

HOSPITALITY POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The West Hants Regional Municipality recognizes that hospitality-related activities are, at times, necessary and legitimate expenses supporting the effective conduct of Municipal business and necessary for diplomacy, protocol, business development, or promotional advocacy. The offering of hospitality will be done in such a manner as to reflect the prudent stewardship of public funds.

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Provide direction and guidance to councillors and employees with respect to the appropriate expensing of necessary hospitality expenses that support the Municipality's objectives.
- Ensure hospitality is offered in an accountable, economic, and consistent manner in the facilitation of Municipal business and/or for diplomacy, protocol, business development, or promotional advocacy.
- Ensure taxpayers' dollars are used prudently and responsibly with a focus on accountability and transparency.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions are provided:

- a. "Audit Committee" refers to a committee of Council, which is responsible for assisting Council in meeting its oversight responsibilities by ensuring the adequacy and effectiveness of financial reporting, risk management, and internal controls.
- b. "CAO" refers to the Chief Administrative Officer of the Municipality.
- c. "Council" refers to the Council of the Municipality.
- d. "Councillor" refers to a Council member and includes the Mayor and Deputy Mayor unless the context indicates otherwise.
- e. "Designate" refers to an individual acting in someone's stead.
- f. "Employee" refers to any person directly employed by the Municipality.
- g. "Hospitality" refers to expenses incurred with hosting individuals from outside of the corporation of the West Hants Regional Municipality, for reasons outlined above, including receptions, ceremonies, conferences, performances, or other group events. Allowable expense may include meals, beverages (non-alcoholic), or other approved items. Note: 'outside'

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of the corporation means the corporate entity and is not a reference to geographic boundaries.

- h. "MGA" refers to the Municipal Government Act.
- i. "Municipality" refers to the West Hants Regional Municipality.

3. APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all councillors and employees of the Municipality who incur hospitality expenses while conducting Municipal business.

Hospitality may be offered under the following circumstances:

- Hosting dignitaries,
- Engaging in official public matters with representatives from other governments; business, industry/labour leaders; or other community leaders,
- Sponsoring conferences,
- Hosting prestigious ceremonies/recognition events, or
- Other authorized official functions, as approved by Council or the CAO.

All hospitality events require the *Hospitality Request Form* be submitted to the CAO for prior authorization. The request form will include the following details:

- Rationale/purpose of the event,
- Estimated numbers of attendees and their respective affiliations, and
- Estimated itemized costs including gratuities and supplementary expenses.

In accordance with the MGA, hospitality expenditures include anything pertaining to a Hospitality Event, including:

- Meals
- Beverages
- Room Rental
- Professional Serving Staff
- Gifts

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The giving of token gifts to individuals outside of the Municipality (value not to exceed \$40.00) is sometimes appropriate. Any giving of gifts must have prior approval, using the *Hospitality Request Form*.

The MGA deems the provision of alcohol in the context of hospitality for reasons of diplomacy, protocol, business development or promotional advocacy acceptable in limited circumstances. The guidelines below will be followed for alcohol provision:

- Alcohol served at hospitality events **will not** be paid for or reimbursed by the Municipality but may be offered to individual attendees for purchase.
- Any request for approval to serve alcohol at a hospitality event must be approved in advance of the event.
- Hospitality events involving alcohol must:
 - Be appropriately licensed,
 - Be staffed with servers,
 - Have drink limits in place,
 - Serve food,
 - Have alternative transportation available (public transit, designated drivers, taxi, etc.).
- All employees and councillors will act responsibly in the care and well-being of themselves, other employees, and their respective guests with respect to service of alcohol.

In accordance with the MGA, the Municipality will prepare a hospitality expense report within 90 days of the end of each fiscal quarter. This report will be posted on the Municipal website for public viewing. A yearly report will be submitted to the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

To ensure timely reporting:

- All *Hospitality Request Forms*, with final costs added and copies of invoices and/or receipts must be submitted to the CAO within one (1) month of the event.
- Original hospitality expense receipts must be submitted to the Accounts Payable Coordinator within one (1) month of the event for payment or reimbursement.

4. ACCOUNTABILITIES

Mayor is responsible for:

- Reviewing hospitality-related expenses for the CAO and approving these hospitality events.

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Audit Committee is responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with the requirements established by this Policy with respect to hospitality expenses.

CAO is responsible for:

- Using discretion to make decisions and choices with some degree of flexibility, while maintaining compliance and consistent application of this Policy. When a situation arises, and discretion needs to be exercised, the CAO should consider whether the request is:
 - Able to stand up to scrutiny by auditors and members of the public,
 - Properly explained and documented,
 - Fair and equitable,
 - Reasonable, and
 - Appropriate.

Employees are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this Policy.
- Submitting completed hospitality request forms before and after the event to the CAO, as outlined in Section 3 of this Policy.
- Submitting original hospitality expense receipts to the Accounts Payable Coordinator for payment.

The **Financial Services Department** is responsible for:

- Providing advice and assistance to the CAO regarding the application of this Policy.
- Monitoring hospitality expenses for appropriate usage and consistency with Policy directives.
- Processing hospitality-related expenses.
- Monitoring the effectiveness and consistent application of this Policy including coordinating periodic reviews of hospitality expenses to ensure compliance with this policy.
- Preparing quarterly and yearly reporting requirements.

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5. REVIEW

In accordance with MGA, Section 23(7) by the January 31st immediately following a regular election held under the *Municipal Elections Act*, Council will review the Hospitality Policy and, following a motion by Council, either re-adopt the Policy or amend the Policy and adopt as amended.

6. REPEAL

The Hospitality Policy, COFN-008.00, dated December 11, 2018 of the former Municipality of the District of West Hants and the Hospitality Policy and Request Form dated June 25, 2019 of the former Town of Windsor are hereby repealed.

I, Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk of the West Hants Regional Municipality, the Province of Nova Scotia, do hereby certify that this is a true copy of the Policy as adopted by the Council of the West Hants Regional Municipality at a meeting duly called and held on the **26th** day of **May, 2020**.

R.N. Brown
Municipal Clerk

<i>Adoption</i>	
<i>Notice to Council:</i>	May 12, 2020
<i>Approval:</i>	May 26, 2020
<i>Description:</i> Initial approval of Hospitality Policy, RCOFN-001.00.	

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
HOSPITALITY REQUEST FORM

Purpose for hospitality:

Estimated number of attendees: _____ **Actual number of attendees:** _____

Affiliations of attendees:

Itemized costs including gratuities and supplementary expenses:
Examples: Meals, Beverages (non-alcoholic), room rentals, serving staff, gifts

Item	Estimated Cost (pre-event)	Actual Cost (post event)
TOTAL		

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
HOSPITALITY REQUEST FORM

Alcoholic Beverage Approval

* Please note, that even once approved, Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursed, however the expense of professional serving staff is reimbursed.

Purpose for needing Alcoholic Beverages:

Checklist for Approval:

- Appropriate License Obtained
- Professional Serving Staff
- Appropriate Drink Limits
- Event will include Food Service
- Alternative Transportation Provided

Claimant Name _____

Claimant Signature _____ **Date:** _____

Hospitality Pre-Authorization _____ **Date:** _____

Reimbursement Approval _____ **Date:** _____

*Attach receipt copies to this completed form for hospitality approval.