POL-GOV–T002
Travel Policy

1 HEAD OF POWER

- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Local Government Regulation 2012*
- *Australian Taxation Office Travel Determination*

2 POLICY PURPOSE

This policy details how the Council will meet costs associated with Staff and Councillors travelling on behalf of Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council (Council) for official work purposes. The policy refers to the Australian Taxation Office Determination - Income tax: what are the reasonable travel and overtime meal allowance expense amounts for the income year.

3 POLICY OBJECTIVE

This policy outlines the framework for managing and approving travel and allowances to ensure a consistent and standardized approach.

4 POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to Councillors and employees of Council who are required to attend official business or approved personnel development / training. This policy does not apply to Councillors or employees during periods of unapproved absence, personal business or on approved leave.

5 POLICY STATEMENT

A Councillor or employee of the Council travelling on official duty shall be paid an allowance to the extent outlined below subject to approval in each case by the Chief Executive Officer or delegate. Payments to the Chief Executive Officer shall be approved by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor (where delegation is applicable).

5.1 PRIOR APPROVAL OF TRAVEL

A Travel Request Form is required to be filled out by the Councillor or employee and approved prior to travel. Approval to incur travel expenses will be by the Mayor in the case of the CEO, and the CEO or Executive Manager for subordinate staff.

5.2 ACCOMMODATION AND FLIGHTS

All employee accommodation and flight bookings will be made by the delegated Council Officer and will be made taking into consideration: -

- value for money
- availability
- distance from training/conference/meeting

Bookings will be made so that they can be cancelled or changed up to 24hours before.

Where possible, accommodation will be arranged at the training/conference/course venue or where Council have negotiated a corporate rate or where this is not an available option, as close to the venue as possible.

In accordance with the Queensland Government Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses. Employees are to be provided with reasonable accommodation in well-appointed establishments offering a comfortable standard of accommodation, including individual sleeping quarters and ensuite, except where this standard is not available at a particular centre. Employees may be offered a higher standard of accommodation where appropriate (e.g., conference venue, location of hotel in relation to work site, competitive rates negotiated with a higher standard establishment).

Should an officer choose to stay in private accommodation (e.g., with friends or family), the officer is not entitled to claim costs for accommodation.

Should an officer choose to upgrade their accommodation (e.g., to a higher rated property or to a larger suite to accommodate family) the officer is responsible for paying the upgrade cost difference.

5.3 ROAD TRAVEL

Council will provide a Council vehicle, hire vehicle or Cab Charge Vouchers for Councillors or staff travelling away from the Shire in order to conduct official business as appropriate and in accordance with value for money principles. Councillors and employees may be provided with a fuel card and cab charge voucher. Where Councillors and employees are required to purchase fuel or taxi fares from their own funds and will be reimbursed on presentation of the tax invoice

5.4 MEALS AND INCIDENTAL

A Travel Allowance form must be completed and approved before travel. Travel Allowance will be paid by EFT on the first day of travel. Council will pay the travel allowance for food, drink and incidentals as determined by the Australian Taxation Office Determination for all Council approved business travel. Where meals are provided as part of a training or conference package, the Councillor or employee is not entitled to claim for meal expenses. Meal costs may be claimed where it is a requirement to camp within the Shire for business purposes. The reasonable amount of incidentals applies in full to each day of travel covered by the allowance, without the need to apportion for any part-day travel on the first and last day.

5.4.1 Departure from or return to usual place of work or home

Lunch – the employee departs earlier than 1.30 pm or returns later than 1.30 pm.

Dinner – the employee departs earlier than 6.30 pm or returns later than 6.30 pm.

Breakfast – an employee is not eligible for payment of expenses or a meal allowance upon departure except in situations where the employee has to depart from their usual place of work or home before 6.00

am and it is not practicable for the employee to have breakfast before leaving and must purchase it during the journey.

When travelling by vehicle for a trip of 7 hours or more it will be deemed that you on your first day of travel allowance you have left at 8.00am and arrived by 6.30pm, therefore lunch will be paid. Should you have a meeting on the day of return to home or community dinner will only be paid on evidence of a meeting finished on/or after 11.00am.

5.5 CHANGES TO TRAVEL

Changes to Travel Arrangements Except in emergency situations, Council will not be liable for any travel costs incurred by any employee or Councillor other than those approved prior to travel by the CEO or delegate. Changes to the approved itinerary and travel arrangements must be approved in advance of the changes. A Councillor or employee, while away on official business, choosing to change any bookings that Council may have made, including accommodation or travel, that have not previously been authorised by the CEO or delegate, will bear the cost of those changes except at the discretion of the CEO.

5.6 REIMBURSEMENT TO COUNCIL

Councillors or employees that have been paid an allowance in advance to travel for official business and they fail to meet the requirement of their approved travel will be liable to fully reimburse Council for all allowances received.

5.7 FAMILY

Council believes a family friendly policy is an integral part of retaining and attracting employees. Family members may accompany employees when they participate in approved official functions. Where airfares are involved, this will be at a cost to the employee. Council will pay the standard room rate sufficient to accommodation one person and the employee will be responsible for the difference between a standard room rate and extra costs for extra persons. The Councillor or employee will be responsible for all meals and other for all other costs associated with family member's travel.

Where a spouse/partner has been invited to attend accompanying the Mayor or Councillor by Invitation, the Council will pay for flight. No travel allowance or additional accommodation will be paid.

5.8 EXTENDING OF TRAVEL PERIOD

Employees seeking to extend their stay for annual leave, RDO, TOIL or leave without pay or over a weekend shall be responsible for the extra costs associated with the extended time and may utilise corporate rates for accommodation if they wish to extend their stay at accommodation provided by Council.

5.9 ILLNESS OR INJURY WHILST TRAVELLING

If a Councillor or employee becomes ill whilst travelling, they are to notify their Manager as soon as possible. The officer will then commence on sick leave if required. In the event of an injury, the officer is to notify their Manager and Council's Workplace Health and Safety Officer as soon as possible.

5.10 Conduct

Councillors and employees shall at all times adhere to Council's Code of Conduct provisions and act in a professional manner so as not to harm Council's reputation.

6 Human Rights Compatibility Statement

This policy has been assessed as compatible with Human Rights protected under *the Human Rights Act 2019.*

7 Definitions

Term	Definition
Conference	An event usually provided for networking and professional development for members/observers such as ALGA, LGAQ, LGMA, LGFPQ, TCICA
Council	Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council
Family	Includes spouse/partner and children
Official Duty	Includes training and conference and any other meeting or business trip related to Council's official duties, such as meting with state or federal government representatives and regional group
Training	A training course provided by a registered training provider or equivalent

8 Related Polics and Other Documents

Policies

- Council Credit Card Policy
- Councillors Code of Conduct
- Councillor Expenses Reimbursement Policy
- Entertainment and Hospitality Policy

Documents

- Employees Code of Conduct
- Employee Expense Claim Form
- Staff Handbook
- Travel Allowance Form
- Travel Request Form

9 MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed every four (4) years for relevance and to ensure that its effectiveness is maintained.

10 RESPONSIBILITY

This Policy is to be implemented by the CEO; and reviewed and amended in accordance with the by the Executive Manager Corporate Services.

It is the responsibility of Managers to ensure that:

- They are familiar with the Travel Allowance Policy, and that they follow them accordingly;
- Submit their travel allowance forms to the CEO for approval;
- Submit their travel allowance forms to HR for processing before the first day of travel;
- Employee entitlements are authorised accordingly and in line with Policy;
- Travel allowance is approved on the basis that it is believed that the request is genuine, and that the travel allowance applied for is appropriate in the circumstances.

It is the responsibility of HR to ensure that:

- All Managers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the Travel Allowance Policy;
- Managers are given continuous support and guidance in regards to Travel Allowance Policy and/or any issues.
- This policy is maintained and updated in line with legislation.
- Travel allowance forms are completed and sent to managers in reasonable time frames.

It is the responsibility of the Finance Officer to:

- Process the Travel Allowance Form as applicable prior to or on the first day of travel.

It is the responsibility of employees to:

- Submit their travel allowance forms to their Manager for Approval prior to the first day of travel.

11 VERSION CONTROL

Version	Details	Resolution No	Date
V1	Developed and adopted		30 Jun 2015
V2	Amended and adopted		23 Feb 2017
V3	Amended and adopted	2025/40	28 May 2025
V4	Amended and adopted	2025/121	27 Aug 2025