

Section: Finance and Administration	Number: 12.70.P.v4.1
Subject: Staff Events (Corporate, Retirement Dinners, Social, Recognition and Gifts)	Associated Document Form Number:
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PURPOSE

The BPS Expenses Directive is issued under the authority of the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010*, and came into effect April 1, 2011. This Directive covers all designated broader public sector organizations, including OTN. The purpose of this Policy is to provide all OTN staff with practical policy options that are aligned with the BPS Expenses Directive.

This Policy focuses on the following areas:

- Corporate Staff Events
- Staff Retirement
- Staff Social Events
- Staff Recognition, Engagement and Team Building Events
- Staff Gifts

SCOPE

This policy applies to all OTN employees, contractors and Board members.

POLICY

The following principles form the basis for decisions with respect to staff events, recognition and gifts:

Corporate Staff Events

- OTN has a practice of hosting an annual holiday luncheon for its staff. The budget allocation for this event is limited to \$55/person (inclusive of taxes and gratuities). This amount covers the total expenses for the event including any small token gifts to staff such as a gift card in recognition of efforts for the year. This amount is reviewed annually and could change depending on OTN's budgetary constraints. There may be instances where staff members are asked to contribute an additional fee to off-set additional costs that exceed the organization's budget.
- For staff in remote locations, who cannot attend a localized luncheon, may get together and have a lunch. Prior written approval must be obtained from HR and the cost should not exceed the current year's maximum as set out by HR.
- Any leader/site wishing to hold their own holiday event and/or other social activities for staff during the year must ensure the costs are covered by staff. The activities should take place during a time period that does not disrupt the regular operations of that team or site.
- OTN recognizes the importance of fostering a positive work environment and is committed to hosting two staff breakfasts per year at a cost of \$5/person.
- No alcohol will be provided at OTN sponsored events that are held during work hours. If alcoholic beverages are served as part of an after-hours event, then the decision to serve alcohol should have the appropriate approval from the portfolio leader or CEO. In these instances, staff will be expected to personally assume the cost of purchasing alcoholic beverages. Moderation must be exercised at all times. Employees must promote awareness of personal safety and security with other employees and their guests consistent with the values of the corporation and the code of conduct. Care must be taken when planning, managing and/or supervising an event where alcohol is served.

Staff Retirement Dinner

- Employees who reach retirement during their tenure with OTN will be recognized by way of a retirement dinner. The main purpose of this dinner is to recognize their contributions and to reinforce or promote positive behaviours and performance that support OTN's values, goals and objectives. The budget allocation for the dinner is up to a maximum of \$40/person, inclusive of taxes and gratuities. This amount is reviewed annually and could change depending on OTN's budgetary constraints. In accordance with reasonableness and fiscal responsibility, attendance at the dinner will be limited to those who actually worked with the retiring staff member.
- Recognition events may be formal (e.g., ceremony) or informal (e.g., presentation).
- Other non-work-related social gatherings of staff do not fall within the guidelines of this Policy. Expenses related to these gatherings are personally assumed by staff.
- If alcoholic beverages are served at any OTN sponsored retirement event, the cost will be covered by the employees. The decision to serve alcohol should have the appropriate approval. OTN respects the legal and social norms associated with alcohol consumption. When providing and consuming alcohol, employees must be aware of the risks and implications associated with excessive alcohol consumption. Moderation must be exercised at all times. Employees must promote awareness of personal safety and security with other employees and their guests consistent with the values of the corporation and the code of conduct. Care must be taken when planning, managing and/or supervising an event where alcohol is served.

Staff Social Events

- OTN does not fund staff social events. These include holiday parties (except annual holiday luncheon as mentioned above), picnics, birthdays, employee farewells (lunches, dinners and gifts are not reimbursed) and personal celebrations. These staff social events may be held without charge in OTN rooms subject to availability and staff may contribute food and beverages at their own expense. Staff recognition and engagement events are not considered social events.

Staff Recognition, Engagement and Team Building events

- Staff recognition (e.g. end of project celebrations), engagement and team building events must be appropriately modest, fit the circumstances and have available budget. One over one written pre-approval must be obtained. The total cost of the event must not exceed \$30 per person (including taxes and gratuities) for events after normal business hours unless pre-approved by the CEO. Staff recognition, engagement and team building during normal business hours are allowable but must not exceed \$17 per person (including tax and gratuities) unless pre-approved by the CEO. A list of attendees must also be included with the expense submission.

Staff Gifts

- There are situations where OTN may extend a gift to an employee. Some examples include retirement, recovery from sickness or hospitalization and the death of a loved one.
- Awarding gifts must be compliant with Canada Revenue Agency rules. Coordination of gifts must be arranged through HR.
- All gifts must be appropriately documented, including the individual receiving the gift, the individual who approved the gift, the reasons for awarding the gift, the contents and cost of the gift itself and any other pertinent details. Accurate records must be maintained in order to demonstrate the reasonableness and appropriateness of any gift.
- "Gifts" include flowers, cards, gift certificates or gift cards, etc. but may not include cash or cheques. For gift certificates, prior approval must be obtained from the Financial Controller, or designate, and may not exceed \$25. If an employee receives gift certificates/gift cards in aggregate of more than \$25 per year, the total value will be added as a taxable benefit on their T4.
- Alcohol is not to be given as a gift (i.e., bottles of wine, gift certificates to the LCBO, Beer Store or Wine Store).

- In accordance with principles of reasonableness and fiscal responsibility, the following amounts have been set for these situations as follows:
 - Sickness or death of a loved one – Up to \$100 value. This amount is inclusive of taxes and delivery charges.
 - Retirement – up to \$150.

VIOLATIONS

Failure to adhere to the policies will result in a denial of the expense claim.

EXCEPTIONS

This policy does not apply to expenses paid from the OTN employee fun fund, which are monies collected from employees to be used towards social events.

It is recognized that there could be situations that may deviate from this Policy. In those situations, supporting rationale should be provided and submitted to the VP Finance and Administration or CEO for approval.