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Department:
Environment & Nature Conservation
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE CONSERVATION

SUBSISTENCE AND TRAVEL: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 15 JANUARY 2014 FINANCIAL SERVICES VERSION 1

A PROSPEROUS AND EQUITABLE SOCIETY LIVING IN HARMONY WITH OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

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1. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The Public Service Regulations, in Chapter 1 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.

This policy will enforce the collective agreement for reimbursing employees who are required to incur expenditure on accommodation and travel whilst on official journeys has been reached **(PSCBC) resolution 3 of 1999**.

Definitions

HOD : Head of Department

MEC : Member of Executive Council

S&T : Subsistence and Travel

1.2 Legislative requirements

Public Service Regulations Chapter 1 Part V/E1

Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) resolution 3 of 1999.

2. POLICY STATEMENT AND APPLICATION SCOPE

2.1 POLICY STATEMENT

The aim of this document is to inform management and staff of the Department of Environment and Nature Conservation regarding the subsistence and travel allowances. This document outlines the procedures to be followed in handling the subsistence and travel allowance.

Objectives

To ensure:

- that all S&T claims are valid and are approved by an official in the rank of Deputy Director and higher in the case of trips exceeding 24 hours;
- that claimant gives sufficient and valid proof of the expenses he/she incurred during the trip, (no photocopies or affidavits will be accepted in replacement of lost original cash slips);
- that the delegated officer reconciles the expenditure incurred against the advance. If there are monies due to the departments it should be paid back.

2.1.1 Approval of official journey

- All International official journeys for the HOD shall be approved by the MEC and for all Senior and Middle managers the HOD shall approve, after confirming the availability of financial resources.
- All subsistence and travel claims/advances for official journeys may only be approved by unit heads or senior officers according to existing delegations. Claimants may not approve his/her own advance.
- Documentary proof (invitation, submission or proof of payments) must be submitted before payment thereof can be considered.

2.1.2 Subsistence and travel allowance are not to be utilised as follows

- For entertainment;
- To supplement an employee's salary or to enrich him/herself;
- To refund an employee for any discomfort.

2.1.3 Cancellation of trips

- The employee should notify the Finance Unit that the trip has been cancelled, and should immediately refund the advance at the cashiers office; and

- If an employee fails to refund the advance the amount will be deducted from the next open salary without notice.
- If an official through willful or negligence miss a flight and accommodation bookings have to be cancelled the official will be responsible to pay the expenses incurred.

2.1.4 Subsistence and Travel Claims / Advances

Claims

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

- The nature of the journey must be clearly indicated together with the date, the departure and arrival times and the official's annual salary.
- 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.
- 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 authorised and processed. Items such as cigarettes, alcohol, biltong, 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.
- All claims for subsistence must be submitted within 10 days upon return. Failure to comply would result in the claim not being honoured unless written reason is furnished to justify the non compliance, which must be acceptable to the Responsibility Manager.

Advances

- 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.
- Amounts received as an advance may not be spent for any other purpose except to pay for the approved and reasonable expenses incurred by the official on the execution of their duties.
- These will include:

- Accommodation
 - Meals – limited to a set tariff
 - Telephone cost – with prior approval and if the official has not been provided with a cell phone
 - And work related accidental costs
- Subsistence and travel allowances/advances can only be claimed for trips exceeding 24 hours. Out of pocket expenses which relate to the execution of their duties will be refunded to employees who are away from the office for more than 12 hours but less than 24 hours;
 - For periods less than 30 days, the advance shall not exceed the estimated reasonable expenses for the period of absence;
 - For periods longer than 30 days, the advance may not exceed an amount equivalent to the estimated reasonable expenses for a period of 30 days. A motivation for accommodation and other expenditure must accompany the advance form.
 - 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.

2.1.5 Official Journeys outside the Republic of South Africa

- When accommodation expenditure and related expenses are wholly or partially sponsored by a donor or sponsor, or where part of the meals (e.g. breakfast included in hotel accommodation expenses) is paid by the Employer, the payment of a reduced special daily allowance must be considered. The following breakdown of the special daily allowance to determine the reduced special daily allowance must be considered.
- Incidental expenses (15%)
- Breakfast (20%)
- Lunch (20%)
- Dinner (45%)

These tariffs are guided in the DPSA Financial Manual August 2009 and will be reviewed each year.

2.1.6 Settling of Subsistence and Travel Advances / Claims

- No advance will be awarded if an official has an outstanding balance on the advance account and /or has a negative track record with regard to submission of claims where advances were given in the past.
- Request for an advance is to be made at 4 days (twenty-four hours in cases of emergency) before the trip commences;

- When the advance exceeds the claim the difference should be paid back immediately by the employee;
- Interest will be charged at SARS rates if outstanding for longer than 30 days.

2.1.7 When will a travel and subsistence advance be rejected

- When an employee still has an outstanding advance and has never submitted the subsistence and travel claim; and
- An employee did not refund a previous subsistence and travel debt (in cases where an advance exceeded a claim);
- The proper authorization procedure was not followed and supporting documentation, (i.e. itinerary or motivation) is not attached;

2.1.8 When will S&T claims be rejected

- The S&T forms are incomplete
- The proper authorisation according to the delegations of authority had not been obtained
- Substantiating documentation has not been attached or is incomplete.(e.g. receipts, invoices etc)
- The approved trip authorization and itinerary is not attached

Note: When a claim is presented for settlement only the original supporting documentation will be accepted. If an invoice is lost a new invoice must be requested from the creditor stating that it is a copy. No faxes, affidavit or copies will be accepted.

2.1.9 Subsistence and travel reimbursements and allowances

N.B. Both the special daily allowances and the fixed daily allowances will be paid according to the Department of Public Service and Administration circulars that are applicable at the time of the trip.

- If an employee takes an official journey that lasts for 24 hours or longer, reasonable actual accommodation and meal costs, if any shall be paid.
- If an employee takes an official journey that lasts for 24 hours or longer, for each day or part of a day on the journey, he/she may claim either:
 - A reasonable actual expenditure on accommodation and meals plus a special daily allowance; or
- For official activities where meals and accommodation are provided or where those expenses are covered, the employee may only claim the special daily allowance to compensate for incidental expenses;
- Or activities organised by the department where all employees are expected to attend and where meals, transport and accommodation are provided and the venue is within

50 km of the workplace, employees cannot claim the special daily allowances. Where the venue is more than 50 km from the workplace, management will issue a directive whether the special daily allowance can be claimed by employees as well as the amount of the allowance up to the maximum amount according to DPSA circulars applicable at the time.

2.1.10 Conditions of subsistence and travel allowance claims

The following may not be claimed when actual expenses are claimed as they form part of your special daily allowances:

- Liquor or any alcoholic beverages;
- Private telephone calls
- Room service;
- More than three meals per day.

2.1.11 Bookings

- Employees may only make use of approved travel agencies for the purchase of plane tickets.
- The employee's secretary should make the hotel and accommodation bookings.
- Employees are advised not to make use of travel agencies for accommodation bookings.

2.1.12 Accommodation Expenses

- Employees are requested to make use of the most economical accommodation. For hotel accommodation, employees should not be allowed to stay nearer to the event they are attending in order to save costs (HOD and MEC are excluded).
- All meals included in the accommodation account must be specified in order to ensure that only permissible items are claimed. Meals can only be claimed if not included in the accommodation costs.

2.1.13 Meals

A maximum of three meals per day may be claimed when actual expenses are claimed, provided that the total cost for all three meals does not exceed the amount indicated on Annexure A.

NB: All receipts must be attached when claiming otherwise the claims will not be considered.

2.2 APPLICATION SCOPE

This policy will apply to all officials of the Department of Environment and Nature Conservation.



3. POLICY FRAMEWORK

3.1 IDENTIFICATION AND CONSULTATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

This policy document was distributed to staff members within the department and their feedback and inputs are included where changes were suggested and motivated. Information sessions were also held as part of the consultation process. The recognized Labour Unions are not excluded in the process as they do have shop stewards within the department, and them being part of the departmental staff, thus had the opportunity to participate in the process.

3.2 TIMEFRAMES

This policy was compiled on Wednesday, 27 January 2010. It was submitted to the Policy Development unit for analysis and alignment on November 26, 2010. Its first alignment was conducted on January 14, 2011 and the second on February 08, 2011. The policy development unit held a meeting with the Financial Management unit on April 07, 2011 to discuss some amendments and these were incorporated to this policy.

3.3 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that this policy is carefully followed within the department. All managers should ensure that all employees are made aware of the obligation to familiarize themselves with and follow this policy.

An implementation plan will be drafted which will outline how and when this policy will be implemented. The plan will be drafted two months after the implementation date of this policy. In order to ensure adequate implementation of this policy the Financial Management unit will compile an infrastructure investment (in terms of human capital) and policy management plan. The plan will be updated on an annual basis and will contain details on future guidelines for this policy. The financial implications if any will be indicated on the plan in order to ensure that funds are available or availed.

The implementation date for this policy is February 01, 2014

3.4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This policy will be funded by the different budget allocations of the respective directorates with the cooperation of the Budget Manager (Financial Management).

3.5 COMMUNICATION

This policy should be communicated through the respective directorates. However, the most important unit to contact would be the Financial Management Directorate. This policy will be communicated to all suppliers registered on the Supply Chain

Management database, and the administrators of the Office of the premier (Policy and Planning) website.

3.6 COMPLIANCE, MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

All units are required to sign a memo which contains the signature of the:

- Compiler
- Supervisor (for recommendation)
- The Budget Manager (to verify the availability of funds for subsistence and traveling)
- Head of Department (recommend for out of Province trips)

Policy implementers

The adequate implementation and monitoring of this policy will rest with the Finance unit.

3.7 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed when the need arises or in case of the occurrence of extenuating circumstances (political mitigation, or pronouncement by legislation and/or regulations). The contact person for this policy will be required to submit all relevant information pertaining to this policy in conjunction with a signed memo for all amendments (addition or omission) during the third quarter annually.

The exception, the Policy development unit will be conducting all extenuating reviews throughout the year, therefore it is paramount that any new information received be submitted to this unit, in order to coordinate the review process of this policy.

3.8 POLICY IMPACT

The desire of this document is to inform management and staff of the Department of Environment and Nature Conservation regarding the subsistence and travel allowances. This document aspires to outline the procedures to be followed in handling the subsistence and travel allowance and to avoid corrupt practices/mismanagement of the Departments finances.

3.9 INTERIM MEASURES

This policy will amend and re-enforce some sections of the previous policy which was adopted by the department. It will be used concurrently with the provincial subsistence and travel policy.

ANNEXURE A:

Type of allowance	Maximum allowance w.e.f 1 April 2007
Special daily allowances to compensate for incidental expenses where actual accommodation expenses are paid by the department and proof is submitted(e.g. order form)	The amount will differ annually according to DPSA tariffs
Fixed daily subsistence allowance payable in circumstances where actual accommodation expenses are not paid by the department. This amount includes meals.	The amount will differ annually according to DPSA tariffs
Daily allowances payable to camping personnel	The amount will differ annually according to DPSA tariffs

Maximum allowable amounts with documentary proof(documentary proof to be originals and indicating description of food purchased):

Description	Time away from work	Amount
Breakfast	6 am – 10am	The amount will differ annually according to DPSA tariffs
Lunch	10 am – 15 pm	The amount will differ annually according to DPSA tariffs
Supper	15pm – 20 pm	The amount will differ annually according to DPSA tariffs
Tea		The amount will differ annually according to DPSA tariffs

Maximum allowable amounts without documentary proof (a declaration informing that the official undertook an official trip should be attached):

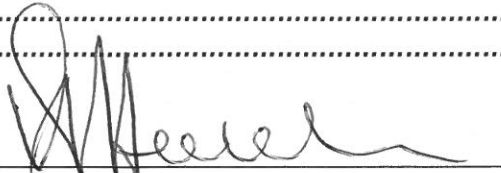
Description	Time away from work	Amount
Breakfast	6 am – 10am	The amount will differ annually according to DPSA tariffs
Lunch	10 am – 15 pm	The amount will differ annually according to DPSA tariffs
Supper	15pm – 20 pm	The amount will differ annually according to DPSA tariffs

4. ADOPTION OF POLICY

Approved/ ~~Not Approved~~

Comments:

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D VAN HEERDEN
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

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