy are made in a timely manner.

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The next scheduled review of this policy will be within four years, or earlier if considered appropriate.

### 5.1 Human Rights Charter

This policy has been reviewed against and complies with section 13 of the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, as this policy aligns with and provides for the protection of an individual’s right not to have their privacy unlawfully or arbitrarily interfered with. It is also in line with section 18 which recognises a person’s right to participate in the conduct of public affairs.

## 6 REFERENCE & RELATED DOCUMENTS

### 6.1 Legislation

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Carers Recognition Act 2012*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Gender Equity Bill 2020*

### 6.2 Council documents

- Governance rules
- Public transparency policy
- Governance framework
- Information privacy policy

## 7 VERSION HISTORY

Version Number	Issue date	Description of change
1.0	June 2012	Initial release
2.0	February 2019	Scheduled review and revision
3.0	August 2020	Revision following implementation of Local Government Act 2020 and to align with Governance Rules
3.1	June 2022	Scheduled review – no recommendations made for change

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## 8 APPENDIX A – REIMBURSEMENT FORM

Debtor		Creditor Number:	
		Date:	

DETAILS	ACCOUNT NO:						ACTIVITY	AMOUNT
							TOTAL	\$
REASON:								

I certify that the goods and / or services detailed above have been received in good condition and / or are subject to reimbursement according to Council resolution, contract, quotation, or agreement.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of person making the reimbursement claim:

I hereby certify that this claim for payment is correct and in order and recommend payment hereof.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Responsible Authoriser:

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