

GUIDELINES FOR COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES FOR LEGISLATORS



DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES 2024

**Guidelines for
Compensation and Expenses
For Legislators**

**Department of Legislative Services
Annapolis, Maryland**

January 2024

This document was prepared
by the Department of Legislative Services,
General Assembly of Maryland

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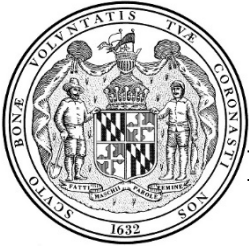
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DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Victoria L. Gruber
Executive Director

December 5, 2023

Members of the General Assembly

This booklet contains guidelines to assist legislators with respect to their salaries, travel expenses, and district office funds. The guidelines for salaries and travel expenses are consistent with the resolution of the General Assembly Compensation Commission.

The administration of the salaries, travel expenses, and district office funds is the responsibility of Finance Services within the Office of Operations and Support Services in the Department of Legislative Services. Finance Services is located in Shaw House, Annapolis, Maryland, telephone number 410-946-5025. Legislators are responsible for obligating expenditures and for submitting vouchers and other documentation for requests for payment or reimbursement in a manner consistent with these guidelines and when appropriate on forms available from Finance Services.

If there are questions with respect to salaries, travel expenses, district office funds, or these guidelines, please do not hesitate to contact Finance Services or me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Victoria L. Gruber".

Victoria L. Gruber
Executive Director

VLG/mpd

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TITLE 1. SALARIES

SUBTITLE 1. GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMPENSATION COMMISSION

1-101. AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Article III, Section 15 of the Maryland Constitution, the General Assembly Compensation Commission proposes, by resolution, the salaries of members of the General Assembly to take effect for the next term. The resolution of the commission, dated January 7, 2022, was not modified by the General Assembly, and these guidelines set forth the salaries as proposed by the commission.

SUBTITLE 2. SALARIES

1-201. SALARIES OF MEMBERS

A member of the General Assembly shall receive an annual salary as follows, payable in 12 monthly installments each year.

<u>Calendar Year</u>	<u>Annual Amount</u>
2023	\$52,343
2024	54,437
2025	55,526
2026	56,636

1-202. SALARIES OF PRESIDING OFFICERS

The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Delegates shall receive an annual salary as follows, payable in 12 monthly installments each year.

<u>Calendar Year</u>	<u>Annual Amount</u>
2023	\$67,986
2024	70,705
2025	72,119
2026	73,562

TITLE 2. REIMBURSABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

SUBTITLE 1. GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMPENSATION COMMISSION

2-101. AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Article III, Section 15 of the Maryland Constitution, the General Assembly Compensation Commission proposes eligibility and maximum amounts for the reimbursement of in-state and out-of-state travel expenses. The resolution of the commission dated January 7, 2022, was not modified by the General Assembly, and these guidelines set forth the eligibility and maximum amounts of reimbursement as proposed by the commission. The resolution also authorizes the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Delegates to adopt guidelines and procedures for determination and payment of expenses. These guidelines set forth the procedures as adopted.

2-102. FILING DURING FISCAL YEAR

A member should file vouchers promptly within the fiscal year in which the expense is incurred to avoid any delay or nonpayment of reimbursement (See page 47, Section 3-604(b)).

SUBTITLE 2. IN-STATE TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

2-201. ELIGIBILITY AND RECORDS

(a) Reimbursable activities.

A member shall be entitled to a per diem allowance for meals and shall be reimbursed for (that member's) expenses actually incurred for lodging and mileage for attendance at:

- (1) Regular, extended, or extraordinary sessions, including scheduled committee or subcommittee meetings.
- (2) Meetings of the Legislative Policy Committee and the standing, statutory, and special joint committees or subcommittees created by those entities that function between sessions.

- (3) Meetings, including site visits, of a commission, joint executive/legislative committee, or task force or subcommittee created by those entities to which the member has been appointed by the Governor, the President of the Senate, or the Speaker of the House of Delegates.
- (4) Other official functions in Annapolis directly related to the duties of a member, including:
 - (i) Attending bill signing ceremonies.
 - (ii) President and Speaker, committee chairs, majority leader, and minority leader attending official duties one day a week in Annapolis during the interim period.
 - (iii) Senate, House, or joint delegation meetings, when those meetings are held in Annapolis.
 - (iv) Other occasions with prior approval of the President or the Speaker.
- (b) Attendance records.

At each scheduled meeting, the professional staff assigned to each committee, task force, or study group shall record and report to Finance Services within three working days following each meeting the attendance of the members.

2-202. MEALS

- (a) Requests for payment of the per diem meal allowance must be submitted on the MGA expense voucher. (The voucher may be obtained from Finance Services.) Receipts are required only to assist members in avoiding adverse tax consequences as outlined in Section 2-205.
- (b) Rates.

The per diem meal allowance may not exceed the total amount for meal expenses per day as provided in the standard State travel regulations of

the State of Maryland, as amended from time to time by the Board of Public Works. Upon notification by the Department of Budget and Management, Finance Services will notify members of changes and their effective date.

(c) Limitations.

- (1) Although under the standard State travel regulations a member is allowed to request up to the maximum established per diem limit, a member may choose the option of requesting a lesser amount of the per diem allowance for meals or may choose the option to request no per diem allowance for meals.
- (2) Weekends – When a member has Saturday or Sunday meetings or committee work during session, the member shall be entitled to a per diem allowance for meals on the same basis as weekdays. When the member does not have Saturday or Sunday meetings during session, the member shall be entitled to a per diem allowance for meals only for extenuating circumstances that are indicated on the voucher.
- (3) Alcoholic beverages – A member will not be reimbursed for the cost of alcoholic beverages.

2-203. LODGING

(a) Receipts required.

A member who requests reimbursement for expenses incurred for lodging shall support the request by submitting actual receipts. The original itemized bill shall be submitted with the expense voucher.

(b) Direct payment.

A member may elect to have Finance Services make direct payment to the vendor providing lodging. The original bill should be approved by the member and forwarded to Finance Services for payment.

(c) Approval of private rentals.

Reimbursement for lodging other than in a hotel or motel must be approved in advance by the President or Speaker. A member who intends to rent such lodging shall communicate with the General Assembly's Ethics Advisor and disclose if there is any known financial, familial, or personal relationship between the member and the owner of the property. The Ethics Advisor shall make a recommendation to the member's presiding officer regarding approval or disapproval of the rental, based on appearance of a conflict of interest.

(d) Rental lease.

When a member rents an apartment or house from a private individual, the member shall submit a copy of the lease to Finance Services.

(e) Session Lodging: Direct Payment.

In accordance with a determination by the Ethics Committee, all lodging during the legislative session for a period that is known in advance must be paid directly by the Department of Legislative Services pursuant to the submission of a properly executed lease or signed invoice. For an occasional, unanticipated hotel stay, a member may pay for that nights lodging and then be reimbursed as stated under Section 2-203 LODGING.

(f) Rate of reimbursement.

The maximum rate of reimbursement for lodging may not exceed the maximum per diem amount specified for lodging in the most current published federal General Services Administration daily per diem rate for lodging in Annapolis, Maryland, if the lodging occurred in Annapolis, or the appropriate local rate if the lodging occurred outside of Annapolis, Maryland.

2-204. MILEAGE

(a) Reimbursement.

A member shall be reimbursed for expenses actually incurred in traveling between the member's home and Annapolis or the meeting location described in Section 2-201.

(b) The rate of mileage reimbursement shall conform to the equivalent rates in the standard State travel regulations. Finance Services will notify members as to changes in the rate of mileage reimbursement made in the standard State travel regulations by the Department of Budget and Management and the effective date of any change. The rate of reimbursement may not exceed the current rate per mile established for travel by automobile, if the travel is by other means.

(c) Reimbursement during session.

(1) A member who commutes shall be reimbursed for one round trip each day.

(2) A member with lodging in Annapolis throughout the week shall be reimbursed for one round trip per week.

(3) A member with lodging in Annapolis for part of the week shall not be reimbursed for mileage on those days for which lodging is reimbursed.

2-205. TAX CONSEQUENCES

(a) Members should be aware that expense reimbursement related to official business in Annapolis during the legislative session and the interim may or may not be taxable as income by the Internal Revenue Service. The determination of taxability is based on the distance a member lives from the State House, and the circumstances for the stay.

(1) Members who live more than 50 miles from the State House qualify under provisions of Section 162(h) of the Internal Revenue Code, which provides that reimbursement for meals,

lodging, and travel (mileage) is not treated as income since these expense guidelines meet federal standards as to the maximum amount of reimbursement. Members who qualify under these provisions must notify Finance Services prior to any reimbursement requests and make a formal election to that effect when filing their income tax return.

- (2) Members who live 50 miles or less from the State House may claim reimbursement for lodging, meals or travel (mileage). However, the amount reimbursed will be reported as taxable wages and it will be subject to withholding and employment taxes.
 - (3) Members who live 50 miles or less from the State House that do not have a 90 day or more lease may file a waiver form to exclude the lodging and meals for that day from taxability. To obtain an exclusion for any day, the member will be required to file the waiver form along with their travel expense reimbursement form with Finance Services. You should consult your own tax, legal, and accounting advisors on your waiver exclusions.
 - (4) Members who live 50 miles or less from the State House that have a 90 day or more lease during session may claim a waiver by filing the waiver form weekly with Finance Services. You should consult your own tax, legal, and accounting advisors on your waiver exclusions.
- (b) This material has been prepared for informational purposes only, and is not intended to provide, and should not be relied on for, tax, legal, or accounting advice. You should consult your own tax, legal, and accounting advisors.

2-206. IN-DISTRICT TRAVEL

- (a) In-district allowance.

A member will be provided with an in-district travel allowance in the amount of \$750. This allowance shall be disbursed in a lump sum at the beginning of each calendar year, but only through 2026.

- (b) The in-district travel allowance is considered by the Internal Revenue Service to be taxable income and will be reported as such. The allowance is subject to withholding and employment taxes. Generally, these deductions will be reflected in a member's paycheck for February.
- (c) If a member does not want to receive the in-district travel allowance, the member must notify Finance Services.

SUBTITLE 3. OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

2-301. IN GENERAL

- (a) Prior written approval required.

A member shall obtain the prior written approval of the President and the Speaker before incurring reimbursable expenses for out-of-state travel.

- (b) Responsibility of President and Speaker.

All out-of-state travel for the purpose of attending meetings and conferences that relate to the official business of the Maryland General Assembly shall be planned, budgeted, and approved jointly by the President and the Speaker.

- (c) Individual consideration.

Each out-of-state travel request shall be considered and acted upon jointly by the President and the Speaker.

2-302. MAXIMUM DAILY REIMBURSEMENT

For the calendar years 2023 through 2026, a member may be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred for meals and lodging, but with one exception, a member may not be reimbursed for meals and lodging expenses combined that exceed the most current published federal General Services Administration daily per diem rate for meals and lodging. The one exception is if the published conference rate for

lodging exceeds the General Services Administration daily per diem rate for lodging the President and the Speaker may approve the published conference rate.

2-303. PROCEDURES FOR REIMBURSEMENT

(a) Estimate.

- (1) A member shall indicate on the request for travel authorization form an estimate of reimbursable expenses for transportation, registration fees, meals, and lodging.
- (2) The member shall make reasonable efforts to obtain the most economical airfares that are available for travel to the out-of-state destination. Thereafter, the member shall submit an estimate of reimbursable expenses for travel by commercial airlines.
- (3) After approval, the request form should be forwarded to Finance Services as reimbursement of expenses cannot be made without this documentation.

(b) Itemized expenses.

A member shall itemize expenses on the expense account reimbursement forms available from Finance Services.

(c) Reimbursements.

- (1) Reimbursement shall be made only for expenses actually incurred in the line of official business.
- (2) When a registration fee is charged, reimbursement is limited to the member only.
- (3) When a conference includes meals, reimbursement for those meals is not allowed. Members should submit a copy of the conference agenda with their claim for reimbursement.

- (4) Reimbursement is permitted for reasonable gratuities given to persons who render a direct service in connection with the member's travel, except housekeeping services.
- (5) A member shall submit actual, itemized receipts with requests for reimbursement of expenses incurred for out-of-state travel covering lodging, meals, plane travel, and registration fee.

2-304. TRANSPORTATION

(a) Travel arrangements.

Member travel arrangements should be finalized at least 30 days before an event to ensure that members receive a competitive rate. In the event that a member subsequently chooses to cancel or modify previously made travel arrangements, the costs, if any, associated with such cancellations or changes will not be reimbursed to the member. An exception to this general limitation may be authorized by the President or the Speaker in an emergency or unusual instance where travel arrangements were modified due to unforeseeable circumstances that were beyond the member's control.

(b) Airline standard coach rate.

- (1) When a member chooses to travel by commercial airline, the member shall be reimbursed at the standard coach rate. A copy of the airline ticket shall be submitted as a receipt.
- (2) If standard coach accommodations are not available, the member's request for reimbursement at first-class rate must be accompanied by an explanation from the airline that standard coach accommodations were not available.

(c) Train coach rate.

- (1) When a member chooses to travel by train, the member shall be reimbursed at coach rate.
- (2) If the trip is overnight, pullman rate is permitted.

(d) Automobile.

- (1) If a member chooses to travel in a privately owned vehicle, the member shall be reimbursed at the current rate provided in the standard State travel regulations.
- (2) Reimbursement for travel by a privately owned vehicle may not exceed the cost of standard coach airfare to the same destination.
- (3) A member may not be reimbursed for lodging en route, without approval in advance by the presiding officers.

(e) Transportation to airport/train station.

A member may be reimbursed for the cost of transportation to and from the airport or railroad station.

(f) Car rental.

A member may not be reimbursed for automobile rental expense.

(g) Airline insurance.

A member may not be reimbursed for air flight insurance. The State of Maryland has a contract for a blanket air flight insurance policy, which automatically covers all members. For information concerning this policy, contact Finance Services.

(h) Airline baggage charges.

A member may be reimbursed for airline baggage charges actually incurred in connection with authorized out-of-state travel for a maximum of two checked bags. Any additional baggage charges (such as charges for additional baggage or for excess baggage weight) will not be reimbursed.

2-305. MEALS

- (a) Actual cost.

A member may be reimbursed for expenses actually incurred for meals, not to exceed the combined daily limit for meals and lodging, as stated in Section 2-302, Maximum Daily Reimbursement. Receipts are required to claim meal reimbursement.

- (b) Alcoholic beverages.

A member will not be reimbursed for the cost of alcoholic beverages.

2-306. LODGING

A member who submits a bill for lodging will be reimbursed on the basis of the actual cost of the lodging not to exceed the combined daily limit for meals and lodging, as stated in Section 2-302, Maximum Daily Reimbursement.

- (a) Itemized paid bills.

A member shall submit itemized paid bills with the member's expense reimbursement form.

- (b) Limitation.

A member may not be reimbursed for the expenses of the member's spouse or family.

TITLE 3. DISTRICT OFFICE FUNDS

SUBTITLE 1. GENERAL

3-101. DEFINITIONS

In these guidelines the following words have the meanings indicated.

- (a) “Allowance” means the district office expense allowance.
- (b) “District” means a legislative district or subdistrict as appropriate.
- (c) “Encumber” means a financial obligation incurred prior to receipt of an item or service.
- (d) “Funds” means the district office expense allowance funds.
- (e) “Member” means a member of the General Assembly.
- (f) “Obsolete” means an item has no cash value and is fully depreciated.
- (g) “Office” means a district office.

3-102. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- (a) District office expense allowance.

There is a district office expense allowance for each member of the General Assembly from funds appropriated in the annual budget. A member may use these funds to maintain an office in that member’s district and for any other expenses that are authorized pursuant to these guidelines. Finance Services will provide each member with a monthly statement that shows the status of that member’s account.

- (b) Limitations.
 - (1) Each member shall limit that member's annual expenditure of funds to the amount of the allowance.
 - (2) A member may not incur an obligation in a fiscal year unless the member has sufficient funds in that member's account to cover the obligation.
 - (3) A member may encumber funds only if that member has a valid purchase document for an approved purchase of district office furniture or equipment. Funds may not be encumbered for recurring or routine operating expenses such as payroll, rent, utilities, postage, or supplies. All funds encumbered from the preceding fiscal year must be expended for their originally intended purpose no later than September 30 of the following fiscal year. Any district office funds encumbered by a member from a prior year appropriation that have not been disbursed on or before September 30 of any fiscal year will be reverted by Finance Services to the appropriate Maryland General Assembly general fund account.
- (c) Special circumstances.
 - (1) At the beginning of a fiscal year in which a general election is held for the members of the General Assembly, Finance Services will reserve one-half of each member's funds for that portion of the fiscal year that begins with the taking of the oath of office for members.
 - (2) If a member dies in or resigns from office and the current fiscal year's funds for that member are depleted, the new member may request that the President or the Speaker allot further funds to that member's allowance.
- (d) When a member's approval is required, this must be accomplished by the member's signature.

- (e) If a member opens an account with a vendor, the account should reflect the following: member's name, General Assembly of Maryland, member's address.
- (f) Members should submit the original invoice for payment. Any request for reimbursement must be supported by receipts.

SUBTITLE 2. STAFF

3-201. SECRETARIAL AND CLERICAL SERVICES

- (a) A member may employ temporary (non-benefitted) employees to perform secretarial and clerical services for the district office. In order to initiate payment for an employee, the member shall forward an Interim Expense Payroll Voucher to Human Resources authorizing payment on the Special Payments Payroll. A federal Employment Eligibility Verification form (I-9) and State Withholding Form (W-4) must accompany the voucher. In those instances where a temporary employee is employed on a continuous basis, the member must submit a payroll voucher at least once a year. Members need to be aware that funds encumbered for secretarial and clerical services may not be used for other purposes including work performed on behalf of campaign.
- (b) Payment will be on a biweekly basis as directed by the Central Payroll Bureau's pay schedules for special payment payrolls.
- (c) Payment will normally be mailed to the employee's payroll address.
- (d) Payment may not be made directly to a member.
- (e) Payment may not be made to members for secretarial or clerical services performed by the member.
- (f) General Assembly employees are subject to anti-discrimination standards as set forth in federal and State statutes.
- (g) General Assembly employees may not work at a district office which is located in a legislator's residence.

SUBTITLE 3. OFFICES**3-301. OFFICE RENT**

- (a) A member's allowance may be used for payment of rent for an office as set forth below.
- (1) The office shall be within the member's district unless the President or the Speaker authorizes a location outside of the member's district. An explanation as to why the location is outside of the district must be provided to the presiding officer prior to authorization.
 - (2) The office shall be an office or designated portion of an office that is used principally for legislative business.
 - (3) Payment of a pro rata share of the rent of the member's business office is prohibited even if that office is also used for legislative business, except with the prior approval of the President or the Speaker.
 - (4) All members of a district or subdistrict may share the rental cost of an office located within that district or subdistrict.
 - (5) A member may not receive payment of rent as a landlord of property in which the member or someone in the member's immediate family owns a substantial interest. The President or the Speaker shall determine what constitutes immediate family and a substantial interest.
 - (6) A member may not receive payment of rent for space in that member's private residence, even if that space is used for legislative business.
 - (7) A member may not sign a lease that would require occupancy by the member beyond the expiration date of the member's current term of office.

- (8) A security deposit will be honored only if the lease specifies that the deposit will be applied to the last month's rent.
- (9) Rental payments will be mailed directly to the lessor.
- (b) The member must obtain a written lease for any office space to be charged to the member's allowance. The member shall send the lease to Finance Services so that rental payments may be made.
- (c) A lease entered into by the member should contain a clause allowing the member to terminate the lease in the event the member vacates the office prior to the expiration of the lease. If such a clause is not included, the lease should contain a clause requiring the lessor to make a good faith effort to find a party to sublease the premises in the event the member vacates the office prior to the expiration of the lease.
- (d) A lease entered into by the member should not contain any provision which could have the effect of obligating the Maryland General Assembly or the State of Maryland to paying for the cost, or any portion thereof, to repair or replace any structural building component (such as roof, ceiling, floor, or wall) or integral building service system (such as heating, ventilation and cooling/HVAC, plumbing, electrical, or telecommunications systems), except to the extent that such damages are shown to have been directly caused by or attributable to the member's occupation and use of such premises.

3-302. COMMUNICATION

- (a) Printed material.
 - (1) A member may not use funds for the preparation, publication, mailing, or distribution of newsletters or questionnaires.
 - (2) The Legislative Print Shop may only be used for official legislative business. A member may not use the print shop to print any materials for personal or political purposes, even if the member wishes to reimburse the Print Shop from personal or campaign funds.

(b) Advertisement.

A member's allowance may not be used for the payment of any costs incurred for advertising in any media, *i.e.*, newspapers, radio, and television.

(c) Books and publications.

(1) A member's allowance may be used to purchase newspapers if the member finds the purchase necessary for fulfilling the member's legislative responsibilities. These purchases shall be limited to \$750 per fiscal year per member.

(2) A member may not purchase books or publications, including computer manuals. Members should make their book or publication requirements known to the Department of Legislative Services' Library and Information Services.

(d) Telephone.

(1) A member may not charge the basic rental for a home or business telephone to that member's allowance. A member may charge a telephone or telephone system used only for legislative business to the member's allowance. The monthly billing for a legislative telephone line should clearly identify the name of the member or members or the legislative district and be addressed to the district office address.

(2) Expenditures from a member's allowance for cellular phones and citizens band (CB) radios are prohibited.

(3) Expenditures from a member's allowance for directory advertisements are prohibited.

(4) The member shall identify long-distance calls as being for legislative business.

(5) The maximum allowable telephone expense is \$2,000 in each fiscal year. Prior approval of the President or the Speaker is

required before payment can be made for any member's telephone expenses in excess of the minimum allowable telephone expense.

- (6) A member shall approve all telephone bills and forward them to Finance Services for payment. Payments will be made directly to the telephone company.
 - (7) When submitting a telephone bill, the member should note personal calls and include a check made payable to the Maryland General Assembly for the amount of the personal calls.
 - (8) When a member incurs long-distance telephone charges for legislative business on that member's home or business telephone, the member shall submit the original or a copy of the telephone bill on an expense voucher with a statement as to the portion chargeable to legislative business. Reimbursements will be mailed.
- (e) A member may use district office funds to pay for rental of a site to meet with a group of constituents to discuss legislative issues. The President or the Speaker may approve the use of district office funds for other fees associated with these meetings. The member shall submit documentation of the proposed expenditure to Finance Services for review. Finance Services will contact the President or the Speaker to request any necessary approvals.

3-303. SUPPLIES

- (a) Except for the presiding officers, majority leaders, minority leaders, committee chairs, and delegation chairs, a member shall charge all district office supplies to the member's allowance.
- (b) A member may draw district office supplies from the General Assembly central supply room, but the cost of supplies shall be charged to the member's allowance.
- (c) Supply requisitions must be signed by the member.

- (d) A member also may purchase district office supplies from local vendors and charge them to the member's allowance.
- (e) When a member purchases district office supplies from a local vendor, that member shall approve the vendor's original invoice before submitting it to Finance Services. Payments will be made to the vendor. An expense voucher is not needed when direct payment to the vendor is made.
- (f) The member shall list out-of-pocket expenses for office supplies on an expense voucher, supported by paid receipts. Reimbursements will be mailed to the member.

3-304. POSTAGE

- (a) A member shall list postage expenses on an expense voucher that is supported by original receipts.
- (b) A member shall certify on the expense voucher that the postal expenses were incurred in connection with legislative business.
- (c) A member may charge the cost of mailings to constituents and community organizations to the district office allowance. However, these mailings may only be with respect to a specific issue or a response to a constituent inquiry on a specific issue, including the member's position on that issue. These mailings may not include letters to constituents on bills introduced by the member, letters to constituents that provide an overview of the legislator's or the Governor's activities or actions on a number of issues, letters asking for positions on bills, letters on general responsibility as a legislator, letters on nonlegislative matters, or letters printed on campaign stationery.
- (d) A member may not charge the cost of mailings of newsletters or questionnaires to that member's allowance.
- (e) A member shall limit district office postage expense to \$1,000 within each fiscal year without prior approval of the presiding officer.

- (f) Metered mail.
 - (1) Members may have their mail processed through the General Assembly's postage meter during the session.
 - (2) (i) Members may have their mail processed through the General Assembly's postage meter during the interim. However, the cost will be charged to their district office allowance.
 - (ii) The postage for mail relating to the Legislative Scholarship Program and to notary publics may be processed through the General Assembly's postage meter at no charge to the member's district office allowance. Members should clearly identify scholarship program mail and notary mail prior to delivery to the legislative mail room.

3-305. UTILITIES OTHER THAN TELEPHONE

- (a) The member shall list expenses for utilities related to a district office on an expense voucher, supported by original invoices.
- (b) When direct payment is to be made to the vendor, the member shall approve the original invoice and forward to Finance Services for payment. An expense voucher is not needed.
- (c) Utility expenses may be charged to the member's allowance when they relate to the district office covered by a lease.

SUBTITLE 4. COMPUTERS AND RELATED EQUIPMENT

3-401. PURCHASING COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

Members may purchase, lease, or rent computer equipment and software using their district funds with the prior approval of the President and the Speaker.

3-402. PURCHASING GUIDELINES

- (a) Members may acquire computer equipment from:
 - (1) Information Technology. A standard “legislative office package” geared toward basic legislative office functions. Support and maintenance is included with each PC provided through the replacement program for four years.
 - (2) Any computer vendor. The member is then responsible for purchasing all software, maintenance, and support. The “legislative office package” is not available for these machines.
 - (3) Finance Services. PCs turned in by other members can be obtained from Finance Services in conjunction with Information Technology

- (b) Information Technology’s Legislative Office Package: To provide an incentive to purchase standard hardware and software, the General Assembly provides one “legislative office package” suite for each PC issued through Information Technology’s replacement program at no cost to the member. If the member purchases additional PCs through this office, the member is responsible for paying for all software for the additional PCs, Microsoft Office is a required purchase for each machine. However, annual updates to the voter database and all software upgrades are provided for the first four years at no cost to members. The “legislative office package” includes:
 - (1) A PC with the standard office package, including word processing, presentation and spreadsheet software, constituent management software (which includes a database containing the names, addresses, and other pertinent information for all registered voters in the member’s district), and electronic expense sheet. Additional software can be added as needed if deemed compatible with the legislative package.
 - (2) Assistance from Information Technology’s staff when acquiring and using computers in legislative offices, repair of PCs, access to training classes, and walk-in and telephone assistance.

- (3) An email system, which allows members to communicate with other members, staff, and constituents.
 - (i) Information Technology will provide, at the member's request, email accounts for full-time or regular part-time member staff. The request must be submitted through a form sent to Information Technology. Staff email accounts will be closed upon notification of member staff termination.
 - (ii) When members resign their positions, Information Technology will remove all email accounts, and related email messages will be deleted from the General Assembly mail system two weeks after departure.
 - (iii) In an election year, members who will not be returning for the following session will have their email accounts flagged until swearing in of replacement members. After members leave office, the email account and all related email messages will be deleted from the General Assembly mail system.
 - (iv) Members with active email accounts provided by Information Technology will be subject to certain customary limitations.¹
 - Support for three email accounts:
 - District Account
 - Floor System Laptop Account
 - Public Access Account (MGA Website)
 - (v) Privacy of email:

Email is subject to Section 3-409, "Privacy of Files," of the member guidelines.
- (4) Access to various legislative databases including bill text, fiscal notes, the statute database, and bill history.

¹Current email limitations are 3 Gigabytes per mailbox, and single message size restricted to 20 megabytes.

- (5) Support of the complete legislative office package for the first four years after the PC is purchased. Once the PC is obsolete, the computer will be turned into a Reduced Capacity PC. A word processing package and browser will be supported until the supported software can no longer be installed on the PC.
- (c) Computer vendors: Members may purchase equipment directly from any computer vendor. Computers purchased from outside vendors will not be supported by OIS and will not connect to MGA network. Members are also permitted to include printers purchased with private funds to “complete” the computer system.

Members should be aware that they do NOT receive any of the following if they purchase PCs from private vendors:

- (i) Assistance when installing, using, or repairing this equipment.
 - (ii) The “legislative office package” described in the previous paragraph.
 - (iii) Access to the MGA network. They must purchase their own Internet access.
 - (iv) Training and other assistance provided to members who purchase their PCs from Information Technology.
- (d) Finance Services.
 - (1) Members may obtain equipment that has been returned by another member through Finance Services, which maintains a waiting list for returned equipment.
 - (2) If the equipment was initially acquired from Information Technology, it will be treated just like any other equipment purchased through Information Technology, and members will be entitled to the full range of services for the PC. If the PC is more than four years old, Information Technology will install a word processing package and a browser on the PC at no charge to the member.

- (3) If the equipment was purchased from a private vendor, it will be treated just like any other equipment purchased from a private vendor. No software will be installed on the equipment.

3-403. REPAIRING COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

(a) Maintenance contracts.

- (1) At the time of purchase, members are required to purchase a four-year maintenance contract for all PCs whether purchased through Information Technology or a private vendor. The cost of the maintenance contract is included in the price of all PCs purchased through Information Technology.
- (2) Members are required to purchase a three-year maintenance contract at the time a printer is purchased. The cost of a three-year maintenance contract is included in the price of all printers purchased through Information Technology.
- (3) Members are not required to keep maintenance contracts on computer equipment that is more than four years old. However, members should be aware that these machines cannot typically be repaired at a reasonable cost, and they should be prepared to dispose of the equipment if it breaks.

(b) Repair of equipment purchased through Information Technology.

- (1) Information Technology repairs all PCs purchased through its office for the first four years. If parts are available, Information Technology will repair equipment during the fifth year at no cost to the member. If Information Technology does not have the required parts, they will repair the equipment if the member purchases the part. However, members should be aware that parts for PCs over four years old may not be available for purchase from private vendors.
- (2) PCs located in district offices will ordinarily be delivered or shipped to Information Technology for repair.

- (3) Information Technology does not repair any PC that is over five years old or any equipment that is purchased from a private vendor.
- (4) Information Technology does not repair printers even if the printer was purchased through them.

3-404. REPLACEMENT EQUIPMENT

- (a) A member may replace defective equipment or enhance existing equipment to make it compatible with available software without the prior approval of the President or Speaker if the cost of the equipment or software does not exceed \$1,000 plus a 10% delivery or transportation charge.
- (b) Members who purchased their PCs through Information Technology should contact this office before purchasing any replacement parts to ensure that the replacement parts are compatible with the standard legislative package. Upon request of the member, the office will purchase and install the equipment.
- (c) Members may purchase printer supplies such as toner cartridges, and other items of an expendable nature through the central supply room as noted in Section 3-303.
- (d) Members will receive from the General Assembly, through Information Technology, up to two PCs during a four-year term (at no cost to the member) provided that:
 - (1) Members surplus an obsolete PC with current software licenses for each PC replaced.
 - (2) The obsolete PC is used in a reduced capacity without the legislative office package installed. All licensed software will be transferred to the new PC.
- (e) PCs provided under this replacement program are subject to the existing guidelines as outlined in the "*Guidelines for Compensation and Expenses for Legislators*," Sections 3-402 through 3-412, including Attachment A.

- (f) If a member's legislative office requires more than two PCs, the member must receive prior approval from the presiding officers before purchasing additional PCs. The member is responsible for hardware and software costs associated with additional PCs.

3-405. EXPENDITURE GUIDELINES

- (a) The district office allowance may be used for the following items:
 - (1) Finance charges.
 - (2) The cost of disposable parts and supplies (*e.g.*, toner cartridges, etc.). Members may purchase supplies for privately owned equipment with district funds, if the equipment is used for legislative business.
 - (3) The cost of computer furniture.
 - (4) The cost of hiring consultants or assistants to demonstrate or operate the equipment.
 - (5) Training in the use of the computer, but the cost of the training should not exceed the cost of similar instruction offered at a community college.
 - (6) Equipment (*e.g.*, high speed modem, router, extra phone line) and/or charges required to access the General Assembly's website.
 - (7) Maintenance contracts for the equipment or software.
 - (8) Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) used to provide power when there are electrical problems.
- (b) District office allowance may not be used for the following items:
 - (1) Purchase of components or software to be installed in equipment not owned by the State (such as a member's personally owned computer, or a system purchased with campaign funds).

- (2) Maintenance contracts for equipment not purchased with State funds.
- (3) Books or publications purchased to assist in the use of the system, unless the Department of Legislative Services' Library and Information Services is unable to purchase the materials out of library funds. Members must obtain approval from the President or Speaker for use of their district funds for these materials.
- (4) Rental or lease contracts that extend beyond the member's term of office.

3-406. COMPUTER EQUIPMENT PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

- (a) When purchasing new or additional equipment, members are responsible for confirming that they have adequate funds to purchase the equipment. Finance Services will provide information on the status of members' accounts.
- (b) With the approval of the President or the Speaker, members may use funds from two different fiscal years to purchase equipment, but members should be aware that the funds will be deducted from their accounts on July 1 of the second fiscal year.
- (c) Members must obtain advance approval from the President or the Speaker before purchasing computer equipment, except for certain replacement or additional items listed in Section 3-404.
- (d) If a member purchases a "legislative office package" PC or other computer equipment through Information Technology, this office will supply all necessary forms to present to the President, the Speaker, and Finance Services.
- (e) If a member purchases the equipment from a computer vendor:
 - (1) Members should submit a request for approval to the President or the Speaker, that includes the following information:

- (i) A description of the system, including for each individual component of the system, a brief description, the model or unit number, the brand name, and the price.
 - (ii) If leasing or renting the system, the proposed contract.
 - (iii) The proposed maintenance contract.
 - (iv) Other charges, such as installation costs, training, consulting services, etc.
 - (v) If a member plans to share the cost with another member or members, the member's share of the cost.
- (2) After obtaining authorization from the President or the Speaker, members may purchase the equipment. Members should notify vendors that they do not have to pay State taxes on equipment purchased using interim funds. The required tax exemption number is available from Finance Services.
- (3) Members may either submit the invoice to Finance Services for payment or pay the vendor out of their own funds and request reimbursement. Members submitting invoices should confirm that the equipment is in working order and that all documentation and software have been included before submitting the vendor's invoice. The invoice or reimbursement form should include the make, model, and serial numbers of all equipment and software.

3-407.1 SMART PHONES

- (a) Smart phones:
 - (1) Smart phones and the related cell plans are to be procured directly by the member. Except as provided in subsection (2) below, the costs associated with purchasing a smart phone or the related cell plan are not reimbursable to the member.
 - (2) The MGA will provide reimbursement to the member, for the actual monthly costs incurred for the data portion of the plan (which allows legislative email, calendar, and contact

synchronization with the MGA facilities) up to a maximum of \$50/month.

- (3) All inclusive plans that do not separate out the data charge will be reimbursed at 40% of the total plan cost, up to the maximum of \$50/month.
- (4) Reimbursements made under this section are subject to the general provisions set forth in section 3-102(f) of the *Guidelines for Compensation and Expenses for Legislators*, and accordingly will be charged to the member's district office allowance.

3-408. SOFTWARE LICENSING

- (a) Members are advised that it is the policy of the General Assembly that all software used with State-owned equipment must be purchased and properly licensed for the machine on which it is used, because it is a violation of both the license agreement and copyright law to use unlicensed software. (See Attachment A for a statement of this policy.)
- (b) Software purchased with district office funds is the property of the State and does not include copies of the software on CDs or other media.

3-409. PRIVACY OF FILES

Members should not presume that files on their PCs are their own private files. PCs purchased with interim funds belong to the General Assembly and, as such, all files on them are subject to public information laws.

3-410. MEMBER HOME PAGES

- (a) The General Assembly website includes an information page for each member. These pages list all bills sponsored by the member and their current status in the legislative process, and a photograph of the member. The page also provides a link to a public email address for all members. At the State Archives, there is a home page for each Senator and Delegate, which includes biographical information and a photograph of the member. The Archives also provides rosters of the Senate, the House, and committees, which are hyperlinked to the

members' pages. The General Assembly does not provide funding, development, hosting, maintenance, or user support services for member home pages, other than as described above.

- (b) Members may wish to maintain their own web pages, in addition to those provided at the General Assembly and Archives sites. Such "personal" pages and links to them from other websites are permitted, subject to the following restrictions:
 - (1) Members of the General Assembly may not place their personal web pages on servers funded directly or indirectly by the State, or on servers maintained by a State agency or instrumentality of the State, except as provided in the next paragraph.
 - (2) This policy does not prohibit a member from maintaining web pages on any server that permits the general public to maintain pages, or permits members of some particular group to do so, as long as the qualifications required and the page content are unrelated to the member's official duties as a member of the General Assembly.
 - (3) Members may not pay for any expenses related to personal web pages from their district office expense accounts.
 - (4) The General Assembly does not provide links to member web pages, other than those maintained by the Archives, from the General Assembly home page. Further, it is the intent of the General Assembly that other State-funded or operated web servers not provide such links; and members shall refrain from requesting such links to be established on servers operated by State agencies or instrumentalities of the State.
 - (5) It is the responsibility of each individual member to comply with these policies and to inform themselves concerning the operation and funding of web servers on which they may host their web pages.

3-411. MEMBER ACCESS TO LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION

The Maryland General Assembly website provides information on all bills introduced in both chambers, including history, title text, bill synopsis, and fiscal notes. Profiles may be created to track the status of groups of bills, and members can transfer bill status and profile information to their own personal computers. Hearing schedules are available online, as are proceedings of both chambers during the daily legislative sessions.

3-412. DISPOSITION OF COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

- (a) Disposition of computer equipment while in office.
 - (1) Members may not purchase for personal use or otherwise transfer ownership of any computer equipment.
 - (2) Members may not transfer computer equipment to another member. Unwanted equipment must be returned to DLS Information Technology for disposition or reassignment.
 - (3) When a member in a leadership position moves to a position in the opposite chamber, the computer equipment assigned to the leadership position remains with the original chamber.
 - (4) When a member moves to a position in the opposite chamber, the member may take all related district computer equipment to that chamber.
 - (5) Members are responsible for returning all computer equipment (PCs and peripherals)² that has been replaced or is no longer required to Information Technology. All components, as well as manuals, licenses, software, maintenance contracts, etc., are to be included when returning equipment.

²A peripheral is any external device attached to a computer. Examples of peripherals include printers, flash sticks, and external hard drives, etc.

- (b) Disposition of computer equipment when the member leaves office.
 - (1) When leaving office, members may purchase with personal funds any computer equipment that was acquired with district office funds. Members will be charged for the depreciated value of the equipment or, if it was purchased within two years of the time a member leaves office, the full price of the equipment without any depreciation. Equipment not purchased by the departing member can be assumed by the replacing member if it has not been declared obsolete by Information Technology³.
 - (2) Computer software does not depreciate and members must pay the current license price for any software they wish to purchase.
 - (3) Members may not transfer computer equipment to another member. Unwanted equipment must be returned to the Department of Legislative Services for disposition or reassignment.
 - (4) With the exception of smartphones, members must return all computer equipment (PCs and peripherals) and software to Information Technology when they leave office even if they are purchasing the equipment.
 - (5) All components as well as manuals, licenses, software, maintenance contracts, etc., are to be included when returning equipment to Information Technology.
 - (6) The equipment will be disposed of as follows when returned to Information Technology.
 - (i) Equipment that is obsolete will be “cleaned up” and transferred to the Maryland State Agency for Surplus Property or used for spare parts.⁴

³Incoming members should be prepared to purchase additional computer equipment as necessary.

⁴When Information Services “cleans” a PC, all files and programs on the PC are deleted from the PC. If the PC is being transferred to another member, the software is re-installed before the transfer. If the PC is being sent to Jessup, the PC is transferred without any programs or files. This is done to avoid transferring confidential information.

- (ii) All software not purchased by the member, as well as the voter database, will be deleted and licenses transferred to the member replacing the departing member.⁵ The PC will then be returned to the member.
- (iii) All other equipment will be “cleaned up” and transferred to another member on the Facilities and Inventory waiting list. First preference will be given to members in the same legislative district.

3-413. HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

- (a) High-speed Internet service.
 - (1) Information Technology provides to members, at no cost to the member, high-speed Internet service to member district offices where available. Reimbursement is provided only through the outlined program. Existing high-speed Internet service or service independently procured by the member is not reimbursable.

If the member’s district office is housed within the member’s residence, Information Technology will provide high-speed Internet service to the district office.

If the member’s district office is housed within the member’s residence and if the member currently has existing high-speed Internet service, Information Technology will provide a separate, high-speed service for legislative use.

If the member’s district office is housed within the member’s residence, personal high-speed Internet service and the high-speed Internet service provided by the Maryland General Assembly (Information Technology) must remain separate.

⁵Information Services must remove the voter database from all computer equipment purchased by members because the contract with the vendor supplying the voter database specifically states that the voter database can be installed only on PCs owned by the General Assembly.

Only equipment (PCs and printers) provided by Information Technology will be supported on the high-speed Internet connection. Information Technology will support up to four wired connections per office, which can consist of a combination of PCs and network printers. Wireless connectivity is also provided for floor laptop usage.

- (2) Information Technology provides a combination of hardware firewall and software anti-virus and anti-spam packages to protect member PCs in the district office. Periodic security updates will be provided by Information Technology.
 - (3) Information Technology will inventory and bar code all high-speed Internet equipment provided through this office.
 - (4) The member must terminate high-speed Internet service within 30 days of leaving office. All high-speed Internet equipment provided by Information Technology must be returned within 30 days of departure and may not be purchased by the departing member.
 - (5) When a member moves district offices, the member is responsible for notifying Information Technology that the service must be moved. Information Technology will attempt to identify service at the new location. Information Technology will process the move as a new installation.
 - (6) Changes to the wired/wireless router are not permitted. Information Technology will password protect the high-speed router and the password will not be provided to the member.
 - (7) The “always on” nature of high-speed Internet service requires that one computer in the district office should be kept on at all times. This will require that one PC remain in the district office during session.
- (b) High-speed usage.

High-speed Internet service is intended for legislative use and is subject to the “*Guidelines for Compensation and Expenses for Legislators*,”

Section 3-410(b) and the “*Ethics Guide*,” Section 2-108. These sections restrict the systematic usage of public resources for business, personal, and political campaign purposes.

(c) File and printer sharing.

Basic file and print sharing will allow you to share your printer between PCs in the district office and allow you to exchange files between PCs in the district office. This does not include the ability to share your Outlook email, calendar, or contacts. We request that you not install any additional networking protocols or third-party network applications.

ATTACHMENT A

Unlicensed Computer Software

The use of unlicensed computer software by members or staff of the General Assembly is not authorized.

When typical personal computer software is purchased, the purchaser receives a license to use the software on a single computer system, and it is a violation of both the license agreement and copyright law to copy the software for use on another computer, “lend” it to someone else, or “borrow” a copy from another person for one’s own use. Organizations can be and are being held liable for unauthorized copying and use of licensed software.

The General Assembly cannot afford to expose itself or its members to the possibility of such action. In addition, secondhand software is a common source of infection from so-called computer viruses, which are easily passed from one computer to another. It is not always possible to know where such software has been.

For these reasons, it is requested that members and their staff refrain from using unlicensed or unauthorized software on equipment belonging to the General Assembly and remove any such software which may be currently installed on our computers. Where a legitimate need exists to use computer software not provided by the General Assembly, an authorized copy of the software must be purchased for each machine to be used. Software purchased with State funds remains State property and may not be transferred or used other than in accordance with the applicable license agreement.

Members should note that computers and software purchased with district office account funds are specifically included under this policy.

While it is recognized that use of unlicensed software is not uncommon in the personal computer user community, it is not appropriate for the General Assembly.

ATTACHMENT B**MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
DISTRICT OFFICE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS****Depreciation Schedules**

Category 1. Useful life 20 years – depreciates at rate of 5% per year.

Category 1 includes furniture and equipment not subject to heavy wear. Items in this category include work surfaces, closed and open storage file cabinets, and small office equipment.

- Desks (executive, secretary, kneehole)
- Credenzas
- Conference Tables
- File Cabinets (4-drawer, 2-drawer, lateral)
- Supply Lockers
- Bookcases
- Wall Shelving
- Commodes
- Coffee Tables
- Lamp Tables
- Storage Cabinets
- Equipment Stands/Tables
- Cabinets
- Coat rack
- Screens (freestanding, room separators)

Category 2. Seating – Useful life 10 years – depreciates at rate of 10% per year.

Category 2 includes equipment normally subject to wear due to moving parts and furniture subject to wear due to frequent direct use by people. Items in this category include all forms of seating, upholstered and nonupholstered.

- Executive Chairs
- Secretarial Chairs
- Armchairs
- Side Chairs
- Benches & Settees

Category 3. Office Machines and Equipment – Useful life 10 years – depreciates at rate of 10% per year.

Category 3 includes items of equipment that are mechanical, electrical, electronic, and electro-mechanical.

Typewriters (electric or manual, including portable)

Calculators, adding machines (desk top or portable), dictation equipment, transcribers, or tape recorders (desk or portable)

Lamps (desk and table)

Copiers

Intercom Systems

Office Humidifiers

Office Dehumidifiers

Office Heaters

Vacuum Cleaners

Projectors (slide, motion picture, or audio equipment)

Category 4. Automated Equipment and Telephones.

(A) Memory typewriters and communication equipment – Useful life five years – depreciates at rate of 20% per year.

Memory Typewriters

Telephones and Telephone Systems

Facsimile (Fax) Machines

(B) Depreciation of Computers.

With the exception of smartphones, computer equipment is depreciated 25% each year. External peripherals, such as external hard drives, etc., which are purchased after the original system was purchased, depreciate 25% each year starting from the date of purchase. Printers depreciate fully after six years starting from the date of purchase. Members desiring to purchase their equipment will be charged the full price for equipment purchased within two years of the member's departure from office, unless the equipment was a one-to-one replacement of a defective part. Finance Services will provide members with the current depreciated values of their equipment upon request.

Computer software does not depreciate and members will be charged the current license price for any software they wish to purchase.

SUBTITLE 5. FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT**3-501. GENERAL POLICY AND LIMITATIONS**

- (a) A member shall limit purchases or rentals of furniture and equipment to those items necessary to maintain the member's district office.
- (b) A member may not purchase or rent furniture and equipment that is not on the approved list or the cost of which exceeds the amounts indicated on the approved list, plus a reasonable amount for transportation or delivery charge.
- (c) The President or the Speaker may approve purchases or rental of furniture and equipment that:
 - (1) are not included on the list; or
 - (2) exceed the amounts on the list.

3-502. APPROVED LIST OF FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

Desk	\$1,500
Desk Chair	550
Desk Lamp	150
Side Chair	300
Table	370
Table Lamp	250
File Cabinet	700
Bookcase (3-shelf, 36" x 48")	450
Credenza	1,000
Copier	1,400
Paper Shredder	250
Calculator or Adding Machine	200
Telephone or Basic Telephone System	300
Table(s) or Stand(s) for Data Processing Equipment	500
Facsimile (Fax) Machine, Accessories and Associated Connection Fees	600

- (a) A member is limited to the purchase of two fax machines, accessories, and associated connection fees not to exceed \$1,200 within a four-year term. Each member is allowed only two fax machines on inventory at any one time.
- (b) The fax machine must be located in the member's district office outside of the Annapolis Office Complex unless a member's district office is maintained on a permanent basis solely in the Senate office buildings or the House office buildings in Annapolis.

3-503. RENTAL OF FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

If furniture or equipment is rented rather than purchased, the following requirements apply:

- (a) The member must forward a copy of the written rental agreement or lease with a purchase option agreement with an amortization schedule supplied by the vendor to Finance Services.
- (b) The lease or rental period may not extend beyond the member's term of office.
- (c) A partial lease or rental agreement will not be approved.
- (d) If a member exercises any purchase options, title shall be vested in the General Assembly. The member shall notify Finance Services when the member exercises any purchase options, and the requirements for the purchase of equipment apply in those cases.

3-504. PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

- (a) A member may order furniture and equipment through Finance Services and charge it to that member's allowance.
- (b) For items ordered directly from a vendor by a member, the member should approve and send the original invoice to Finance Services for payment.
- (c) A member should ensure that any furniture being purchased for their Annapolis office matches the current décor; otherwise, the member should get approval from their presiding officer.

- (d) If equipment is traded in for new equipment, the submitted invoice shall describe the item traded and its serial number and the amount of trade-in allowed.
- (e) Payment may not be made unless the original invoice is submitted with an appropriate description of the equipment, including model and serial numbers.
- (f) Payment will be made directly to the vendor.
- (g) A permanent inventory record shall be maintained in Finance Services of all items of furniture and equipment costing more than \$100.
- (h) The member shall review and verify furniture and equipment listed on that member's inventory statement, which will be provided at least annually by Finance Services.
- (i) Payment of maintenance contracts or repairs will not be honored on any item not listed on the member's statement of inventory.

3-505. DISPOSITION OF FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

- (a) The preferential sale of State-owned property to State officials or employees is prohibited, except as provided elsewhere in these guidelines.
- (b) A member who is leaving office at the end of a term shall notify Finance Services within 90 days after the general election of the plan for disposition of the member's inventory of furniture and equipment. A member shall complete disposition of the inventory of furniture and equipment within a period of 90 days after leaving office. A member leaving office prior to the end of a term shall complete disposition of the inventory of furniture and equipment within a period of 90 days after leaving office. After the 90-day period, it will be determined whether to refer the member's account to the Central Collection Unit for appropriate action. A member shall dispose of inventory as follows:
 - (1) Assign the furniture or nondata processing equipment to another member of the General Assembly who is continuing in office.

Data processing equipment can be assigned to a member or member-elect from the same legislative district.

- (2) Return the furniture and equipment to Finance Services.
 - (3) Purchase the furniture and equipment at a fair market value to be determined on the basis of straight line depreciation over the useful life of the items. (See Attachment B.)
- (c) During its useful life, furniture and equipment will not be depreciated below 20% of its original purchase price. With respect to data processing equipment, Finance Services and Information Technology shall determine where an item is classified under Category 4 of the depreciation schedules (Attachment B) and periodically submit revisions of Category 4 to the President and the Speaker for review and approval.
 - (d) If the member wishes to purchase furniture and equipment purchased within two years before the member leaves office, that member shall pay the full price of the item, and depreciation is not permitted.
 - (e) Furniture and equipment that has completed its useful life will be considered obsolete. The member shall obtain the approval of the President or the Speaker before an obsolete item may be removed from a member's inventory by Finance Services and retained by the member.
 - (f) A member shall return to Finance Services furniture and equipment the member no longer needs. If the member is returning furniture and equipment as a result of leaving office, then the cost incurred in transporting the furniture and equipment may be charged to the member's district office allowance to the extent that the member's account has funds available. Otherwise, the member is responsible for any cost incurred in transporting the furniture and equipment.

3-506. PROCEDURES FOR LOST, STOLEN, AND DAMAGED FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

- (a) Lost, stolen, or misplaced furniture and equipment.

When furniture or equipment is discovered to be missing, the member shall prepare a report to the President or the Speaker that states the circumstances surrounding the disappearance. Where appropriate, the member should report to the local police authority that the furniture or equipment is missing. Upon approval by the President or the Speaker, the item shall be removed from the member's inventory by Finance Services.

(b) Damaged furniture and equipment.

When furniture or equipment is damaged, the member shall obtain a written evaluation that is prepared by an appropriate repair facility. The member shall send the report to the President or the Speaker with a request for a determination by them as to whether the item has been damaged beyond economical repair. If a determination is made by the President or the Speaker that the item has been damaged beyond economical repair, the item shall be removed from the member's inventory by Finance Services.

SUBTITLE 6. MISCELLANEOUS

3-601. UNAUTHORIZED USES OF DISTRICT OFFICE EXPENSE FUNDS

(a) Travel.

A member may not use the member's allowance for any travel. A request for reimbursement for travel expenses from the member's allowance will be denied by the presiding officers.

(b) Unauthorized purchases.

Purchase of the following items for use in an office from the member's allowance is prohibited:

- (1) Picture framing.
- (2) Art work such as photographs, oil paintings, watercolors, etchings, sculpture, and carvings.

- (3) Decorator objects such as fancy ashtrays, personalized desktop items, live flowers or plants, artificial or dried floral or plant arrangements, carpeting, rugs, curtains, draperies, window treatments, and wall hangings.
 - (4) Small personal items such as pins, tie tacks, desk flags, etc. The only flags members may purchase using district office allowance funds are Maryland flags that measure either 3' x 5' or 4' x 6'.
 - (5) Refrigerators, microwave ovens, and air conditioners.
 - (6) Cameras and/or film.
 - (7) No food or beverages except for the allowed District Night.
- (c) Contribution to nonprofit organizations and charitable causes is prohibited.

A member may not use the member's allowance to provide a financial benefit to a nonprofit organization or other charitable cause, whether by direct monetary contribution or by payment to a consultant to perform work on an organization's behalf.

3-602. ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES

The President or the Speaker may authorize disbursements from a member's allowance that are not authorized by these guidelines.

3-603. REFERRAL TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ETHICS

When an issue arises on a question of propriety relating to the use of the member's allowance, the President, the Speaker, or the member may refer the question to the Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics for recommendation.

3-604. FORMS/TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

- (a) All forms needed to comply with these guidelines may be obtained from Finance Services.

- (b) All forms and vouchers must be submitted to Finance Services within 60 days of the actual expense and the fiscal year in which the expense was incurred. Any form or voucher submitted after 60 days of the actual expense cannot be reimbursed.

- (c) Purchase of supplies, furniture, and equipment for legislative use is exempt from the Maryland State retail sales tax. The exemption number is 3002563. Sales tax will not be reimbursed nor will it be paid if included on an invoice submitted for payment.