



Department of  
**Education and Training**

## DOMESTIC TRAVELLING ALLOWANCE

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## 1 POLICY STATEMENT

To the extent that it is practicable, the Department of Education and Training (DET) must pay for hotel, motel or other commercial accommodation expenses for any employee on an official trip that necessitates an overnight stay away from headquarters (normal place of work).

A DET employee will be reimbursed for all meal and incidental expenses personally incurred in accordance with the relevant award.

When undertaking official travel within a radius of 50 kilometres measured from the employee's headquarters, an employee is not entitled to the provision of or to claim an allowance for accommodation, meals and incidentals.

A DET employee is not entitled to claim a reimbursement for any official travel expenses incurred where the expenses have been paid or are payable by DET.

## 2 RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR AUTHORITY

*Public Service Award 1992;*

*Government Officers Salaries, Allowances and Conditions Award 1989*

*Education Department Ministerial Officers Salaries, Allowances and Conditions Award 1983*

*Teachers (Public Sector Primary and Secondary Education) Award 1993*

### 2.1 RELEVANT POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

*Corporate Credit Card User's Manual;*

*Official Air Travel; and*

*Premier's Guidelines for Official Hospitality.*

## 3 PROCEDURES

### 3.1 ACCOMMODATION

- a) Necessary bookings are to be made prior to travel where an official trip involving an overnight stay away from headquarters is made.
- b) The employee shall arrange for the accommodation to be paid by either a Corporate Credit Card or a direct billing to DET for payment.
- c) The type and cost of accommodation booked for all official trips involving an overnight stay shall not be excessive. As a guide, the cost of accommodation is generally about 50-70% of the daily rates, as prescribed in the relevant award or agreement.
- d) Approval from the employee's business unit manager is required where the cost of the accommodation exceeds 70% of the employee's total travel entitlement for the trip.

- e) In exceptional circumstances where accommodation expenses cannot be paid by direct billing or a corporate credit card, and an employee is required to pay the accommodation expenses out of their own money, the employee is eligible to claim an accommodation allowance in accordance with the relevant award subject to prior approval by the business unit manager.
- f) Where private (non commercial) accommodation is arranged, the employee shall be reimbursed in accordance with the rates as prescribed in the relevant award or agreement for accommodation other than hotel/motel.

### 3.2 MEAL AND INCIDENTAL EXPENSES

- a) An employee is entitled to claim a reimbursement for meal expenses :
  - when an official travel exceeds a radius of 50 kilometres;
  - for those meals that have not been provided;
  - the meal expenses have not been paid or payable by direct billing or a corporate credit card; and
  - the employee's certification that each meal claimed was actually purchased and paid by the employee.
- b) An employee is entitled to claim a reimbursement for incidental expenses:
  - when an official travel exceeds a radius of 50 kilometres and involving an overnight stay away from the headquarters; and
  - when the incidental expenses have not been paid or payable by direct billing or a corporate credit card.
- c) An employee may arrange for the meals and or incidentals to be provided by the school or DET. In such events, these expenses can be paid by direct billing to the school, DET or a corporate credit card, and the expenses incurred must not exceed the relevant award rates.
- d) Where a meal provided is inadequate or not suitable for personal dietary reasons, an employee is eligible to claim a reimbursement for any expenses personally incurred in purchasing an alternative meal.
- e) Where it can be shown to the satisfaction of the business unit manager that by the production of receipts, reimbursement in accordance with the Travel Allowance Schedule does not cover an employee's reasonable expenses for the whole trip, the employee shall be reimbursed the excess expenditure.

### 3.3 REIMBURSEMENT FOR MEALS AND INCIDENTALS

Reimbursement for meals and incidentals shall be made in accordance with the relevant award rates.

### 3.4 DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL TIMES

For the purpose of reimbursement for part of the day:

- the departure time is deemed to be the later of the departure time from the employee's place of work, or departure time from the employee's home; and
- the arrival time is deemed to be the earlier of the arrival time at the employee's place of work, or arrival at the employee's home.

To claim a reimbursement, proof of departure and arrival times must be provided as follows:

#### 3.4.1 TRAVEL BY AIR

An itinerary, airline tickets or boarding passes must be included as evidence of arrival and departure times. A statutory declaration is required if actual times vary from the supporting documentation. If the employee takes approved leave during the journey, then the time that the official component ceased is to be recorded on the Travel Claim form. Alternative flight details to support a return to home or headquarters excluding the approved leave component of the journey must be provided.

#### 3.4.2 TRAVEL BY CAR

The departure and arrival times are recorded on the Travel Claim form. If the employee takes approved leave during the journey, then the time that the official component ceased is to be recorded on the Travel Claim form.

### 3.5 BUSINESS ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES

When an employee purchases a legitimate business meal for a guest while on official travel, the employee may use the corporate credit card or claim reimbursement for the full amount incurred in accordance with the *Hospitality and Working Meals* policy.

### 3.6 CASH ADVANCE FOR MEALS AND INCIDENTAL ALLOWANCE

The cash advance is to be requested within five working days prior to travel. The advance is payable for travel involving a full day or more. Travel approval must be obtained before a cash advance can be given. The cash advance will be calculated based on 100% of the award rates plus any out of pocket reasonable incidental expenses.

All cash advances will be paid directly to the employees' bank accounts through an electronic fund transfer.

### 3.7 PRIVATE EXPENSES

An incidental allowance is available to cover an employee's personal or private expenses while on an official trip. Therefore, employees are not eligible to claim separately any personal or private expenses incurred while on an official trip. The following expenses are considered as personal or private expenses:

- Mini-bar expenses (excluding bottled water);
- Newspapers and magazines;
- Morning and afternoon tea expenses;
- Sight seeing expenses;
- Private telephone expenses;
- Private entertainment expenses (including in-house movies);
- Fees and charges incurred on private credit cards;
- GST on meals and any other private expenses;
- Tips; and
- Any other personal or private expenses.

### 3.8 BUSINESS EXPENSES

In addition to the incidental allowance provided in the award, an employee is eligible to claim all reasonable business expenses incurred while on official travel. The following expenses are considered as reasonable business expenses:

- Laundry and dry cleaning expenses;
- Car hire, train, bus and taxi fares incurred for travel to and from business engagements; and
- Business telephone, email and fax;

Receipts or relevant documentary proof must be provided for all reasonable business expense claims.

### 3.9 CERTIFICATION

#### 3.9.1 ACCOMMODATION

For accommodation exceeding 70% approved under provision 3.1(d), all of the following must be provided with the claim:

- an explanation to justify the accommodation booked ;
- the explanation is to be signed off by the business unit manager; and
- a copy of the approved travel application form, where applicable.

When claiming an accommodation allowance under provision 3.1(e), all of the following must be provided with the claim:

- a justification and or an explanation as to why the accommodation had to be paid by the employee;
- the explanation is to be signed off by the business unit manager; and
- a copy of the accommodation invoice/receipt.

When claiming an allowance for private accommodation under provision 3.1(f), an employee is not required to provide any documentary proof.

#### 3.9.2 MEAL EXPENSE

When claiming a reimbursement for a meal expense, an employee is required to certify on a travel claim form that each meal claimed was actually purchased.

Receipts are required only in the following instances:

- claiming the cost of a meal where a meal provided is not adequate or suitable to the personal dietary requirements; and
- claiming a reimbursement in excess of the allowance.

#### 3.9.3 INCIDENTAL EXPENSE

No receipts are required when claiming the incidental allowance for personal expenses. However, receipts must be provided when claiming the expenses in excess of the award rates.

### 3.10 REPORTABLE ALLOWANCE

If an allowance claimed is in excess of the ATO reasonable amount, the allowance will be reported in the employee's payment summary. For meals and incidental expenses not involving an overnight stay, the amount claimed will be reported in the payment summary, as it is deemed to be assessable income.

### 3.11 APPROVED LEAVE DURING AN OFFICIAL TRIP

An employee taking approved annual leave or time off as flexible work arrangements during an official trip must apply for approval from their manager prior to the trip.

If the employee takes approved leave during their trip and continues to stay in the accommodation provided the employee must pay the hotel/motel directly for the nights concerned. The travel allowance reflects the official component of the trip only.

Reimbursement of expenses shall not be suspended should an employee become ill whilst travelling, provided leave for the period of such illness is approved in accordance with the relevant personal leave or sick leave clause of the award or agreement.

### 3.12 TRAVEL CLAIM CLEARANCE

A travel claim form for travel expenses must be submitted as soon as possible after completion of the trip, usually within two weeks.

This is also necessary to ensure that cash advances are cleared promptly and, where applicable, claims for additional allowable expenses incurred are made.