



## COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES POLICY 2023

### 1. PURPOSE

The Councillor Allowances and Expenses Policy (this Policy) has been developed to provide an overview of how the Council can assist and support the Councillors in carrying out their civic and statutory responsibilities.

### 2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors of the Clarence City Council and is based on the allowance and entitlement provisions contained in the *Local Government Act, 1993* (the Act) and *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015* (the Regulations).

### 3. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to this Policy:

Act	means the <i>Local Government Act, 1993</i> .
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	means the Chief Executive Officer/ General Manager of the Clarence City Council.
Council	means Clarence City Council.
Councillor	means an elected member of the Clarence City Council.
Deputy Mayor	means a councillor who has been elected as Deputy Mayor of the Clarence City Council.
Mayor	means a councillor who has been elected as Mayor of the Clarence City Council.
Regulations	means the <i>Local Government (General) Regulations 2015</i> .



## 4. POLICY STATEMENT

Significant demands and expectations are placed on Councillors in carrying out their functions. Councillors accept a range of roles and responsibilities in representing the Council, its community and stakeholders.

This Policy provides an overview of how the Council can assist and support the Councillors when conducting council business and is based on the following principles:

- allowances and expenses provided are for use while conducting Council business
- Councillor expenses are those costs necessarily incurred by Councillors or on behalf of Councillors for the purpose of Council business
- expenses not covered specifically within this Policy will not be met, without prior authorisation from Council or, if delegated to do so, from the CEO, and
- as part of Council's commitment to open and transparent activities, details of expenses incurred by the Councillors are made public.

## 5. RELATIONSHIP TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

The following key organisational goal is identified in the Clarence City Council Strategic Plan 2021-2031:

*Governance and leadership - We seek to act with the highest ethical standards and foster trusting and respectful relationships, demonstrating leadership and accountable transparent governance of the city. Good governance promotes public trust, leads to informed and ethical decision-making, and improves efficacy.*

## 6. COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCE

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### LEGISLATIVE BASIS

Section 340A of the Act provides for councillors entitlement to allowances. Mayors and deputy mayors are entitled to allowances in addition to those payable to them as councillors.

Regulation 42(2) specifies the allowances payable to councillors, mayors, and deputy mayors and establishes an indexation process so that allowances are adjusted from 1 November each year.

Regulation 42(2A) entitles deputy mayors to receive the allowance payable to the mayor when they act in the role for four consecutive weeks or more.



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## PAYMENT

Allowances are payable in arrears and are paid on a fortnightly basis.

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## SALARY SACRIFICE

Salary sacrifice arrangements are available to Councillors with respect to allowance payments where such arrangements are provided for by law and do not result in additional costs to Council. Such arrangements must be entered into by agreement through the CEO.

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## FOREGOING ALLOWANCE

In accordance with Section 340A(3) of the Act, the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or a Councillor may elect not to receive part or all of an allowance. This decision is to be communicated to the CEO by written notice.

## 7. COUNCILLOR EXPENSES

Council will reimburse Councillors for reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out their duties of office in relation to:

- conferences, functions, study tours and professional development (including memberships and subscriptions)
- travel
- communication
- carer services, and
- resources.

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## CONFERENCES, FUNCTIONS, STUDY TOURS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Councillors shall have the opportunity to participate in conferences, functions, study tours and professional development activities which meet one or more of the following criteria:

- assists a Councillor in the performance of their role
- are relevant to matters currently being considered by the Council
- are related to the functions of, or services delivered by, the Council or Special Committee of the Council upon which the Councillor is an appointed representative



- are relevant to an identified need within the Clarence community, directly linked to an objective and strategy in Council's Strategic Plan or key strategy, or
- relevant to the local government industry.

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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIAN (LGAT) CONFERENCES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Council recognises the importance of Councillors' attendance at the annual LGAT Conference and professional development training and will pay registration and related costs (as per guidelines above) of those Councillors seeking to register to attend the LGAT conference.

Costs associated with attendance at a LGAT Conference or training and development activity do not have a bearing on the Councillor Expenditure Limit for other conferences, functions, study tours and professional development activities attendances by a Councillor.

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## SIGNIFICANT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Council further recognises that sound corporate governance and an appropriate level of understanding of the broader responsibilities of elected members is important for the performance of the role of Councillor. Council will allocate up to \$12,500 each year to provide for attendance at significant professional development programs. The program must provide significant professional development in regard to strengthening understanding and performance of duties and responsibilities related to the role of office.

A Councillor wishing to attend a program funded under this provision must submit a request to the CEO for listing as an agenda item on an ordinary Council meeting agenda. Approval to attend shall only be by resolution of Council. While a councillor may submit a request at any time, council will consider the total remaining budget in determining the outcome of any request.

Costs associated with attendance at an approved significant professional development program do not have a bearing on the Councillor Expenditure Limit for other conferences, functions, study tours and professional development activities attendances by a Councillor.

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## MEMBERSHIPS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Council will pay Councillors' membership and subscription fees to bodies and organisations whose activities are relevant to the role of Councillors and where the Councillor actively participates in the body.

Costs are to be included in calculation of the Councillor Expenditure Limit outlined in this Policy.



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## OVERSEAS ATTENDANCES

A Councillor wishing to attend an overseas conference, function, study tour or professional development activity must submit a request to the CEO for listing as an agenda item on an ordinary Council meeting agenda. Approval to attend shall only be by resolution of Council.

The request must outline:

- how the attendance satisfies the evaluation criteria set
- an estimate of all the expenses likely to be incurred , and
- any relevant supporting information.

Costs are to be included in calculation of the Councillor Expenditure Limit outlined in this Policy.

Councillors are to provide a written report to the Council for all approved international travel. The report should outline the outcomes and benefits of the travel, costs incurred and should be prepared within 30 days of return from travel and submitted for agenda listing at the next available Council meeting.

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## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Council will meet the reasonable cost of registration fees and accommodation associated with attendance at approved conferences, functions, training and professional development activities. Council will also meet the reasonable cost of meals when they are not included in the conference fees.

Costs are to be included in calculation of the Councillor Expenditure Limit outlined in this Policy.

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## COUNCILLOR EXPENDITURE LIMIT

Expenses for conferences, functions, training and professional development will be limited to \$6,500 per Councillor per term of appointment (four years).

A Councillor elected to office to fill a casual vacancy is entitled to a pro-rata allocation from the date of election to their end of term of appointment.

Councillors may elect to expend their entitlement at any time during their 4-year term of office.

Unexpended expenditure shall not rollover to any subsequent term of office of a Councillor.



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## NON-ATTENDANCE AT AN APPROVED ACTIVITY

At the determination of the CEO, a Councillor may be required to reimburse the Council for any costs incurred if the Councillor does not attend an activity that they are registered to attend.

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## UNDERTAKING COUNCIL BUSINESS WHILE ON PRIVATE TRAVEL

If a Councillor proposes to officially represent the Council while on private travel, authorisation must be sought in line with approval processes and requirements outlined in this Policy. Approval to represent Council is required regardless of whether or not expenses will be incurred.

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## PARTNER/COMPANION TRAVEL

The cost of a partner or companion accompanying a Councillor on Council business must be borne by that person. If a partner or companion wishes to accompany a Councillor in a private capacity, such travel will not be booked by Council.

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## APPROVAL AND ARRANGEMENTS

Applications to attend a conference, function, training or professional development activity must be made in writing to the CEO's office, including:

- details of the activity, including all associated costs
- relevance to Council priorities and business, and
- relevance to the exercise of the Councillor's civic or statutory duties.

The CEO will consider the above criteria, the Councillor's remaining individual limit, and the total remaining budget in determining the outcome of any request.

Arrangements for the registration of attendance are to be made through the CEO's Office.

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## AIR TRAVEL

Councillors will normally travel economy class.

Upgrades in the class of service are permitted at the Councillor's expense.



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## ACCOMMODATION

Councillors can stay in reasonable accommodation appropriate to the area travelled to and the nature of the visit. Four-star accommodation is considered appropriate.

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## PAYMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES

A Councillor may elect to either:

- seek reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred, or
- be paid a daily travelling allowance in accordance with public service rates outlined in the Local Government Industry Award 2020 as determined from time to time.

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## COSTS IN EXCESS OF THRESHOLD

Where the cost of attendance is anticipated to or has exceeded the threshold stated, a Councillor may submit a request for further assistance and explanatory memorandum with relevant supporting information to the CEO for listing as an agenda item on an ordinary Council meeting agenda. It is a matter for the Council to determine the level of assistance that is to be provided to the Councillor in this category.

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## COMMUNICATION

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### EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

Communication equipment and services shall be provided to assist Councillors in the conduct of Council business.

Equipment available to each Councillor will, on request, include the provision of a mobile phone, suitable portable electronic device, a laptop or personal computer, and a printer. Equipment will be in accordance with Council's standard equipment purchasing policies. Equipment shall be replaced from time to time at the discretion of the CEO.

Issued items remain the property of Council and must be returned at the end of the Council term.

Council will reimburse Councillors for reasonable expenses incurred in relation to equipment and services utilised in carrying out the duties of office, where items are not issued by Council.

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### INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

Equipment issued by Council will be fully maintained by Council.



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## EXPENSE LIMITS

The following table details expense limits. Councillors may claim lesser amounts based on their assessment of the proportion of Council-related business incurred on their accounts. Councillors are encouraged to explore suitable packages which minimise the costs of services obtained by them under the various relevant reimbursement categories of this policy.

Internet Connection	Maximum of \$100 per month.
Mobile	Council will meet all Council related call costs.

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## TRAVEL - LOCAL

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### GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES

The following support is provided to assist Councillors with travel costs when undertaking the duties of office, including:

- attending formal meetings of Council, Council Special Committees / Workshops / Briefings
- attending a meeting of a Regional Committee, Authority or external organisation to which the Councillor has been appointed as a representative of Council, provided that the organisation does not cover such expenses
- attending any other meeting where the Councillor has been delegated or authorised by Council to attend
- conducting inspections of relevant sites and talking with interested parties regarding matters formally listed as Agenda Items for a meeting of the Council
- travelling to and from meetings with residents and ratepayers in response to their request or problem
- travel to and from a meeting with Council staff, and
- travel to and from any activity in compliance with a resolution or policy of Council.

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### EXCLUSIONS

Council will not reimburse a Councillor for travelling in relation to unsolicited visits to citizens that have been undertaken for the self-promotion of the Councillor.





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## CAR PARKING FEES

Councillors may be reimbursed for on and off-street parking fees incurred in the course of undertaking the duties of office.

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## USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, TAXIS AND RIDE SHARE

Councillors may be reimbursed for public transport, taxi and ride share fees incurred in the course of undertaking the duties of office. All arrangements are to be documented on a claim form in the same manner as for private vehicle use.

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## USE OF PRIVATE MOTOR VEHICLE

Claims for travelling expenses shall, where practicable, be submitted monthly and include:

- date of travel
- the place of departure and arrival
- distance travelled
- reason for the journey, and
- total amount of claim.

Reimbursement of expenses will be in accordance with public service rates outlined in the Local Government Industry Award 2020 as determined from time to time.

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## CARER EXPENSES

The Council will reimburse the cost of necessary carer expenses incurred by Councillors in the course of carrying out Council business. Reimbursement of costs will be available for immediate family only, i.e. where the Councillor or their domestic partner is the primary care giver. The maximum hourly rate a Councillor will be reimbursed for carer expenses is \$40 per hour or as otherwise advised by the CEO or delegate.

Costs are not eligible for reimbursement if paid to a person who normally or regularly lives with the Councillor, except where a live-in (professional) helper is required to work extra time at extra expense because of the duties of the Councillor.

Claims for reimbursement must be accompanied by a receipt or tax invoice, specifying if costs include GST.



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## RESOURCES

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### BUSINESS CARDS

Council will provide a supply of personalised Council business cards designed in accordance with the corporate design and branding.

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### COUNCILLOR CORPORATE UNIFORM AND NAME BADGE

Councillors will be provided with a Clarence City Council name badge, designed in accordance with the corporate design and branding.

Councillors may request a council branded vest and/or jacket, in accordance with standard staff branded clothing.

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### COUNCILLOR ROOMS

A fully maintained office, known as the "Councillors' Room" will be available at all times for the use of all elected members, excluding the Mayor.

## 8. CLAIMING EXPENSES

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### CLAIMS EXCLUSIONS

A Councillor shall not claim expenses where the expenses would otherwise have been incurred as a result of personal business.

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### CLAIMS PROCEDURE

A Councillor is to make a claim for expenses for the recognised duties of office only through the Council's Claims lodgement process. Claims for reimbursement are to be accompanied by receipts or tax invoices and each claim must clearly identify the purpose of the expense.

Claims for reimbursement are to be submitted to the CEO on a monthly basis using the Claim Form provided. Claims must be submitted within 6 months of the expenses being incurred.

Where, in the opinion of the CEO, a question arises as to whether a claim for reimbursement of expenses is eligible under this policy, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Mayor who will discuss the matter with the Councillor making the claim. Should the question still remain, the matter is to be referred to a closed session of Council for a decision.



## 9. SUPPORT FOR THE OFFICE OF MAYOR

Support provided to the Mayor is the same as provided to Councillors plus the following:

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### MAYORAL VEHICLE

In recognising the responsibilities of office, the Mayor is provided with an official vehicle of an appropriate standard as determined by Council from time to time:

- the vehicle shall be fully maintained by Council and available to the Mayor for full private use
- when deemed necessary by the Mayor, a person, other than a Council employee or a Councillor, may drive the vehicle
- the vehicle is also available for the Mayor's partner/spouse to support them in community activities as may arise from time to time, and
- the vehicle may be made available to Councillors or staff for use on Council business at the discretion of the Mayor.

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### MAYOR'S OFFICE

An office will be provided for the Mayor to assist them in conducting their civic duty. This office will be serviced and furnished to the requirements of the Mayor. The Mayor will be provided with secretarial and administrative support as required and as approved by the CEO in accordance with Council's approved budget.

## 10. SUPPORT FOR THE OFFICE OF DEPUTY MAYOR

The level of support provided to the Deputy Mayor is the same as provided to Councillors. When the Deputy Mayor acts in the office of Mayor the support provided to the Mayor shall apply.

## 11. REPORTING

Details of expenses incurred by the Councillors will be outlined in each Quarterly Report to Council and the Annual Report. These Reports are published on council's website.



## 12. RELATED DOCUMENTS

### LEGISLATIVE (ACTS, REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS)

- Local Government Act, 1993
- Local Government (General) Regulations 2015

### COUNCIL POLICY, PLANS, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

- Clarence City Council Strategic Plan 2021-2031

## 13. ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

### TABLE OF AMENDMENTS

No.	Date	Brief Details
1		
APPROVAL		
COUNCIL APPROVAL DATE	19 June 2023	
REVIEW	Every 4 years	
RESPONSIBLE POSITION	Chief Executive Officer	
ECM REFERENCE	ECM_5028286	