

NORTHERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



POLICY: TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE

ADOPTED ON THE: 01 DEC 2011

SIGNED BY: HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

Public Service Regulations Chapter 1 Part V/E1, requires the Minister for Public Service and Administration to determine service benefits, compensation practices, work facility practices and allowances for employees through the collective bargaining process.

A collective agreement for reimbursing employees who are required to incur expenditure on accommodation and travel whilst on official journeys has been reached in Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) Resolution 3 of 1999.

The aim of the subsistence allowance and re-imbursement of incidental expenses is not to:

- Enable an employee to entertain him/herself;
- Compensate an employee for any discomfort; and/or
- Supplement an employee's salary.

Subsistence allowances must be cost efficient and economically justifiable, taking due regard to fairness and reasonableness.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to provide a measure with regard to the reasonable expenditure including incidental expenses that may be claimed by an employee during periods when s/he is away from her/his headquarters on an official journey. Furthermore, travel and subsistence allowance policy is to ensure that clearly defined policy and guidelines for subsistence and travel allowances and expenditure exist.

3. DEFINITIONS

"PSCBC" means the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council;

"Fixed Daily Subsistence Allowance" means the expenditure in respect of accommodation, meals (including non-alcoholic beverages with meals), dry cleaning and laundering;

"Official Duty" means official trip from headquarters as authorised by the department;

"Headquarters" means the city, town, institution or place where the principal duties of an employee have to be performed or which may be indicated as his/her location on his/her job description;

“Responsibility or Cost Centre Manager” an official responsible for the administration of human and physical resources of a cost centre who shall, at management level, control, co-ordinate, evaluates and account to the programme manager for all activities within a cost centre;

“Meals” does not include sweets, chocolate, alcohol, cigarettes, stationery and may not be reimbursed;

“National” any destination outside the Northern Cape Province;

“Provincial” any destination within the Northern Cape Province;

“Special daily allowance (incidental)” claimed when away from place of residence for 24 hours or longer.

4. COMPLIANCE FRAMEWORK

Laws and regulations	Policy and procedures
Public Service Act, 103 of 1994	PSCBC Resolutions
Employment of Educators Act, 76 of 1998	Personnel Administration Measures
Public Finance Management Act, 1999	
Public Service Regulations	

5. SCOPE

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all office based employees in the Northern Cape Department of Education employed in terms of the Public Service Act, 103 of 1994, as amended and to office based educators.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

Section 39 of the PFMA places the ultimate responsibility of budgetary control in the Head of Department (HOD) as the Accounting Officer of the department.

However, the HOD may delegate these functions to the responsibility managers and the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for authorisation in line with approved budget. The CFO should also monitor, review and report on travel and subsistence allowances during his/her financial management monthly report that get discussed with management and HOD.

7. POLICY PROVISIONS

(i) Official journeys

- (a) If an employee has approval for the use of her or his private transport to carry out her or his duties, the employer shall;
 - Provide an allowance to cover reasonable actual costs, and / or
 - Compensate the employee according to tariffs prescribed by the Department of Transport.
- (b) The employer may compensate an employee for the costs of official journeys, including travel to and from the normal work place, when an employee must;
 - Temporarily take up duties and, in consequence, residence at another place of work, or
 - Travel to work outside of normal hours.
- (c) If an employee on official duty away from her or his normal place of work returns home because a spouse, parent or child becomes severely ill or dies, the employer may pay reasonable actual costs for the employee's travel.
- (d) If an employee travelling on official duty becomes so ill that he/she must remain distant from his/her home, and the presence of his/her family at his/her bedside is deemed necessary the employer may pay reasonable actual costs for travel and accommodation for one of his/her immediate family members (i.e. parent, spouse or child) to join him/her.
- (e) All journeys undertaken will be managed on a claim / advance bases and not through the SCM processes. A deviation will only be considered in cases where, an official receives notice to travel, within the 5 day period required to process the advance, and the official cannot afford to pay the accommodation, approval may be sought to make use of SCM procedures.
- (f) The measures with regard to travel and subsistence expenses applicable to employees (Educators) who perform duties in respect of public examinations are contained in chapter E, paragraph 3 of the Personnel Administration Measures (PAM).

ii) Approval of an official journey

- (a) All international official journeys for the HOD shall be approved by the MEC, after confirming the availability of financial resources.
- (b) All official journeys for the Chief Directors shall be approved by the HOD, after a confirming the availability of financial resources.



- (c) All official journeys for Directors shall be approved by the respective Chief Directors, after a confirming the availability of financial resources.
- (d) All official journeys for other staff members (Clerks, Assistant Directors, Deputy Directors, etc.) shall be approved by the respective Directors in consultation with their respective Chief Directors, after a confirming the availability of financial resources.
- (e) The district director shall approve all official journeys of all staff members of his/her district after confirming availability of financial resources. The chief director districts shall approve all official trips of the district directors after confirming availability of financial resources

iii) Means and class of transport

- (a) All travel by air domestic or international shall be undertaken in economy class with the approval of the Head of Department.
- (b) In case of motor transport, government-owned vehicles should be used for official journeys as the preferred means of transport. Privately owned or hired vehicles (highest class of hired vehicle to be Group B) transport may only be considered if government owned vehicles are not available or if the use of privately owned vehicles is deemed more appropriate/cost-efficient. The use of government-owned vehicles is not applicable to SMS and MMS members who receive car allowances.
- (c) In cases where two or more officials are travelling provincially or nationally, they should travel in the same vehicle even in cases where the officials are from different units.

iv) Type and class of accommodation

- (a) All employees shall use the most economical accommodation available when on official journeys. Where daily rates exceed the approved accommodation tariffs (see table below), the employee must obtain prior written approval from the responsibility manager (could be HOD, Chief Director or Director – refer to Approval of official journey above) to utilise such accommodation.

	Provincial	National
Accommodation	R600	R850.00

- (b) The motivation as to why the approved tariff limit had to be exceeded as well as the approval thereof must be attached to the subsistence claim.

- (c) The maximum amount for accommodation in Namaqua and Siyanda shall be R1 000 per night for the period 1 August to 31 October of each year as a result of the increased seasonal rates over this period.
- (d) If an employee must take an official journey lasting under 24 hours, the employer shall meet reasonable actual accommodation costs, if any.
- (e) If an employee must take an official journey that lasts for 24 hours or longer, for each day or part of a day on the journey s/he may claim either – reasonable actual accommodation (i.e. per the approved accommodation tariff) plus an allowance of R88.00 a day or a fixed allowance of R286.00 a day (in cases of own accommodation). These amounts are revised annually by DPSA.
- (f) Only in circumstances where self catering accommodation is used may an official claim for grocery items purchased from a supermarket limited to the tariffs for breakfast, lunch and dinner. An official will be required to produce an itemised supermarket slips as proof of purchase.
- (g) With regard to employees who travel overseas, meals and incidentals should be claimed in line with “Annexure A”– Accommodation on official journey outside the Republic and circulars (as prepared by the National Ministry of Public Service Administration). The Annexure A and the circulars are revised annually and in each fiscal period up to date documents must be attached to the policy.

iv) Meals and Incidentals

- a) A set boundary of 100 kilometres from headquarters (one way) must be exceeded prior to any subsistence and travelling claim being reimbursed.
- b) The actual expenditure may be claimed in respect of meals (incl. beverages), provided this is reasonable. The cost of alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed. All claims must be supported by the submission of an itemised receipt.
- c) An official will be granted a maximum amount of R300.00 per day to be utilised for Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. The maximum amount that may be spent on either of the aforementioned meals is R150.00, provided that an official has been away from her/his head quarters for longer than 24 hours.
- d) In the event of trips shorter than 24 hours the following maximum tariffs will apply in respect of actual expenditure, (iv)(b):

MEAL	AMOUNT
Breakfast	R60.00
Lunch	R80.00
Dinner	R120.00
TOTAL	R260.00

- e) Whether the employee qualifies for the reimbursement of such meals and beverages in accordance with the above subparagraphs will depend upon the times of departure and return and the reasonableness of the claim. Refer to "Procedures and Conditions Relating to Claims", for clarity on times if required.
- f) Employees may also be reimbursed for those costs in respect of parking and toll fees as well as the official phone calls as follows:
- Parking/Bus/Taxi Fares/Toll fees/ - provided proof is supplied
 - Official phone calls – provided proof is supplied and written statement justifying the necessity for the official call.
- g) Employees who attended a meeting/seminar/workshop where catering and or / accommodation is provided, are not entitled to submit claims for meals or a fixed daily allowance. However, officials who travel from outside the town of the venue of the workshop may claim the special daily allowance.
- h) Laundry may only be claimed where the trip exceeds 5 continuous working days, or where an official has been transferred or seconded and claims actual expenditure. The amount claimed must be supported by proof and will be limited to 20 items or a maximum of R100.00 per week.
- i) With regard to employees who travel overseas, where meals and incidentals are wholly or partially sponsored by a donor or sponsor or by employer, employees will be reimbursed by way of a reduced special daily allowance as follows:
- Incidental expenses (15%)
 - Breakfast (20%)
 - Lunch (20%)
 - Dinner (45%)
- v) Cancellation of Accommodation and Flight Bookings
- (a) If an official has to cancel a flight or accommodation booking on instruction from his / her supervisor a letter motivating the circumstances must be submitted and attached to the payment advice for audit.
- (b) If an official through wilful or negligence miss a flight and accommodation bookings have to be cancelled the official will be responsible to pay for the expenses incurred.



8. IMPLEMENTATION

The overall responsibility for adherence by the Northern Cape Department of Education (NCDOE) to this policy lies with the NCDOE Head of Department, Chief Financial Officer, the other departmental Chief Directors and the other responsibility managers. However, the Chief Directors together with their Responsibility Managers are to comply with this Policy in developing their budgets.

9. PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS RELATING TO CLAIMS AND ADVANCES

Claims

The following requirements must be met when submitting claims for reimbursement of expenditure:

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- (a) The nature of the journey must be clearly indicated together with the date, the departure and arrival times and the official's annual salary.
- (b) The claimant must sign the claim before submitting it to her/his supervisor or an official designated to check and/or certify the correctness of the payment/reimbursement. The claimant must also keep a copy of the claim and receipts until such time that he/she is reimbursed.
- (c) The designated officer must ensure that the times quoted on meal vouchers are relevant to the amount being claimed, for example, when an official claims for the reimbursement of lunch and the time indicated on the slip is 18h15, this cannot be accepted. **Breakfast can be claimed until 10:30, lunch until 15:00 and supper from 15:00 onwards.** The date(s) on the slip(s) must correspond with the day(s) on which the official journey was undertaken. Furthermore, where officials are travelling over meal periods, purely to be able to claim the meal allowance, this too must be controlled and prevented.
- (d) It should be noted that where an official is required to represent the department at a meeting, for example, on Monday at 10H00, travelling arrangements must, wherever possible, be made to coincide with the meeting. When official(s) wish to travel on the Sunday prior to a meeting, this should only be considered under exceptional circumstances, in which case, the necessary motivation



and the Responsibility Manager's approval must be attached to the claim.

- (e) Whether an official qualifies for reimbursement will depend upon the reasonableness of the claim as well as the times of departure and return. In this regard, if an official leaves her/his headquarters before 07H00, he/she may claim breakfast and if he/she returns after 19H00 he/she may claim supper.
- (f) It is the responsibility of the official certifying the subsistence claim to ensure that the amounts being claimed are reasonable and within the determined limits. Where deviations are detected, the amounts on the claim must be amended prior to the claim being authorized and processed. Items such as cigarettes, alcohol, sweets, chips, chocolates, biscuits and stationery may not be reimbursed. The official approving the claim must be satisfied that all provisions of relevant prescripts have been met.
- (g) All claims for subsistence and travel must be submitted within one (1) calendar month of the return date of the journey. Failure to comply could result in the claim not being honoured unless written reasons are furnished to justify the non-compliance, which must be acceptable to the Responsibility Manager.

Advances

- (h) Where officials are unable to personally finance trips, they may apply for an advance for such expenditure, provided the prescribed form is used for this purpose and the relevant supporting documentation is attached.
- (i) All requests for a subsistence and travel advance must be submitted in the approved format **5 working days prior to the trip**, to ensure the timely processing and payment of the advance.
- (j) It should be noted that **no advance will be awarded if an official has an outstanding balance on the advance account** and/or has a negative track record with regards to submission of claims where advances were given in the past.
- (k) Officials are reminded that where advances are drawn to cover the cost of an official trip, the subsistence claim form pertaining to that trip must be completed and submitted for processing without delay and by **no later than one (1) calendar month of the return date of the journey**. Failure to submit subsistence and travel claims within the specified timeframe will result in the full advance amount being recovered from the employee's open month salary.



General

- (l) Officials are required to keep the copy of the subsistence claim form together with the supporting documents until such time that the claim is processed and finalised. It is the Responsibility Manager's duty to ensure that officials comply with the above, otherwise, the expenditure is not brought to book and the advance amount is not cleared. In this regard, Responsibility Managers are required to peruse their Subsistence and Travel Accounts on a monthly basis for detailed outstanding advances. These must be investigated and reported to the Director: Finance.
- (m) In order to ensure that the spending of State funds is properly monitored and controlled, all officials charged with the responsibility of checking, authorizing and controlling subsistence claims are required to render their full co-operation and support in this regard.
- (n) If an official takes an official journey that is in contravention with this policy document, without prior approval from her/his Responsibility Manager or his/her delegate, then such officer may be compensated for none.

10. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective from the date of approval by the Head of Department.

11. REVISION DATE

The policy shall be reviewed annually.