



# Non-elected Members Allowances Policy

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**Author:** Acting Group Manager – Strategy, Governance and Engagement

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# 1. Statement of purpose

This policy explains the circumstances in which the Northland Regional Council will pay allowances to Non-elected Members<sup>1</sup> who are appointed to its standing committees, subcommittees, working parties, subordinate bodies established by the aforementioned and external bodies, and sets out the conditions that must be met for a claim to be paid.

This policy does not apply to:

- a. Boards established under specific legislation (e.g. Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe Board) which have separate and specific allowances policy.
- b. Non-elected members appointed as Hearing Commissioners (addressed under other processes).
- c. Non-elected member of council's Catchment Working Groups, River Working Groups and Sector Liaison Groups.

## 2. Policy goal

The goal of this policy is to ensure the council's position and procedures for the payment of allowances to non-elected members are transparent, accountable, and fair.

## 3. Key principles

- a. The council recognises that non-elected members from time to time incur personal expense as a result of participating in council meetings.
- b. The council wishes to ensure non-elected members are not financially disadvantaged by their participation, or that the financial impact of their participation acts as a disincentive to participation.
- c. The council acknowledges the significant contributions tangata whenua make to its committees, subcommittees, working parties and subordinate bodies and the importance of ensuring that their expertise and knowledge is appropriately recognised and provided for.
- d. Fees are to be set on a fair but conservative basis to reflect a discount for the element of public service involved.
- e. The application of a transparent, fair and balanced policy on the payment of allowances to non-elected members promotes public confidence in the council's financial stewardship.

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<sup>1</sup> Elected members' remuneration, expenses and allowances are governed by the Remuneration Authority. The Authority does not concern itself in a council's methods or policies for rewarding or recompensing non-elected members.

## 4. Eligibility

Subject to the restrictions noted below, non-elected members are eligible to claim allowances for attendance<sup>2</sup> at the following:

- a. Standing Committee Meetings: i.e. a permanent committee non-elected by the council (only) that meets on a regular basis to address specific issues covered by the committee's delegations, and Standing Committee workshops, provided the meeting/workshop schedule has been approved by council resolution.
- b. Meetings/workshops of:
  - Subcommittees,
  - Working Parties, and
  - Any subordinate bodies set up by Standing Committees/Subcommittees/Working Parties,if the membership and meeting/workshop schedule has been approved by council resolution.
- c. Extraordinary meetings/workshops of:
  - Subcommittees,
  - Working Parties, and
  - Any subordinate bodies set up by Standing Committees/Subcommittees/Working Parties,if the payment of allowances can be met within existing budgets and is approved by the relevant Group Manager.
- d. Scheduled meetings of External Bodies; provided council has approved by resolution that the non-elected member will represent council at these meetings.<sup>3</sup>

**or otherwise:**

The Chief Executive Officer (or delegated Group Manager) has granted them an exception under Section 8 of this policy.

## 5. Restrictions

Allowances will not be paid:

- a. To council's independent advisors, as those members are paid a fixed annual fee.
- b. To any non-elected member whose participation is remunerated by another organisation. This will be determined by a declaration statement on appointment of the member. To avoid doubt, the council will reimburse the member (unless otherwise advised by the member); any issues regarding remuneration in these cases are a matter to be resolved between the member and the organisation concerned.
- c. To a proxy, if both the non-elected member and a proxy attend a meeting (a proxy is eligible to claim allowances if the member does not attend a meeting).

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<sup>2</sup> Non-elected members are eligible to claim allowances if they attend the start of a scheduled meeting, but the meeting lapses due to lack of a quorum.

<sup>3</sup> External Body is defined as a government agency, local authority or private/public interest group.

- d. If only part of a meeting is attended.
- e. If a meeting/workshop is cancelled.

## 6. Meeting (workshop) allowance

The following conditions apply:

- a. The council will pay a maximum daily meeting (workshop) allowance of \$240 for members and \$300 for chairs or co-chairs subject to the provisions of this policy.
- b. If a member attends two meetings (workshops) on the same day, the allowance may only be claimed once for that day.
- c. Members may choose to not claim this allowance.
- d. The meeting (workshop) allowance covers all work associated with participation in the meetings of the body, including that performed outside of meetings (e.g. preparation and post-meeting follow-up).

**Note:**

The meeting (workshop) allowance **does not** cover work undertaken by member(s) of the body/group over and above participation in meetings/workshops. Remuneration of any such work is outside the scope of this policy.

## 7. Vehicle mileage and travel time allowance

The council will pay the vehicle mileage and time travel allowance as set out in its current Elected Members' Expenses and Allowances Policy, subject to the provisions of this policy. For clarity, the annual cap and minimum distance and travel time within the region requirements of the Elected Members' Expenses and Allowances Policy apply. In addition, a maximum claim for vehicle mileage of 500km/meeting applies. Eligible non-elected members may choose to not claim mileage or travel time.

## 8. Exceptions

The Chief Executive Officer (or delegated Group Manager) will consider the following applications for exception, based on the particular circumstances detailed in a non-elected member's written application, and the Auditor-General's 2020 good practice guide on "Controlling sensitive expenditure: Guide for public organisations"<sup>4</sup>:

- a. From non-elected members who are otherwise ineligible for the travel and meeting allowances. Allowances provided must not exceed those provided for in this policy.
- b. From non-elected members who seek an allowance or reimbursement for a meeting/workshop expense not detailed in this policy.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://oag.parliament.nz/2020/sensitive-expenditure/foreword.htm>

## 9. Procedures

- a. The Finance Manager shall advise the Administration Support Staff the account to which allowances are to be charged.
- b. Non-elected members are to advise the Administration Support Staff if they prefer to receive an automatic payment for meeting attendance rather than submitting a Claim for Meeting Allowances<sup>5</sup>.
- c. The Administration Support Staff is to ensure that a Claim for Meeting Allowances is attached to every notice of a meeting sent to non-elected members who do not wish to receive automatic payments.
- d. At each meeting, the Administration Support Staff are to note the time and date of the meeting, and a list of attendees, and collate returned completed claim forms.
- e. Claims are to be presented to the Chief Executive or their delegated officer for approval.
- f. Payment will be made by the Payroll Officer by direct credit by the 25th of each month.

## 10. Linkages

For related information, see Northland Regional Council's Elected Members' Expenses and Allowances Policy<sup>6</sup>.

## 11. Responsible persons

The Governance Support Manager and Administration Support Staff are responsible for overseeing implementation of this policy and for providing guidance for decisions that may not align to the policy.

## 12. Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- a. When a formal request to do so is received from the chair/co-chairs of the committee, subcommittee or working party; and
- b. At the end of each financial year, specifically to consider amending the rates in line with inflation.

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<sup>5</sup> Automatic payment for attending meetings (meeting allowance, mileage and travel time) can be arranged if preferred, Automatic payments cannot be made for proxies or partial meeting attendance.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nrc.govt.nz/media/tuhdymmb/appointed-members-allowances-policy-approved-by-council-18-april-2017-updated-june-2020.pdf>

## 13. Amendments and review dates

DATE	AMENDMENT	AUTHORISED BY
18 April 2017	Amended policy presented to council and approved.	Council resolution
14 Feb 2020	Minor formatting amendments	N/A
21 April 2020	Clause 4(c)(1) removed to allow all members of TTMAC to be reimbursed for attending marae based hui.	Council resolution dated 21 April 2020
12 June 2020	Updated to new corporate template.	N/A
22 April 2021	Update for new policy title, revised meeting allowance and delegation to GM to approve allowances for extraordinary meetings/workshops within budget.	Council resolution dated 18 May 2021
17 August 2021	Review of meeting allowance and remuneration rates and other amendments.	Council resolution dated 17 August 2021

**Northland Regional Council**

**P** 0800 002 004

**E** [info@nrc.govt.nz](mailto:info@nrc.govt.nz)

**W** [www.nrc.govt.nz](http://www.nrc.govt.nz)