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DIRECTIVE #2.1
(s.49(3)(c) - c.L-11.3)

TELECOMMUNICATION AND RELATED EXPENSES

AUTHORITY

- (1) Telecommunication technology and service offerings are changing rapidly and this Directive recognizes the need for Members to stay in touch with their constituents and their constituency offices using a variety of technological options. The intent of this Directive is to capture all telecommunication and technology costs **incurred by the Member in respect of his or her duties as a Member** under this authority.

Each Member of the Legislative Assembly is eligible to seek reimbursement or have direct payment made on his or her behalf for telecommunication and related expenses incurred by the Member in respect of his or her duties as a Member as detailed below.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- (2) Eligible expenses from this provision include:
- (a) **cellular or smart phone devices** for the Member and associated wireless expenses for the Member and constituency assistant(s) including:
- (i) service, usage and airtime, maintenance and repair charges;
 - (ii) data usage charges for other wireless devices such as tablets and iPads;
- (b) **constituency office telecommunication expenses** including:
- (i) telephone installation, rental, long distance, directory advertising. The costs of other telephone services, including but not limited to, message manager, name and number display, call return, call forwarding, call waiting and 1-800/888 telephone service;
 - (ii) the costs associated with subscribing to and using the internet;
 - (iii) security system monitoring;
 - (iv) cable television.

- (c) **residential telecommunication expenses** including:
 - (i) long distance expenses charged to a personal telephone line in the Member's residence provided they relate to MLA business. A Member may have one additional line installed in his or her residence for business purposes, in which case the telephone service and additional costs as outlined in clause (2)(b)(i), (ii) and (iii) are eligible expenses under this provision;
 - (d) **for Members who maintain two residences**, one of which is located in the city of Regina, eligible telecommunication expenses at the Regina residence include telephone service and additional costs as outlined in clause (2)(b)(i), (ii) and (iii) provided they relate to MLA business.
 - (e) **the design, maintenance and operation of Member constituency websites**. Member websites are subject to the restrictions outlined in clause (11) of Directive #4.1 – *Constituency Service Expenses*. Onetime costs for design and development of a new website or redesign of an existing website shall not exceed \$3,500.
 - (f) **fax expenses** including the purchase, installation, maintenance and repair costs of the machine. Line rental, long distance costs, fax paper and toner are also eligible expenses under this provision provided it is used for MLA business. Fax communication expenses are subject to the restrictions outlined in clause (11) of Directive #4.1 – *Constituency Service Expenses*.

EQUIPMENT EXPENSES AND RESTRICTIONS

- (3) This provision is intended to provide **one** cellular or smart phone device per Member. This would include but is not limited to batteries, chargers, cases, hands free vehicle mounts and installation, maintenance and repair costs for that one device.

Should a Member wish to operate more than one cellular or smart phone device, the costs of the additional cellular or smart phone device and associated accessories must come out of the *Constituency Service Expenses* provision, although the operating costs of the additional cellular or smart phone device will still be eligible under this provision.

- (4) This provision is intended to provide one fax machine per Member. Should the Member wish to have more than one fax machine, the costs to purchase an additional machine must come from the *Constituency Service Expenses* provision, although operating costs of the additional fax machine will still be eligible from this provision.

- (5) Equipment purchases such as iPads, tablets and other computer equipment able to operate wirelessly are not eligible for payment from this provision. The costs related to purchasing these devices are eligible for payment from the *Constituency Service Expenses* provision, and is subject to clause (8).
- (6) Any equipment that has been purchased with public funds is the property of the Legislative Assembly and shall be returned to the Legislative Assembly Service when the Member ceases to be a Member.
- (7) Any equipment acquired with the *Telecommunication and Related Expenses* provision is subject to the Inventory Guidelines approved by the Board of Internal Economy.
- (8) Members who are assigned ministerial responsibilities may continue to maintain and operate their wireless devices such as smart phones, iPads and tablets acquired with the *Telecommunication and Related Expenses* provision or *Constituency Service Expenses* provision. In these instances, the device(s) must be purchased by Executive Government from the Legislative Assembly based on a prorated amount of remaining asset life. Further costs for this equipment must be assumed by Executive Government.

PERSONAL EXPENSES

- (9) Members who incur telephone expenses that are not MLA business related must reimburse the Minister of Finance for these charges. It is recommended that these reimbursements occur semi-annually but must occur at least once per fiscal year. Members may estimate a percentage of personal calls and process reimbursement based on a flat dollar amount. All reimbursements must include the GST component if it is not already included in the charge.
- (10) Cable television services in the Member's residence(s) are considered to be personal expenses of the Member.
- (11) Members have the option of personally purchasing their surplus cellular telephone equipment package(s) as described in clause (3).

Purchase costs are based on fair market value and shall adhere to the following scale: 100% of purchase price for equipment that is less than 1 year old; 50% of purchase price for equipment that is 1-2 years old; 20% of purchase price for equipment that is 2-3 years old; 10% of purchase price for equipment that is 3-5 years old. Equipment more than five years old is deemed to have zero value.

- (12) Members, both current and former, who choose to cancel existing MLA cellular contracts, are personally responsible for the return of the equipment to the Legislative Assembly Service and for any and all costs incurred as a result of this transaction including outstanding service and cancellation fees.

CLAIM PROCEDURES

- (13) Members may seek reimbursement or seek direct payment on their behalf as follows:
- (a) by attaching an original receipt or an original invoice to a Request for Payment form. Requests for reimbursement must also include the invoice and evidence of payment;
 - (b) by certifying on the Request for Payment form that the expense is in respect of his or her duties as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, being the representative of all constituents, and not in respect of his or her role as a member of a political party; and
 - (c) by signing his or her name directly upon the accompanying receipt or invoice, as the case may be. Invoices that exceed \$50 must be signed by the Member, while invoices of \$50 or less must be signed by either the Member or the constituency assistant.
- (14) Because of GST implications, Members are encouraged to submit bills for direct payment by Member Payments, rather than opting for a reimbursement of expenses.