

REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

September 2009



1. Introduction

1.1 The Canadian Federation of Medical Students (CFMS) represents medical students across Canada from 14 member schools. The CFMS appreciates that often member students incur expenses as part of CFMS Official Business (defined below). Understanding the unnecessary financial strain this can place on students, the CFMS is committed to an efficient and reimbursement policy that will refund students in a timely manner while maintaining rigorous standards for verifying expense claims in compliance with guidelines set out by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and in Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

1.2 The objectives of the Reimbursement Policy are to:

- decrease financial hardship by ensuring a fair reimbursement procedure for out-of-pocket expenses,
- ensure expenses are driven by approved budgeted items,
- maintain up-to-date and accurate records of spending, enabling more precise budgeting in the future,
- standardize expense reimbursement procedures.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all individuals conducting OFFICIAL BUSINESS of the CFMS (henceforth "CFMS INDIVIDUALS"), including but not limited to:

- President and Executive Officers,
- Employees,
- Officers,
- Representatives/Delegates to Affiliated Organizations and Committees, Member Schools, and Visiting Medical Students
- CFMS Member Students.

2.2 "Official Business" of the CFMS constitutes activities that fall within substantive portfolios or assignments conducted by the individuals aforementioned including but not limited to:

- any activities approved through the Annual Budget presented at AGM,
- any activities not accounted for in the Annual Budget but approved for subsidy by the VP Finance, President, and/or Executive Council.

2.3 This policy does not apply to CFMS members who are conducting business on behalf of their school's medical societies (eg. student travelling as a VP External to an AGM).

3. Approval

3.1 At the Spring General Meeting (SGM), a preliminary budget will be drafted and presented in-camera to CFMS members only. This is to increase the transparency and ensure financial responsibility for spending over the months of July, August and September, which fall under a new fiscal year for the CFMS and have previously meant working without an approved budget. Adoption of the budget, which may be revised over the months of July – September to

accommodate unforeseen revenues and expenses, will be pending final approval at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in September.

3.2 Within the CFMS budget, all activities and expenditures fall under the purview of each individual Executive Officer's portfolio. These people should be the first line of contact for individuals with questions regarding expenses.

3.3 Ultimate approval for any line item of spending will rest with the VP Finance. If there are disputes regarding the reimbursements, the VP Finance may strike a committee to investigate the matter further. Any decision arrived at by such a committee will be binding on all parties. As a general rule, precedent cases will be used as a guide to ensure consistency and transparency in decision making; however, extenuating circumstances will be taken into account.

3.4 Withdrawal of approval for funding will be at the discretion of a committee consisting of the VP Finance, President and two other Executive members should a CFMS INDIVIDUALS failing to complete their responsibilities to a standard that can be reasonably expected. By accepting CFMS funding, individuals acknowledge that their expenses may not be reimbursed in situations including but not limited to:

- cancellation of travel plans without giving timely notice for reimbursement from the airline/train/busline/etc.,
- missing travel plans,
- failure to attend a meeting/event, where the CFMS INDIVIDUAL would be representing the CFMS,
- failure to fulfill duties agreed to as stipulations of funding to be received,
- failure to submit original itemized receipts,
- failure to submit receipts in a timely fashion,
- spending in excess of what was approved in advance of the expenditures,
- undertaking or committing of financial resources without obtaining prior approval from the appropriate person,
- any unprofessional behaviour that may reflect poorly on the CFMS.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Expenses incurred on OFFICIAL BUSINESS by CFMS INDIVIDUALS will be reimbursed to the individual on the basis of actual expenses incurred. CFMS INDIVIDUALS are expected to spend CFMS funds prudently. The following is a list of items that the CFMS will not reimburse including but not limited to:

- alcoholic beverages
- entertainment expenses not previously approved
- phone and copy charges not for OFFICIAL BUSINESS
- intra- or inter-city transportation not necessary for OFFICIAL BUSINESS
- any other personal or non-CFMS OFFICIAL BUSINESS expenses.

5. Reimbursement Procedure

5.1 All requests for reimbursement must be formalized on an official CFMS Expense Claim Form, signed in ink, and mailed to the CFMS Office. If a request must be processed immediately, a faxed or scanned and emailed copy may be accepted. Originals must follow by mail.

5.2 Original itemized receipts are REQUIRED for reimbursement of any expenditure. The only exceptions currently recognized are

- mileage, provided starting and end points are detailed,
- Incoming Exchange Student Support, provided these funds are verified against the Incoming Students list provided by the NEO at the beginning of the year.

5.3 Upon receipt of the claim, a cheque will be issued within 10 business days for all approved expense reports and mailed to the CFMS INDIVIDUAL who submitted the claim.

5.4 If a claim is in excess of \$1000, it may take additional time to verify the expenditure. The VP Finance will inform any claimant of the time delay.

5.5 If a claim does not comply with this policy and is therefore not verified, the VP Finance will inform the claimant of the deficiencies, and provide the option to submit another CFMS Expense Claim Form.

6. Exceptions

Expenses not covered by the policy herein set forth shall be reimbursed pending approval from the VP Finance and whatever committee he/she deems necessary to ensure consistency with this policy. Requests must be made in writing prior to consideration and approval of any exception to this policy.