

## Elder Compensation and Mileage Policy Update

### What the policy currently says:

The practice of “gifting,” whether through a monetary value or through a tangible item, is a traditional practice in the Indigenous community. In essence, this practice is an “exchange” and is done so in the spirit of reciprocity and of the principal that Indigenous people take care of one another. Because of this, the value of the reciprocal exchange is difficult to identify – words of wisdom, guidance, prayers, ceremonies, etc. do not come “with a price tag.” The value of an Elder’s knowledge and the impact(s) upon the receiver(s) are subjective. Due to this, Miskanawah remains within cultural protocols and does not define any monetary value or limits to what is exchanged for the purposes of customary reciprocity.

### We want to add:

Miskanawah does however also recognize that guidelines to support staff in determining appropriate gifting exchanges are sometimes needed. This will help to ensure all our Elders are gifted fairly and is to be used as a guide only. The guidelines are as follows:

**Monetary Gifts:** the minimum monetary gift we will gift to Elders is \$250 for any service that is a half-day commitment or less. This could include activities like a 30-minute consult or request to begin a meeting or event with smudge and prayer. Elders are given a monetary gift of \$500 for each full-day of work as well as \$500 for each ceremony they facilitate regardless of the time it takes to complete said ceremony. Ceremonies can include, but are not limited to, Pipe Ceremonies, Sweat Lodges, Tea Ceremonies, Naming Ceremonies, blessing of homes.

**Appreciation Honorarium:** Elders who work with us on a consistent basis at a minimum of one time per month at least 8 months of the fiscal year will be entitled to receive a one-time per fiscal year “Appreciation Honorarium”. This special honorarium can be up to \$500 to utilize on any of their scheduled work days for a paid day off. The person or program responsible for the Elder’s regular payment request on the agreed upon day will be responsible for submitting the payment request and identifying it as an “Appreciation Honorarium”.

In addition to our Elder support, Miskanawah often works with Knowledge Keepers and Oskayapewis who may be gifted as follows:

Time Commitment	Knowledge Keeper	Oskayapewis
Half-day or less	\$150	\$125
Full-day	\$300	\$250

**Mileage:** If Miskanawah is requesting Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and/or Oskayapewis travel more than 50 km one way to provide services, we will reimburse mileage at \$0.505 per km. Staff must complete a payment request unless the Elder, Knowledge Keeper, or Oskayapewis submits one on their own then staff can review, get approval, and forward to finance.

**Hotel Accommodations:** a hotel may be provided and paid for by Miskanawah for Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Oskayapewis if they must travel more than 100 km one way to provide services. Staff can use a hotel that has an account with Miskanawah or staff can make arrangements for another hotel up to a maximum of \$150 per night.

**Important notes:**

1. Staff are required to obtain prior approval from their supervisor for any monetary gifts to be given to Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and/or Oskayapewis.
2. If an event that a payment has been requested for is cancelled, it is the employee's responsibility to inform finance as soon as possible.
3. Any Elder, Knowledge Keeper, or Oskayapewis new to the agency must be given the request for SIN and an address form to complete.
4. If an Elder, Knowledge Keeper, or Oskayapewis has status and performs the work being paid for on reserve, then that must be stated on the payment request. Pay close attention to this as it is especially common while doing virtual work.
5. If the total amount paid to an Elder, Knowledge Keeper, or Oskayapewis in a calendar year is greater than \$500, Miskanawah sends a T4A to the paid individual and a copy to the Canada Revenue Agency. Please let your Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and/or Oskayapewis know so it is not a surprise if they have to pay tax on the payment received.