

## APPENDIX A. GUIDELINES ON DOMESTIC ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES

Officers are reminded that the purchase card is not to be used for personal purpose in any instance while on official travel as per *Treasurer's Instruction (TI) 321 Credit Cards – Authorised Use*.

### A.1. DOMESTIC TRAVEL

To the extent that it is practicable, and in accordance with the Travelling Allowance Schedule prescribed in the relevant award:

- a) The Department will 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).
- b) An employee is eligible to claim an allowance for meals and incidental expenses personally incurred when on an official trip that necessitates an overnight stay away from headquarters.
- c) An employee is eligible to claim an allowance for meals only when undertaking official travel outside a radius of 50 kilometres measured from the employee's headquarters, and provided the trip does not involve an overnight stay away from headquarters.
- d) The employee is entitled to claim full incidental allowance and there is no requirement for employees to produce receipts in order to claim incidental expenditure (see exception below in A.8 Business Expenses)
- e) A Department employee is not entitled to claim an allowance or reimbursement for any official travel expenses incurred where the expenses have been paid or are payable by the Department.

### A.2. ACCOMMODATION ALLOWANCE AND EXPENSES

- a) Necessary bookings are to be made prior to travel where an official trip involving an overnight stay away from headquarters is made. Accommodation bookings are to be made in accordance with travel rates prescribed in the respective awards.
- b) The employee shall arrange for the accommodation to be paid either by purchase card or direct billing to the Department or school for payment.
- c) In exceptional circumstances where accommodation expenses cannot be paid by direct billing or purchase card, and an employee is required to pay 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 line manager/principal.
- d) Where private (non-commercial) accommodation is arranged, the employee is eligible to claim an allowance in accordance with the rates as prescribed in the relevant award or agreement.

- e) Line managers/principals are required to make every effort to minimise the cost of travel. Only overnight travel that is considered essential to the requirements of specific work programs and which would meet the Department's outcomes are to be approved. Line managers/principals need to limit overnight travel stays and consider a range of alternative options. Alternatives include teleconferencing or videoconferencing.
- f) As prescribed in the relevant award, an employee is eligible to claim an allowance for meals only when undertaking official travel outside a radius of 50 kilometres measured from the employee's headquarters and the trip does not involve an overnight stay away from headquarters.

### **A.3 MEAL AND INCIDENTAL ALLOWANCE AND EXPENSES**

- g) An employee is entitled to claim an allowance for meals in accordance with the relevant award provided:
  - official travel exceeds a radius of 50 kilometres;
  - if travel is for part of a day, calculation of meal allowance is as per the part day formula in the relevant award;
  - meals have not already been provided;
  - meal expenses have not been paid or are payable by direct billing or a purchase card and
  - the employee certifies that expenditure was incurred.
- h) An employee is entitled to claim an allowance for incidental expense in accordance with the relevant award:
  - when official travel exceeds a radius of 50 kilometres and involves an overnight stay away from the headquarters;
  - if travel is for part of a day, calculation of incidental allowance is as per the part day formula in the relevant award;
  - when the incidental expenses have not been paid or payable by direct billing or purchase card.
- i) An employee may arrange for meals and/or incidentals to be provided by the school or the department. In such events, these expenses can be paid for by purchase card or direct billing by the school, or department. Such expenses incurred must not exceed the relevant award rates.
- j) Where a meal provided is inadequate or not suitable for personal dietary reasons, an employee is eligible to claim an allowance for any expenses personally incurred in purchasing an alternative meal.
- k) Where it can be shown to the satisfaction of the line manager/principal 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.

#### A.4 DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL TIMES

Departure and arrival times determine the allowance for which the employee is eligible.

- **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. Alternative flight details to support a return to home or headquarters excluding the approved leave component of the journey must be provided.

- **Travel by Car**

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

#### A.3. ALLOWANCE PAYMENTS FOR PART OF THE DAY

The formula to calculate allowance payments for part of the day can be found in the Travelling Allowance clause of the relevant award.

For this purpose

- 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.

#### A.4. BUSINESS ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES

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

#### A.5. CASH ADVANCE FOR MEALS AND INCIDENTAL ALLOWANCE

Cash advances to staff may be administered but only in exceptional circumstances and are at the discretion of the authorising officer. A cash advance is to be requested in HRMIS no later than five working days prior to travel. The advance is payable for travel involving a full day or more. Approval for the travel is required before a cash advance is given.

The cash advance will be calculated based on 100% of the travel allowance.

All cash advances will be paid directly into the employee' nominated bank account by Corporate Business Services prior to the intended travel.

In the event that cash advances are given, they are to be acquitted promptly in HRMIS after completion of the trip, usually within two weeks. (See also B6 Travel Claim Acquittal Process below)

## A.6. 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 personal or private expenses in addition to this allowance while on an official trip. Travellers should request a separate bill if minibar items are purchased. The following expenses are considered personal or private expenses:

- mini-bar expenses (excluding bottled water);
- alcohol;
- newspapers and magazines;
- morning and afternoon tea expenses;
- sight-seeing expenses;
- private telephone expenses (more than five minutes)
- private entertainment expenses (including in-house movies);
- GST on meals and any other private expenses;
- tips; and
- any other personal or private expenses.

## A.7. BUSINESS EXPENSES

If the incidental allowance provided in the award does not cover an employee for all reasonable business expenses while on official travel, the employee is eligible to claim the following business expenses on production of receipts:

- laundry and dry cleaning expenses;
- business telephone expenses, Wi-Fi etc.;
- car hire, train, bus and taxi fares incurred for travel to and from business engagements;
- fees and charges incurred on private credit cards (used in exceptional circumstances for business purposes only);
- business entertainment (noting that the allowance payable will be reduced according to the meal allowance paid in instances where this expense includes the claimant's meal); refer Expenditure on Hospitality Policy; and
- tips, where verifiable and when connected to performing official duties.

## A.8. REPORTABLE ALLOWANCES

If the total meals and incidentals allowance claimed is in excess of the ATO reasonable amount, the allowance will be reported in the employee's payment summary and the excess (above the reasonable amount) will be subject to PAYG Tax.

## A.9. 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/principal prior to the trip.

If an employee takes approved leave during his/her trip and continues to stay in the accommodation provided, he/she must arrange separate billing for the nights concerned. The travel allowance reflects the official component of the trip only.

Payment of allowances 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. Please also see the *Official Air Travel Procedures* on leave undertaken in conjunction with official travel.