

	<h2>Town of Cochrane Policy</h2>
<p>Policy No.: Policy Title: Approval Date: Revision Date: Department:</p>	<p>1108-03 Council Members Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement November 25, 2019 March 9, 2026 Legislative Services</p>

POLICY STATEMENT

Council Members for the Town of Cochrane are required to commit a substantial amount of time and effort in order to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of their elected office. It is also recognized that official duties of the Council Members often occur outside of regular work hours, taking them away from personal responsibilities.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

This policy is intended to provide guidelines for establishing remuneration for the Council Members and provide clarity in determining what expenses will be covered by the municipality and what expenses are considered to be personal expenses. Personal expenses are not recoverable from the municipality. Public disclosure of Council Member's remuneration and business expenses enhance accountability, transparency and public confidence.

POLICY

1. REMUNERATION AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

- 1.1. The annual salary and benefits are intended to remunerate Council Members for the performance of regular and usual duties associated with the responsibilities of such elected offices, including attendance at:
 - 1.1.1. Regular and Special meetings of Council, including Public Hearings;
 - 1.1.2. All annual strategic planning workshops and budget presentations;
 - 1.1.3. Conventions, conferences, seminars or workshops which Council Members attend; and
 - 1.1.4. Meetings of importance where it is considered the attendance of Council Members is important or essential. Such situations shall normally be reported to Council as soon as practical through Councillor Reports at the Regular meeting of Council.

- 1.2. Council Members will receive an annual remuneration for their responsibilities as a Council Member as set out in Appendix

“A”;

- 1.3. Council Members will receive the same Cost of Living Adjustments as Administration to commence on the first pay period of the year in question. In subsequent years, Council Members will receive the same Cost of Living Adjustments as Administration OR an adjustment based on the Alberta Consumer Price Index, whichever is less, to commence on the first pay period of the year in question.

2. GROUP BENEFIT PLANS

- 2.1. Council Members shall be eligible, at their option, to participate in the following items under the Town’s Group Benefit Plans:

<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Premiums</u>
2.1.1. Group Life Insurance	100% employer paid
2.1.2. Dependents Life Insurance	100% employer paid
2.1.3. Accidental Death and Dismemberment	100% employer paid
2.1.4. Extended Health Care	100% employer paid
2.1.5. Dental Insurance	100% employer paid
2.1.6. EAP	100% employer paid

3. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1. Council Members benefit from training and development opportunities to enable them to perform their governance role as per the Municipal Government Act and keep informed on current and emerging local government issues.
- 3.2. Council Members shall have an annual budget available to fund their professional training and development to increase their existing knowledge and skills as it pertains to their role as an elected official. The amounts are as follows:
Mayor: \$10,000
Council Member: \$6,500
- 3.3. The fund shall be all inclusive of all related expenses and used for the following:
 - 3.3.1. Annual Alberta Urban Municipalities conference registration;
 - 3.3.2. Federation of Canadian Municipalities Conference
 - 3.3.3. Annual courses, workshops, seminar, and webinars to support an individual in their role as an elected official.
 - 3.3.4. Attendance at annual conferences or seminars that are directly related to the Council Member’s role as the Council appointed representative on Council’s Boards, Committees and Commissions;
 - 3.3.5. Purchase of information and learning materials directly related to Council business such as books, journal subscriptions, etc. Council Members are encouraged to share these materials with other Council Members to eliminate duplication.
- 3.4. Council members are afforded the opportunity to contribute a portion, specifically up to 50%, of their designated training and development budget to a fellow council member. This voluntary initiative is designed to

facilitate the exchange of knowledge and skills, thereby enriching the overall competencies of our Council. Any contributions made in this regard are entirely discretionary.

- 3.5. Council Members are required to provide a brief report of significant learnings during Councillor Reports in the Regular Council Meeting after they have taken part in a developmental activity. This will enable other members of Council to share some of the benefits of that development and to better determine if such an activity would be worthwhile given their needs and circumstances.
- 3.6. The Town shall not pay for guest expenses associated with any Council activity.
- 3.7. To assist with carrying out their duties, Council Members shall be provided with a laptop, iPad or surface. Any equipment provided remains the property of the Town of Cochrane and shall be returned within 3 days when the individual is no longer a Council Member.

4. TRAVEL AND EXPENSES

- 4.1. The rates and terms prescribed are intended to avoid economic loss to the Council Member when reasonable and related expenses are incurred that are directly related to Town business.
- 4.2. When feasible Council Members are encouraged to commute to attend Town business events and conferences.
- 4.3. When traveling to conferences, members should stay in designated conference hotels at negotiated preferred rates, unless specific circumstances require alternative arrangements. Accommodation will be reimbursed for actual hotel or other room rental costs based upon single room occupancy. Accommodation shall be neither extravagant, nor sub-standard.
- 4.4. A Council Member when travelling on official business may claim the following expenses with a receipt:
 - 4.4.1. air fare
 - 4.4.2. bus fare
 - 4.4.3. taxi fares
 - 4.4.4. reasonable parking charges
 - 4.4.5. automobile rental
 - 4.4.6. public transportation
- 4.5. A Council Member who uses his/her own motor vehicle on Town business shall be reimbursed for travel as per the Kilometric Rates as posted by the National Joint Council. Where more than one Council Member shares private motor vehicle transportation, only one person may claim the expense.
- 4.6. If a Council Member is required to travel on Town business and overnight accommodation away from his/her regular home is necessary, he/she may claim:

- 4.6.1. The actual cost of accommodation on production of receipts; or
 - 4.6.2. Council Members may wish to secure alternate accommodation at a rate equal to or less than the designated conference hotel costs per night.
- 4.7. Meals and Gratuities
- 4.7.1. Council Members may claim the actual and reasonable cost of a meal including taxes and a normal gratuity of not more than 18% upon the submission of detailed receipts with taxes and gratuities indicated on the receipt.
 - 4.7.2. Expense claims for meals apply to Council Members travelling to and from meetings, conferences or seminars. Cochrane will use the National Joint Council as a guide for a total daily meal expense. Receipts need to identify the establishment, the meal(s), refreshment(s), taxes and gratuities are required.
 - 4.7.3. Where meal costs are included on a hotel bill, they must be identified as meal costs and a detailed receipt included.
 - 4.7.4. Where conference, seminar or meeting includes meals, the Town will not reimburse substitute meals.
- 4.8. Spouses/Partners
- 4.8.1. If a spouse/partner accompanies a member of Council to an out-of-town conference/convention, the expenses of the spouse/partner for travel, meals, registration is considered a personal expense.
- 4.9. Hosting
- 4.9.1. Council Members may claim reimbursements for the reasonable cost of hosting business associates such as other Council Members, locally or in travel status upon the submission of an expense report, complete with receipts and full details, including the names, which company the person(s) represent and the reason.
- 4.10. Ineligible Expenses
- 4.10.1. Alcohol
 - 4.10.2. Golf fees and cart rental
 - 4.10.3. Political or charitable contributions
 - 4.10.4. Traffic citations (parking tickets or fines)
 - 4.10.5. Costs incurred due to absences- members who do not attend an event for which a registration fee, ticket, airfare, hotel accommodation, or other associated costs has been incurred on their behalf will be required to reimburse the Town for the costs. (Note: This may be waived due to emergent/extenuating circumstances if approved by the Mayor/CAO as appropriate)
- 4.11. To receive reimbursement, all expense reports must have detailed receipts attached. If no receipt is available, a detailed written statement must accompany the expense report. Missing Receipt forms will only be accepted after all attempts to obtain a duplicate copy are exhausted.

- 4.12. Council Member's expenses will be approved by the Mayor, or Deputy Mayor in the Mayor's absence, before submission to Finance.
- 4.13. The Mayor's expenses will be approved by the appointed Deputy Mayor, or if absent, the next appointed Deputy Mayor in the rotation.
- 4.14. Online Disclosure and Reporting:
 - 4.14.1. Council members shall, within 30 days of incurred costs, complete an Expense Claim form to be provided by the Executive Assistant to Mayor and Council who shall review such form for conformity to this policy. Where there are extenuating circumstances, the Mayor shall have the authority to approve extraordinary expenses that are directly related to Council business. All expenses including training and development activities related to each individual Council member will be reported online via the Cochrane website on a quarterly basis, ensuring that the public has access to the information.
 - 4.14.2. It is the responsibility of each Council member to ensure that expenses, receipts, and any supporting documentation are submitted to the Executive Assistant, Mayor & Council within 30 days of incurring the expense and in any case, must be completed by December 31 of the current year.

5. End of Policy

Signature on File

Manager, Legislative Services

Signature on File

Mayor

APPENDIX A

RATES OF REMUNERATION FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS

REMUNERATION

1. The rate of remuneration for the performance of all regular and usual duties of office as identified in Section A of the policy shall be:

i)	Mayor	\$107,776 per annum <i>(effective January 1, 2025)</i>
ii)	Councillors	\$ 45,275.61 per annum <i>(effective January 1, 2025)</i>

2. Annual remuneration will be paid on a semi-monthly basis.
3. The annual salary will be adjusted according to the same general market adjustment that employees receive.
4. An analysis of a selection of Alberta communities' mayoralty salaries and populations will be used to determine the Mayor's salary so that the relative size of the community will be appropriately reflected in compensation. These would include:
 - i) Okotoks
 - ii) Spruce Grove
 - iii) Fort Saskatchewan
 - iv) Leduc
 - v) Airdrie
5. Adjustments to the Mayor's current salary will be made effective mid-term when the review shows a differential of greater than minus five percent (5%). If there is a differential of greater than plus five percent (5%), the salary will be frozen until analysis shows the salary to be within five percent (5%);
6. Councillors' salaries will be set at a forty-two percent (42%) ratio of the Mayor's salary; and
7. Benefits will mirror those of Town staff with the exception of participation in pension plans. All costs will be covered by the Town.
8. As long as the majority of Town staff are non-unionized, Council members' salary will be adjusted annually at the same percent change as that set in each annual budget for Town non-unionized staff using the Consumer Price Inflation Rate (CPI) as published by the City of Calgary in the fall edition of the Calgary and Region Economic Outlook as the starting point.
9. Council remuneration surveys will be completed by Legislative Services at least once per Council term to ensure that remuneration remain at mid-market for similar sized municipalities in Alberta.