



Government of **Western Australia**
WA Country Health Service

Travel Expenses and Reimbursement Guideline



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1. Introduction

The WA Country Health Service (WACHS) provides its health services to geographically dispersed locations usually through air travel and/or road travel, and this often incurs additional expenses. Staff are entitled to a reimbursement of reasonable expenditures and incidentals where travel for official business is required and approved, and may be entitled to a Travel Allowance depending on the relevant industrial agreement through which they are employed.

This document outlines the standard / endorsed WACHS approach (along with alternatives) for staff purchasing accommodation and incidentals. It applies to travel where an allowance / reimbursement is applicable.

2. Travel Related Expenses

The [OD 0585/15 WA Health Staff Air Travel Policy](#) and [Guidelines](#) provide guidance on the process of travel-related expenses. Refer to Guidelines Section 5 Claims and Expenses, Professional Development Leave and University Academics.

The standard WACHS approach for staff travel-related expenses is to use the corporate purchasing card, with the exception of flights and fuel (fuel card only), when incurring travel-related costs; including meals, accommodation, vehicle hire etc.

All travel-related expenses (either by corporate credit card or through personal funds) incurred on an actual cost basis must be supported by receipts and tax invoices.

2.1 Allowances and Reimbursements for Expenses

An incidental allowance may be available to cover an employee's business expenses when on travel for official business, depending on the employee's relevant industrial agreement. In addition to the allowance, an employee is eligible to claim all other reasonable business expenses incurred while on official travel that are not already covered, provided they can supply evidence that substantiates all costs.

The following expenses are considered reasonable business expenses:

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

Reasonable expenditure refers to both the nature and value of the items purchased: e.g. alcohol and sight-seeing tours, or staying in \$1,000 per night accommodation would not be considered reasonable expenditure.

Expenses already covered under the incidental allowance or via purchasing card must not also be claimed as reimbursement. Staff who are found guilty of misleading or fraudulent claims are liable for disciplinary action and/or prosecution under the [Financial Management Act 2006](#), the [Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003](#), and the [Criminal Code Act 1913](#).

3. Purchasing of Accommodation and Incidentals

Travel Approvals

Either an [ST1 – WA Health Staff Travel Application](#) form or a WA Health Staff Air Travel form (attached to the [OD 0585/15 WA Health Staff Air Travel Policy](#)) must be completed and approved prior to travel where an allowance / expense is applicable, in accordance with the [WACHS Authorities, Delegations and Directions Schedule](#). For Intrastate travel, forms are to be submitted at least four (4) weeks prior to travel; for Interstate/International travel, forms are to be submitted at least six (6) weeks prior to travel.

WACHS has endorsed a standard approach to the purchasing of accommodation and travel related expenses. There are alternative approaches available should the standard approach not be practical. Prior approval must be sought from a Tier 5 (minimum) manager if an alternative approach is to be used. The standard WACHS process and alternatives are outlined below.

Standard WACHS Method

Employer provides accommodation, meals and incidentals e.g. parking

In this arrangement, the employer organises and pays for accommodation, meals and parking in advance / directly using the corporate purchasing card or invoicing a cost centre, up to the industrial agreement allowances.

If an employee is a purchasing card holder they can utilise their purchasing card to pay for accommodation, meals and incidentals etc., providing they have received approval for this expense by the appropriate delegated authority.

If expenses are paid using the purchasing card/invoicing they must not also be claimed by the individual as an allowance or reimbursement. Nor is the employee entitled to claim the difference between the cost of accommodation, meals and incidentals e.g. parking, and the relevant industrial agreement allowances. Misleading or fraudulent claims may result in disciplinary action as per section 2.1.

This method is the endorsed / supported WACHS organisational approach for purchasing accommodation and incidentals. It aligns with the WA Health Air Travel Guidelines preferred approach where:

“all travel related expenses (for example registrations, accommodation and car hire) are to be made by the Travel Coordinator (or designated employee) using purchasing cards.”

Alternative Method 1

Employee claims the Daily Rate as per the relevant Agreement

In this option, the employee organises their own accommodation, meals and incidentals and pays all expenses privately. The employee then claims the relevant Allowance within one month following the travel using the [ST2 –Accommodation/Incidental Allowances Claim](#) form in accordance with their industrial agreement.

Payment of allowances is dependent on the employee staying in the relevant accommodation type claimed (i.e. hotel or accommodation other than hotel). WACHS reserves the right to request proof of the type of accommodation utilised on the employee's return to work.

A travel allowance may be paid according to the provisions of the relevant industrial agreements. Allowances, including incidental allowances, will be calculated in accordance with the relevant industrial agreements. Allowances are based on the departure and arrival times where applicable. Allowances are adjusted for any accommodation or meals either paid by the employer or which are part of the event. Where in doubt, contact your regional or central office Human Resources department.

Allowances for meals, accommodation and incidental expenditure may be paid in advance for travel that is short term and unlikely to require significant changes. Advance payments must be in line with the relevant industrial agreement and will be paid no more than four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled date of departure upon proof of approval to travel.

Supporting documentation including the Travel Proposal form approved by the delegated authority in line with the [WACHS Authorities, Delegations and Directions Schedule](#), and departure and arrival times must be submitted with all allowance claims.

All supporting documentation must be sighted by the employee's line manager and Incurring Officer; and reconciliation must be made between the entitlements under the employee's industrial agreement and the allowance claim made before payment is authorised. The form must then be submitted to the local WACHS Finance team for processing.

Alternative Method 2

A hybrid approach, the employer provides accommodation; employee claims meals and incidentals allowance as per the relevant industrial agreement

In this option, the employer organises and pays for the accommodation directly using the corporate purchasing card.

The employee claims the meals (not provided by the event or meals provided in the course of travel e.g. food provided on a plane) and incidentals allowance as per industrial agreement allowances using the [ST2 – Accommodation / Incidental Allowances Claim](#) form. Supporting documentation including the Travel Proposal form approved by the delegated authority in line with the [WACHS Authorities, Delegations and Directions Schedule](#), and departure and arrival times must be submitted with all allowance claims.

All supporting documentation must be sighted by the employee's line manager and Incurring Officer; and reconciliation must be made between the entitlements under the employee's industrial agreement and the allowance claim made before payment is authorised. The form must then be submitted to the local WACHS Finance team for processing.

Meals paid for by WACHS cannot be claimed even if an alternative meal has been purchased. Employees cannot claim the difference between the amount actually paid for accommodation and meals and the amount the employee may be entitled to claim as an allowance per their relevant industrial award / agreement.

Alternative Method 3

Reimbursement of actual reasonable costs

This option is the same option included in the WA Health Staff Air Travel Guidelines, Section 5.4 'Reimbursement of Actual Costs'. It applies to all staff travel in WACHS.

In this option, an employee may pay their own registration, accommodation and meals and be reimbursed the actual reasonable costs incurred in line with the industrial agreement. Prior to doing so, the Travel Proposal form must be approved by the delegated authority in line with the [WACHS Authorities, Delegations and Directions Schedule](#).

On completion of travel a [ST3 – WA Health Travel Reimbursement](#) form must be completed within one month following the travel. Any Goods and Services Tax paid by the employee will be reimbursed provided the documentation complies with relevant taxation legislation.

Supporting documentation including the Travel Proposal form approved by the delegated authority and supporting itemised tax invoices must be submitted with all reimbursement claims. All supporting documentation must be sighted by the employee's line manager and Incurring Officer; and reconciliation must be made between the nature and value of the travel approval given and the reimbursement claim made before reimbursement is authorised. The form must then be submitted to the local WACHS Finance team for processing.

Note: Meals paid for as part of an accommodation package and/or event registration cannot be claimed as a reimbursement, even if the employee has purchased an alternative meal.

Forms

Forms for these purposes are available from the Health Support Services website and may include the following forms to suit the circumstances:

[ST1 – WA Health Staff Travel Application](#)

[ST2 – Accommodation / Incidental Allowances Claim](#)

[ST3 – WA Health Travel Reimbursement](#)

[ST4 – WA Health Travel Payment Request](#)

[ST5 – WA Health Travel Payment of Grants or Part Allowances](#)

[ST6 – WA Health Travel Concession Payment Request](#)

The correct form must be utilised depending on the nature of the reimbursement before the claim is authorised.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The WACHS employer responsibilities are to:

- ensure the objectives of the WA Health Staff Air Travel Policy and Guidelines are maintained.
- review and consider the request to travel.

The WACHS travelling employee's responsibility is the same as that outlined in the WA Health Staff Air Travel policy. This includes the responsibility for:

- seeking approval to travel in accordance with the Authorities, Delegations and Directions Schedule
- completing a WA Health Staff Travel Application form or ST1 where applicable, e.g. for air travel or overnight accommodation
- addressing the travel approval criteria
- seeking appropriate approval prior to travel and within the required timeframes
- maintaining documentary evidence (e.g. tax invoices, receipts, travel diaries etc.) for taxation purposes
- submitting a correctly authorised WA Health Staff Travel Application form to the local finance team, together with relevant documentary evidence when submitting a travel claim
- documenting departure and arrival times – when calculating the rate of reimbursement for part of a day it is important to note arrival and departure times.

5. Legislation

[Financial Management Act 2006](#)
[Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003](#)
[Criminal Code Act 1913](#)

6. Related Policy Documents

[WACHS Authorities, Delegations and Directions Schedule](#)

7. Related Policies

Department of Health [Operational Directive OD 0585/15 WA Health Staff Travel Policy](#)

**This document can be made available in alternative formats
on request for a person with a disability**

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