



Regional Congress Organization Protocol and RACI Chart

Background

Regional congress is a meeting of the region and it belongs to the delegates of the region. It is a venue for communications between PEO Chapter Office staff, Chapter delegates and Regional councillors of the region. Although the senior regional councillor is presiding as chair of the meeting, his/her job is to ensure the proper meeting order is followed and the meeting starts/finishes on time.

Chapters of a region meet 3 times per year. The general intents of regional congresses are, but not limited to, the following: for the chapter to present and share their events with other chapter delegates at the congress; for the regional councillors to communicate council related matters to the region and vice versa; for chapter office staff to communicate directly with the chapters in a face-to-face format; to work together as a congress either for training or for discussing/ documenting/ solving any open issues.

Following document has been created to examine roles and responsibilities for all parties involved in organizing and running a Regional Congresses.

Regional congresses across the province

The following quick summary provides an informational snapshot of how regional congresses are organized across the province.

West Central Regional Congress

West central region tends to have their regional congresses on week nights. Location of the meeting is usually fixed at the Toronto Pearson International Airport area because it is easily accessible location within the region. The meeting usually starts at 7:00 pm and ends by 10:30 pm at the latest. Because of the start time of the meeting, dinner is served as necessitated by the meeting. Expenses are typically mileage rates and/or subway/transit tokens. Parking is usually complimentary (taken care of by Chapter office staff during negotiations of meeting space)

East Central Regional Congress

East central region tends to have their regional congresses on Saturdays or weeknights depending on the requests from the delegates. The meeting usually starts at 9:00 am in the morning after breakfast and ends at 4:00 pm at the latest. No overnight accommodation is required as the meeting usually takes place at PEO head office. If other locations are chosen, the question of offering overnight accommodation will be considered. Breakfast and lunch is served as necessitated by the meeting. If it is a weeknight meeting, it usually starts at 7:00 pm and ends by 10:30 pm at the latest. Because of the start time of the meeting, dinner is served as necessitated by the meeting. Expenses are typically mileage rates and/or subway/transit tokens. Parking at the PEO building is usually free on a weekend/weeknight

Outer region Regional Congresses

Western, Eastern, and Northern regions are collectively known as outer regions. Outer regions tend to have their regional congresses on Saturdays. Chapters within the region take turn to host regional congress. Due to the distance of travel within the region to the hosting chapter, meeting usually takes place at a hotel and overnight accommodation is offered as necessitated by the travel. The meeting usually starts at 9:00 am in the morning after breakfast and ends at 4:00 pm at the latest.

Hosting a congress (only for outer regions)

Hosting means that the regional congress is being organized within the chapter area. While the chapter office handles and is responsible for all the meeting planning (budget, logistics, etc.) and hotel room booking arrangements, the chapter office will require some general help from the local chapter for suggestions.

Chapter considers hosting a regional congress an honour. It is an opportunity for the hosting chapter to play host for other chapters but it is also optional at the sole discretion of the hosting chapter. Hosting chapter works with the chapter office to ensure their plans are not overly ambitious. The host chapter usually bear the full cost of the organization of the hosting activities outside of the meal, which is covered by PEO. The dollar amount for the meal is constrained by the PEO Expense Reimbursement Policy.

Friday night chapter hosted meal

The regional congress start time necessitates travel the day before. Chapter delegates are free to expense their respective dinners at the rate per the PEO Expense Reimbursement Policy. Rather than each travelling congress delegate eat on their own, the current practice is that PEO would make reservations for a group meal at a local restaurant upon the hosting chapter's recommendation. The event is the sole responsibility of the host chapter and the chapter office is the advisor to ensure budget is met.

Chapter office relies on the local chapter for their assistance so that it can communicate the plans to all the chapter delegates. The sole purpose of this event is to allow all regional congress delegates to share a meal together and network. It is not an opportunity for other events outside of the purpose of a regional congress.

Paying for the Friday night chapter hosted meal

While it is more convenient for PEO to be paying for the entire meal on one bill, in practice, it is troublesome. PEO needs to ensure every meal expense claim conforms to the PEO Expense Reimbursement Policy. Imposing restrictions (cash bar, price fix menu, etc.) is a way to ensure the budget requirements and the spirit of the policy are met.

To conform with the policy, to be fair to the volunteers and to not create any financial audit concerns, it is recommended that the following new process be adopted immediately:

- Host chapter can continue to organize the Friday hosting dinner.
- Volunteers attending the chapter hosted meal can order alcoholic beverages with their meal as it is in accordance to the current PEO Expense Reimbursement policy.
- PEO will no longer be paying for the meal as one bill. Instead, individual congress delegate shall pay for their own meal. Out of pocket expenses shall be recovered by adding the meal cost to the expense claim.

- All delegates shall be reminded to have a copy of the receipt and the credit card slip for expense reimbursement purpose.
- This way, the approver of expenses can apply the policy properly when approving congress delegate's expenses without imposing additional constraints. Thus, there will no concerns that could otherwise cause trouble for PEO during audit.

Regional congress hospitality suite

Unlike the AGM weekend, where PEO traditionally organizes a hospitality suite for out of town delegates to network with each other, to conduct conversations and to have a quick bite and some drinks (wine and beer), there has never been any practice of PEO organizing hospitality suites during regional congresses in the outer regions. This has seen one rare exception where PEO organized hospitality suites and used the opportunity to introduce to the delegates a high-ranking PEO official/staff attending the regional congresses for the very first time.

Regional congress is often seen by our volunteers as a gathering of friends from PEO. Friday night (before a congress and after the dinner) is an ideal time for informal gatherings to take place. These gatherings are casual, unplanned and by their nature, do not offer any official invitations. They should not be confused with an officially organized hospitality suite during the AGM weekend. PEO does not supply alcoholic beverages to these informal gatherings and what is consumed is always purchased by the volunteers.

While being aware of these gatherings, PEO Chapter Office has no part in the organization or payment for the event even though staff may be present for social reasons. Persons participating in such gatherings are perceived as members of the public and are not affiliated with PEO.

Regional congress delegate attendance

RCC allows two delegates per chapter attending regional congress. For the succession planning purposes, RCC encourages chapters to bring an EIT member as a third delegate to the regional congress, provided an effort is taken to mitigate the expenses of bringing the EIT to the congress. Remaining out of pocket expenses for the EIT's attendance will still be covered by PEO.

Hosting chapter may want to send additional delegates to the congress. These requests are encouraged for succession planning purposes. It should be communicated with the chapter office first. Chapter office staff will seek permission with the congress chair (senior regional councillor) on behalf of the chapter and communicate back. The hosting chapter delegates are assumed to be free of any expenses (not incur mileage and accommodation expenses to the congress budget). Any special cases should be communicated with the chapter office in advance.

Non-hosting chapters may want to send additional delegates to the congress. These requests should be communicated with the chapter office first. Chapter office staff will seek permission with the congress chair (senior regional councillor) on behalf of the chapter and communicate back.

Congress chair may wish to invite other pertinent guests to the congress. While the chair can invite guests to his/her meeting, he/she should be cognizant that this is a meeting of the congress delegates. As such, invitations should only be on a need-to-be basis and never to lose sight of the intent of the regional congress. Guest invitations should be communicated with the chapter office first and at least 4 weeks prior to the event to facilitate invitations and hotel bookings.

As the host inviting the guest, the congress chair should be the one responsible for making sure the guest is felt welcomed, comfortable and well looked after throughout the duration the guest is in attendance.

Hotel room bookings

Chapter administrative assistant sends out meeting notice to all chapter chairs and vice chairs with a deadline. It is up to the chapter to respond back to the chapter administrative assistant who are the attending delegates for the congress. Chapter administrative assistant then proceeds to book hotel rooms for all the delegates. PEO negotiates in advance with the hotel for preferential rates based on the number of room bookings. While PEO does not object if the delegate wants to stay at a different property for personal reasons, PEO can only reimburse the delegate the cost of the alternate hotel room, or our preferred room rate, whichever is less. For PEO's negotiated preferred room rate, do not call the hotel, rather please contact the chapter administrative assistant directly. If the delegate wishes to upgrade his/her hotel room, the cost of the upgrade will be the responsibility of the delegate and will not be covered by PEO. Delegates should not book their own hotel rooms at the same property, but make such requests to the chapter administrative assistant to avoid duplicate room bookings.

Once the hotel room block is booked, the chapter administrative assistant will communicate the confirmation numbers to the chapter delegates. Contact the chapter administrative assistant for all hotel related questions.

Regional Congress RACI Chart

	Hotel room bookings	Friday chapter hosted dinner	Regional Congress arrangements	Saturday Congress Meeting
Regional Councillors	Informed	Responsible Accountable	Consulted	Responsible Accountable
PEO Staff	Responsible Accountable	Accountable	Responsible Accountable	Responsible
Host Chapter volunteers	Informed	Responsible Accountable	Consulted Accountable	Consulted
Chapter delegates	Informed	Informed	Informed	Consulted
Guests	Informed	Informed	Informed	Informed

Legend

- Responsible – Who is completing the task.
- Accountable – Who is making decisions and taking actions on the task(s).
- Consulted – Who will be communicated with regarding decisions and tasks.
- Informed – Who will be updated on decisions and actions during the project.

Reference document

PEO Expense Reimbursement Policy