

Policy on Subsistence Allowance and incidental expenses whilst on official journeys

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 Subsistence allowance (expenditure) is listed in Chapter I of the PAM as one of the measures not administered by the Minister of Education, which applies mutatis mutandis to educators as they apply to other employees of the state.
- 1.3 A collective agreement for reimbursing educators/employees who are required to incur expenditure on accommodation whilst on official journeys has been reached in Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) Resolution 3 of 1999.
- 1.4 The aim of the subsistence allowance and reimbursement of incidental expenses is not to:
 - Enable an educator/employee to entertain;
 - Compensate an educator/employee for any discomfort; and/or
 - Supplement an educator's/employee's salary.
- 1.5 With due consideration to fairness and reasonableness, as well as practicality, subsistence allowance must be cost-efficient and economically justifiable.

2. DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

For the purpose of this policy:

- 2.1 “subsistence allowance” means the expenditure in respect of accommodation, meals (including non-alcoholic beverages with meals), dry cleaning and laundering;
- 2.2 “daily allowance” means the expenditure in respect of tips for table and room service, reading matter, private

telephone calls and liquid refreshments which do not form part of meals;

- 2.3 “official duty” means official absence from headquarters as authorised by the department;
- 2.4 “headquarters” means the city, town, institution, or place where the principal duties of an educator/employee has to be performed or which may be indicated as his/her location on her/his job description; and
- 2.5 “PSCBC” means the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council.
- 2.6 “Responsibility Manager” refers to the official who has been formerly appointed to monitor and control the budget allocated to the relevant component.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide measures with regard to the reasonable expenditure including incidental expenses that may be claimed by an educator/employee during periods when s/he is away from her/his headquarters on an official journey.

4. AUTHORISATION

- 4.1 PSCBC Resolution No. 3 of 1999.
- 4.2 Public Service Regulation Chapter 1, Part V/E1.
- 4.3 Regulation 71 of the Regulations regarding the terms and conditions of employment of Educators.
- 4.4 Agreement No.4 of 1999 of the Provincial Bargaining Chamber of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Administration.

5. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

- 5.1 The provisions of this policy shall apply to all educators/employees in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture employed in terms of the Employment of

Educators Act, 76 of 1998, as amended, and the Public Service Act, 103 of 1994, as amended.

- 5.2 This policy shall not apply to an employee/educator who receives compensation under agreements applicable to camping staff or sessional employees.
- 5.3 If an educator/employee, without prior approval, incurs expenditure during an official journey which is not provided for in this policy, the Department may compensate such educator/employee for none or only part of her/his expenses.

6. MEASURES AND PROVISIONS

6.1 Compensation During an Official Journey Less Than 24 Hours

- 6.1.1. A set boundary of 50 kilometres from headquarters (one way) must be exceeded prior to any subsistence and travelling claim being reimbursed.
- 6.1.2 The actual expenditure may be claimed in respect of meals, provided this is reasonable. The cost of alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed. All claims must be supported by the submission of a receipt and the maximum amount claimable in respect of meals is limited to the following:
 - Breakfast: R25.00
 - Lunch/Dinner: R50.00
- 6.1.3 An educator/employee may also claim expenditure for two teas/beverages (excluding alcohol) per day. This is limited to R3.50 per tea/beverage.
- 6.1.4 Whether an educator/employee qualifies for the reimbursement of such meals and teas in accordance with subparagraph 6.1, 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.

6.1.5 Educators/employees may also be reimbursed for those costs in respect of parking and toll fees as well as official phone calls as follows:

- 6.1.5.1 Parking/Bus/Taxi Fares/Toll Fees/ - provided proof is supplied.
- Official Phone Calls - provided proof is supplied or a written statement justifying the official call(s).

It is reiterated that an educator/employee who attends a meeting/seminar/workshop where catering is provided, is not entitled to submit claims for meals/tea/beverage.

6.2 Compensation For Accommodation During An Official Journey Lasting 24 Hours Or Longer

6.1.1 A set boundary of 100 kilometers from headquarters (one way) must be exceeded prior to any subsistence and traveling claim is considered.

6.2.2 The reasonable actual expenditure on accommodation plus daily allowance of R47.00 or an allowance of R154.00 per day (in the case of own accommodation), may be claimed.

6.2.3 Actual expenditure may also be claimed in respect of meals, provided they are not included in hotel expenses and are supported by proof. The cost of alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed. Notwithstanding the above, that is, submission of a receipt, the maximum amounts claimable for meals tea(s)/beverage(s) will be those mentioned in paragraph 6.1.2. and 6.1.3.

In addition to meals, an educator/employee may claim for the following:

6.2 Hotel Expenses

Provided the most economical hotel is used and proof of the expenditure is supplied. Where daily rates exceeds R450.00 (for hotel accommodation only), the educator/employee must obtain

prior written approval from the Responsibility Manager to utilise such accommodation. The motivation as to why this limit had to be exceeded as well as the approval therefore must be attached to the subsistence claim.

Notwithstanding the above, an educator/employee may not claim in circumstances where s/he has state subsidized dwelling within a 50km radius of her/his official destination.

6.3 Laundry

Excluding dry-cleaning, may only claimed where the trip exceeds 5 continuous days and the amount claimed must be supported by proof. This amount is however limited to a maximum of R90.00 per week.

6.4 Parking/Bus Fares/Taxi Fares/Toll Fees

Provided proof is supplied.

6.5 Official Phone Call(s)

Provided proof is supplied or a written statement justifying the official call(s), is submitted.

7 COMPENSATION FOR TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES FOR EDUCATORS WHO PERFORM DUTIES IN RESPECT OF PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

The measures with regard to traveling and subsistence expenses applicable to educators who perform duties in respect of public examinations are contained in Chapter E, paragraph 3 of the PAM.

8 PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS RELATING TO CLAIMS

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

- 8.1 The nature of the journey must be clearly indicated together with the date, the departure and arrival times and the official's annual salary.

- 8.2 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 s/he is reimbursed.
- 8.3 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. The date(s) on the slip(s) must correspond with the day(s) on which the official journey was undertaken. Furthermore, where officials are traveling over meal periods, purely to be able to claim the meal allowance, this too must be controlled and prevented.
- 8.4 It should be noted that where an official is required to represent the department at a meeting, for example, on Monday at 10H00, traveling 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.
- 8.5 Whether an official qualifies for reimbursement as indicated in paragraph 6.1 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 06H00, s/he may claim breakfast and if s/he returns after 19H00 s/he may claim supper.
- 8.6 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 and stationery may not be reimbursed. The official approving the claim must be satisfied that all provisions of relevant prescripts have been met.

8.7 All claims for subsistence, excluding claims where advances are drawn, in respect of the preceding month, must be submitted within 10 days of the succeeding month; for example, claims in respect of January must be submitted on or before 10 February. Failure to comply would 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.

8.8 Subsistence reimbursement must not be financed from the impress/petty cash account.

8.9 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 5 working days, after having completed the trip.

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 Transport Control Accounts on a monthly basis for detailed outstanding advances. These must be investigated and cleared without delay.

8.10 In order to ensure that the spending of State funds are properly monitored and

controlled, all officials charged with the responsibility of checking, authorizing and controlling subsistence claims and expenditure are required to render their full co-operation and support in this regard.

8.11 Where officials are unable to personally finance trips, they may claim an advance for such expenditure, provided the prescribed form (1104 advance form) is used for this purpose.

8.12 If an official takes an official journey that violates this policy document, without prior approval from her/his

Responsibility Manager or his/her delegate, then such officer may be compensated for none or only part of costs.

9 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The Human Resource Management components of the department/regional offices are responsible for communicating the provisions of this policy to all educators/employees. These components/offices are also responsible for the implementation thereof.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, unless inputs from components/offices or an agreement with organised labour informs otherwise.