

## GUIDELINES FOR LEGISLATIVE ALLOWANCE USE

The purpose of this section is to serve as a guide and provide a basis for the legislator in requesting reimbursements or direct vendor payments from legislative allowance for incidental expenses connected with legislative duties.

Under Article III, Section 9 of the State Constitution, each member of the Legislature shall receive allowances reasonably related to expenses as provided by law. Section 24-1 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes provides that each member is entitled to receive an annual allowance to cover incidental expenses connected with legislative duties.

Incidental expenses connected with legislative duties shall include expenditures incurred in connection with carrying out of official duties or in connection with representational activities the nature of which will assist the legislator in: (i) developing the legislator's accessibility to communicate with the community and constituents concerning subjects of legislation and community concerns; (ii) educating the community and constituents on matters relating to the legislature, legislative process, and subjects of legislation; and (iii) carrying out the public's expectations of a legislator's role to the community and constituents.

Legislative allowance may not be used for any personal, political, fundraising, or campaign-related expenses, nor expenses related to the conduct of other than official duties and representational activities of a legislator.

Each member is personally responsible for the payment of any expenses incurred in support of the conduct of official duties and representational activities which exceed the provided allowances.

In the context of the general purposes above for which the incidental expenses connected with legislative duties are intended, guideline examples of allowable expenses are:

1. Office supplies not available from the House Supply Room. Furniture, equipment, or similar durable items which enhance the functionality of the legislator's office, which shall be inventoried as property of the House.
2. Food and beverage expenses incurred by the legislator for the legislator's own person when necessitated by circumstances in the conduct of the legislator's official duties and representational activities.
3. Food and beverage expenses incurred for other persons when necessitated by circumstances in the conduct of the legislator's official duties and representational activities and only if the presence of the persons was necessary and appropriate for the legislator's conduct of official duties and activities. This may include a legislator's staff working past normal hours during periods of high work volume such as during legislative deadlines.
4. Postage for mailing informational or survey material that the legislator sends to the legislator's constituents or members of the community, provided the communication does not advocate or support the election or nomination for election of any candidate or advocates or supports any candidate's defeat, or which does not advocate or support the passage or defeat of a question or issue on a ballot for election.
5. Transportation and lodging while traveling for official legislative business approved by the Speaker.
6. Registration and admission expenses of conferences, conventions, meetings, or dinners which the legislator attends or is invited to in an official capacity as a legislator.

It is emphasized that any expenditures from legislative allowance must be directly connected to the member's duties as a legislator. However, there still may be exceptions as to what may be acceptable. If you have any questions, please contact the House Chief Clerk for any needed clarification prior to making the expenditure.