

Travel policy

COVID-19 travel restrictions

This policy prescribes the department's standard travel rules. Whilst COVID-19 restrictions remain in place, travel is only permitted where this aligns with the [restrictions in place](#) and the latest advice from the Secretary (both being as at the date of travel). If you have any queries regarding whether you can undertake travel, please email transition.team@delwp.vic.gov.au.

Purpose

To outline the department's requirements for work-related travel.

Scope

These policy rules apply to department-funded travel by employees, other workplace participants, non-departmental representatives and external travellers.

There is some variation to standard rules for emergency event and planned burn travel.

See: [Travel associated with emergency events and planned burns](#)

Ministerial travel is subject to different rules and is not covered by this policy. Contact Ministerial Services for further advice at ministerial.services@delwp.vic.gov.au.

Travel arranged and paid for by an external party, including interstate and international emergency event deployments, is subject to the rules of the organising / funding entity.

Policy statements

Eligibility and conditions for travel

1. All travel at departmental expense is to:
 - Be for official business purposes.
 - Provide specific and tangible benefits to the department / state.
 - Comply with the [Victorian Public Service Travel Policy](#).

Note: For the purpose of this policy:

- **Domestic travel** – is defined as travel within Australia and New Zealand.
 - **Overseas travel** – is defined as travel outside of Australia and New Zealand.
2. Alternatives to travel must be used where viable, including:
 - video conferencing, for example through MS Teams
 - online learning

- use of emails
- using a departmental representative who is already at the required location.

Note:

- Such alternatives can deliver savings and support the States' environmental policy objectives to pursue resource efficient technology.
 - Air travel should only be undertaken after remote communication tools, such as teleconferencing and videoconferencing, have been considered.
3. Interstate courses are only to be booked where the same course is unavailable within Victoria and the course is directly relevant to the employee's role and / or development needs.
 4. Travellers are to prioritise safety and consider an overnight stay if it's unwise to drive due to fatigue

Travel approval

5. All travel, including a change to travel plans or costs, is to be approved by an appropriate Travel Approver. **See:** [Travel approval](#)
6. The Travel Coordinator within Finance, Infrastructure and Procurement Services (FIPS) is to be kept informed of all overseas travel approval requests, through being both:
 - copied in on the Secretarial brief where travel approval is being sought
 - notified by the Office of the Secretary when overseas travel requests are approved or rejected.

Note: Email finance.servicedesk@delwp.vic.gov.au to get in touch with the current Travel Coordinator within FIPS.

Class of travel

7. The class of travel selected is not to exceed the permitted levels. **See:** [Travel class](#)

Airline selection and carbon offsets

8. Flights are to be booked using the 'best fare of flight' principle with each leg of the journey to be considered separately.

Note:

- The 'best fare of flight' principle means that lowest cost flight will be booked in the requested travel window (e.g. fly between 7am and 8am on a particular day).
- Existing airline credits are to be applied where available.
- Bookings are to be made as soon as possible after travel approval has been received, as this will generally result in cheaper fares.
- Where there is a high degree of certainty as to travel times, restricted fare types are to be considered as these can be considerably cheaper.
- Where there is a possibility that flight times may need to change, the more expensive, flexible fares may be warranted.

See: [Airline selection](#)

9. Where cancellations are required, these are to be made as soon as possible, preferably at least 24 hours in advance of travel, to reduce the cancellation fees imposed by hotels and airlines.

Note: Cancellations will result in service fees from CTM along with charges from hotels and airlines in many instances. Cancellations will also result in significant administrative effort.

10. All work-related flights will be fully carbon offset with this cost to be borne by the business area undertaking the travel. **See:** [Carbon offsets](#)

Accommodation

11. Accommodation is to be booked using the 'best price of the day' principle. **See:** [Standard of accommodation](#)

12. The department will not make payment for accommodation provided by family or friends.

Travel with spouse, companion and/or dependents

13. A spouse, companion and / or dependents may accompany travellers provided such travel does not result in additional cost to the department or interfere with the business requirements of the travel.

14. Travel by a spouse, companion and / or dependent needs to be approved as part of the travel approval process, or later by the traveller's manager.

Security, health and safety

15. Travellers are required to visit smartraveller.gov.au to research safety and security risks that might exist during their trip and avoid unsafe destinations.

16. Travellers are entitled to be reimbursed for work related travel vaccinations and doctor's fees where approved by their manager with a financial delegation. **See:** [Health considerations](#)

17. COVID-19 is to be an important consideration in determining if / how travel should occur.

See: [COVID-19 travel restrictions](#)

Data protection

18. When travelling on government business, travellers are required to meet the requirements of the Victorian government's information security policies and standards available at: <https://ovic.vic.gov.au/information-security/information-security-resources/>

Travel bookings

19. Corporate Travel Management (CTM) is to be used for the booking of all commercial flights, accommodation and hire cars, unless CTM has confirmed they cannot assist with the booking.

Note:

- There is an exemption from this requirement for both:
 - Emergency event travel
 - Regional Victorian accommodation, where flights and / or hire cars are not required.
- Whilst not mandatory, it is still recommended that CTM is used for regional Victorian accommodation bookings.
- CTM charges a reduced transaction fee of \$6 (excluding GST) for Victorian accommodation booked through the online booking tool. A \$22 fee (excluding GST) applies for phone / email bookings. CTM can generally access equal or better rates than the traveller. The use of CTM for accommodation bookings also assists with the reporting of travel expenses.
- Payments to CTM are to be made through the standard accounts payable process, with a purchase order required.
Refer to: [Purchase order policy.](#)
- Bookings permitted outside the CTM process can be paid by any mechanism (corporate card preferred).

- Travel and conference bookings are not to be made until travel approval has been obtained.
- To align with Whole of Victorian Government rules, the default position is that bookings cannot be made in private residences through Airbnb (or similar).
- In exceptional circumstances (e.g. on safety / logistical grounds) the Travel Coordinator within FIPS can grant an exemption to book:
 - interstate, overseas or metropolitan Melbourne accommodation direct with a supplier
 - accommodation in a private residence through Airbnb (or similar).
- Any approval to grant a policy exemption is to be obtained in advance of a booking being made.

See:

- [How to become a Travel Arranger](#)
- [How to make bookings through CTM](#)

Passports and visas

20. Passport issuance and replacement fees are to be the responsibility of the traveller, unless there are unique circumstances, and the Secretary has specifically approved reimbursement.
21. The cost of travel related visas (or equivalent) and entry / exit fees will be borne by the department and should be pre-purchased through the travel service provider where possible.

Note: This includes Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA) fees for travel to the United States of America.

Travel expenses

22. Out of pocket travel expenses, which align with policy, can be paid by corporate card or claimed as an expense reimbursement.

Refer to:

- [Corporate card policy](#)
- [Departmental expenditure policy](#) – for the process to lodge an expense claim

23. Evidence of travel expenses is to be retained and used to support reimbursement claims and / or corporate card expenditure.

Note:

- This includes Tax invoices, receipts or Missing receipt forms (where receipts missing or unobtainable). Credit card or EFTPOS docket alone are insufficient support.
- Where travel is interstate or overseas, a copy of travel approval is also to be attached to the claim.

24. Transactions incurred in a foreign currency are to be claimed at the actual exchange rate received (inclusive of any fees).

Note: Evidence of the exchange rate received is to form part of the expense claim / travel advance acquittal. Such evidence may include a personal credit card / bank statement (with personal details, transactions and account numbers / balances blacked out) or a foreign currency conversion docket (received when \$AUD are exchanged).

25. Out of pocket travel expenses are not to exceed permitted levels.

See:

- [Meal expenditure](#)
- [Tipping](#)

- [Incidental expenses](#)
- [Other expenses](#)
- [Telecommunications whilst overseas](#)

Travel advances

26. Travel advance requests are only to be lodged where conditions are satisfied.

See: [Conditions of travel advances](#)

27. Travel advances are to be paid as an expense reimbursement through Oracle with supporting calculations attached.

28. A [Travel: Final expenditure report is to](#) be prepared within four weeks of return from travel which itemises:

- travel advances received
- claimable travel expenses, converted to Australian dollars, using the exchange rate received
- the difference between the travel advance received and claimable expenses.

Note: Invoices, receipts and Missing receipt forms are to be attached to the Final expenditure report.

29. The department is to be repaid any unspent travel advance by electronic funds transfer. Email finance.servicedesk@delwp.vic.gov.au for advice of the reimbursement process. The Final expenditure report and supporting documents are to be attached to the reimbursement request.

30. An expense claim is to be lodged through Oracle for any travel advance shortfall. This claim is to be reviewed and approved by the traveller's financial delegate manager. The Final expenditure report and supporting documents are to be attached to this claim.

Leave

31. Personal leave / travel before or after government funded travel is:

- To be approved by an executive level manager in the same reporting line
- Not to:
 - Result in additional cost to the department
 - Create the impression that official travel is being used to subsidise private travel arrangements
 - Have a detrimental effect on work objectives.

Note: If private travel being taken in conjunction with work travel results in additional airfares to the department, the excess amount is to be reimbursed by the traveller. Such reimbursement is to be arranged by contacting finance.servicedesk@delwp.vic.gov.au. No other private travel costs are to be charged to the department, even if the department can access better rates than the traveller, and the traveller is prepared to reimburse the department.

Resumption of duties

32. Resumption of duties during private travel is to be approved by the Secretary and is not to subsidise private travel.

Airport travel

33. Travel to and from airports is to be undertaken by public transport where practical and safe.

Overseas post trip report

34. A [Travel: Overseas travel post trip report](#) is to be completed within four weeks of the travel return date and emailed to the Travel Coordinator FIPS via finance.servicedesk@delwp.vic.gov.au to facilitate statutory reporting.

Note:

- The post trip report information can be provided by email, rather than a formal report, provided the same information is supplied.
- Failure to submit a post trip report is a serious policy breach and may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- A briefing is also to be provided to the Secretary via MIBS, using the standard Secretarial briefing template, either upon request or where the Secretary should be made aware of travel outcomes.

Frequent flyer points and lounge clubs

35. Frequent flyer and other reward points are not to be accrued while travelling on official business at public expense.
36. Membership of an airline lounge / hotel club is:
- Only to be approved in exceptional circumstances (e.g. Where significant travel is undertaken and the benefits of access to food / other facilities outweighs the cost)
 - To be approved in writing by the secretary through the submission of a secretarial brief
 - To be arranged through CTM.

Note: CTM is not permitted to arrange personal memberships at government rates.

Travel insurance

37. The department provides business travel insurance through AHI Assist. **See:** [Travel insurance](#)

Other rules

38. Use of MYKI for public transport journeys within Victoria is to be consistent with the [MYKI Work Instruction](#).
39. Use of taxis and rideshare vehicle is to be in accordance with the [Travel: Taxi / rideshare use and Cabcharge policy](#)

Additional guidance

Travel associated with emergency events and planned burns

Different rules apply for travel associated with emergency events and planned burns, as follows:

- Travel expenses are to be approved by either a temporary or standard emergency management or planned burns financial delegate.
- Corporate card or manual purchase orders are to be used for emergency event services provided by CTM.
- Further restrictions apply to incidental expenses as most items which could normally be claimed as an incidental expense will be available on deployment (e.g. tea, coffee, non-alcoholic drinks, snacks, and newspapers).
- The cost of meals cannot be claimed where appropriate food has been made available. Meals may be claimed whilst in transit.

Aside from the differences outlined in this document, the standard rules of this policy apply to travel associated with emergency events and planned burns. Please email sccvic@travelctm.com to obtain the latest copy of the rules for emergency event and planned burn travel.

Travel class

Travellers are not to exceed the class of travel prescribed below.

Mode of travel	Highest class / type of travel permitted
Commercial airline	Economy (default). Note: Premium economy or business class may only be used when all of the following apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The flight is over six-hours duration• There is good reason to permit business class travel, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The traveller has a documented health issue (e.g. a history of deep vein thrombosis).○ The traveller is accompanying a Minister or the Secretary.○ The traveller needs to arrive refreshed to conduct important business shortly after arrival. Approval for premium economy or business class travel has been obtained from the Secretary, for both domestic and international flights, with such approval to be sought via a Secretarial brief, as a specific approval request on the coversheet.
Rail	First class (if available).
Vehicle	Vehicle use is to be in accordance with Travel: Vehicle use policy

There is no prescribed limit for transport expenses. The most cost-effective travel arrangements are to be made, taking into account:

- The 'best fare of flight' principle
- Time considerations (e.g. For a long journey, an aircraft would be more efficient than driving)
- The permitted class of travel.

Airline selection

Adopting the 'best fare of flight' principle, the cheapest direct flight is to be selected from a preferred airline which:

- Enables the traveller to arrive and / or depart at a suitable time
- Otherwise satisfies business requirements.

The government's preferred airlines are currently:

Domestic travel	Overseas travel
Qantas	Air China
Virgin Australia	Etihad
	LATAM (for South American flights only)
	Qantas / Emirates (joint arrangement)
	Singapore Airlines
	Virgin Australia

Note:

Where a preferred airline doesn't fly to a required destination or otherwise satisfy requirements, an alternative airline can be used.

Travellers are not to select a full-service airline if a cheaper option is available at suitable times.

Carbon offsets

In line with the department's commitment to the environment, full carbon offsetting has been mandated for all departmental funded flights.

Whilst the exact value of carbon offsets will fluctuate from flight to flight, the cost of carbon offsetting will be around one per cent of the value of the airfare. The actual carbon offset amount will be shown on flight itineraries.

Carbon offset amounts will be calculated by an external body and invoiced monthly at division level by CTM.

Standard and cost of accommodation

Rooms are to be booked to at least a three-star rating standard.

Travel booked through CTM is to be booked using the 'best price of the day' principle (with no set limit).

Travellers are welcome to nominate a preferred accommodation supplier, but this can be overruled if it is not a 'best price of the day' supplier.

Accommodation can only be booked directly with suppliers in limited circumstances.

See: [Travel Bookings](#) – for circumstances where direct bookings are permitted.

In the limited circumstances where accommodation can be booked directly with suppliers, it is subject to the following limits:

Location	Limit (inclusive of GST)
Australian capital cities (and 50 km radius thereof)	\$231 per night.
Other Australian locations	\$188 per night.
Overseas (including New Zealand)	No specific limits. To be the best price obtainable for suitable accommodation which satisfies business needs and is of at least a three-star rating. A similar standard of accommodation is to be selected as if travelling within Australia.

Note:

- The Gold Coast, Alice Springs and Cairns are also deemed capital cities for the purpose of applying the above limits.
- The above limits are daily and cannot be aggregated and applied on a trip basis.
- If as part of their contract of engagement, travellers are entitled to higher accommodation limits, then these higher limits apply.
- Where accommodation cannot be obtained within these limits (e.g. it is a high cost location, limited availability, or the price is inflated due to a major event) the limits may be exceeded with the approval of the Travel Approver, who needs to be a financial delegate.
- The rates can be inflated by the value of meals and / or car parking where an all-inclusive rate is selected.
- Long-term accommodation options are to be considered for stays of four weeks or more in the same location, as this may result in savings to the department.

In selecting suitable accommodation, total costs should be considered (e.g. if staying at a cheaper venue would necessitate taxi / rideshare fares, there may be an overall cost saving staying at a venue which is more expensive).

A corporate card may be used as security over additional room charges provided this is subsequently reversed

How to become a travel arranger

Only registered Travel Arrangers can make travel bookings through CTM, unless the travel has been appropriately approved and there is an urgent need for the booking to be made immediately or changed, in which case the traveller can liaise directly with CTM via email or phone. Regular travellers are strongly encouraged to become Travel Arrangers so that they can make and modify their own travel bookings.

To become a Travel Arranger email carolyn.cruickshank@travelctm.com or corey.shanaberger@travelctm.com and copy in finance.servicedesk@delwp.vic.gov.au and your supervisor.

Note:

- If no response with one working day, forward your email to melcvms@travelctm.com.
- Your request is to include your name, position title, branch / division / group, work location, user ID and your default charge code.
- If phone contact is necessary, call CTM on 0478 409 432 – business hours only.

How to make bookings through CTM

Domestic bookings are to be made online where possible, as this method attracts the lowest fees.

The online booking system is accessible by registered Travel Arrangers (only) from the CTM portal via www.ctmsmart.com. Each Travel Arranger is provided with their own unique login.

Travel and accommodation bookings can also be made by email or phone for an additional fee. Please contact the department's dedicated travel consultants as follows:

For standard requests (to be addressed during office hours – 8am to 6pm weekdays):

- Email: delwp@travelctm.com
- Phone: 1300 015 123

For urgent, after hour requests (i.e. from 6pm to 8am on weekdays, and anytime weekends):

- Email: afterhours@travelctm.com
- Phone: 1800 836 000

Note:

- If no response within one working day, forward your email to corey.shanaberger@travelctm.com.
- CTM is required to sight Secretarial approval for overseas travel bookings and domestic flight bookings in business class or premium economy.
- For group bookings of more than 10 Travellers email VicGovGroups@eventsctm.com.

Travel approval

Advance travel approval for non-emergency event or planned burn travel is to be obtained as follows:

Travel type	Minimum approval level	Minimum type of approval
Domestic: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Without flights• Without travel expenses.	Manager/supervisor	Verbal
Domestic: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Without flights	Financial delegate	Email

Travel type	Minimum approval level	Minimum type of approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With claimable expenses. 		
Domestic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With flights 	Financial delegate at VPS6 level (or equivalent)	Email
Overseas	Secretary	A MACS Secretarial Brief with a Travel: Overseas travel application form attached

Note:

- The MACS Secretarial Brief is to be generated through the MACS system by selecting the 'Travel Approval' brief type. Only minimal information is required on this brief, as the detailed application form is attached. Where premium economy or business class travel is requested, this is to be a separate approval request on the brief.
- To the extent practical, overseas travel requests are to be submitted to the Secretary at least six weeks prior to the anticipated departure date.

Note:

- The financial delegate approver needs to be within the same reporting hierarchy and more senior to the traveller.
- For this section, travel expenses exclude costs associated with the use of departmental MYKIs and departmental vehicles.
- The Committee Secretary can approve intrastate day travel by Non-Departmental Representatives (e.g. Committee members) provided the travel does not involve flights, and the Committee Secretary holds the necessary financial delegation.

Standing travel arrangements can be established for regular domestic travel to eliminate the need for travel approval each trip. Such arrangements are to be approved in writing (or by email) by the same level of manager as outlined in the table above. They are to be revoked in writing when no longer required.

Approval for increases to overseas travel expenses, from that initially approved by the Secretary, is to occur as follows:

- Up to 5 per cent increase – Traveller's manager with a financial delegation
- Up to 10 per cent increase – Executive Director level (or equivalent)
- Up to 20 per cent increase – Deputy Secretary
- Over 20 per cent increase – Secretary.

Note: Secretarial approval is to occur via a MiBS Secretarial brief. Other approval can occur by email. A brief justification for the increase in costs is to be provided in the request.

Approval for increases to domestic travel expenses and changes to travel plans is to occur from the regular Travel Approver by email.

Approval for the following changes to overseas travel plans requires the approval of the Secretary:

- Change to traveller(s)
- Change to countries being visited
- Increase to the duration of travel of greater than two days.

Any other changes to overseas travel plans can be approved by a Deputy Secretary.

Meal expenditure

Travel related meal expenses within Australia and New Zealand (including those associated with emergency and planned burn events) are not to exceed the limits below.

Meal type	Limit \$AUD (inclusive of GST)
Breakfast	\$34.95
Lunch	\$49.35
Dinner	\$69.20

Note:

- Rates are on a per meal basis and cannot be aggregated.
- Meal expenses above these limits are to be met by the traveller.
- The only exceptions to these limits are where:
 - The cost of a set-price breakfast at the accommodation provider is greater than the breakfast rate - in which case, the set price breakfast can be invoiced / claimed
 - As part of their contract of engagement, travellers are entitled to higher accommodation limits – in which case the higher contracted limits apply.
- Alcohol cannot be purchased in conjunction with a travel related meal at departmental expense.
- Meal expenses can be in the form of supermarket / retail items provided the quantities are reasonable for the period of travel and number of travellers involved.
- Meal inclusive room rates can be booked where available.
- Meals cannot be claimed for employees and other workplace participants being visited unless either:
 - The person / people being visited have also travelled
 - The meal can be claimed as sustenance or hospitality expenditure (strict criteria applies).
- Meal rates are based on the ATO Maximum Rates Schedule (as adjusted from time to time).

When travelling overseas, there are no specific meal limits, with travellers expected to dine at a similar standard of restaurant and purchase a similar class of meal to that if they were dining within Australia.

Travellers will be required to reimburse the department for any meal expenses which are considered excessive and for any alcohol expenses which were invoiced to the department / claimed.

The following time constraints apply for claiming meal expenses on the days of departure and return of travel and also for part day travel:

- **Breakfast:** if the traveller leaves at or before 7.00am and returns at or after 9.30am
- **Lunch:** if the traveller leaves at or before noon and returns at or after 2.00pm (where overnight travel is involved) or at or after 3.00pm (where part day travel is involved)
- **Dinner:** if the traveller leaves at or before 5.00pm and returns at or after 8.00pm

Note:

- To the extent practical, official duties should be scheduled to enable travel to be completed between 7am and 8pm.
- Meal expenses cannot be claimed if suitable meals are provided as part of travel.
- For meals to be claimed in respect of part day travel, there must be a reasonable distance between the usual place of work and the site being visited. For example, a staff member based at 8 Nicholson Street would not be eligible to claim a meal if they were based at 2 Lonsdale Street for the day.
- It is not appropriate to claim reimbursement for part day meals where a reasonable notice period is provided and there are appropriate meal facilities at the alternative work location.

Tipping

Tipping can only be claimed where it is expected in the country being visited and is not permitted in respect of domestic travel.

Note:

- Tipping is not expected in Australia, New Zealand, and most of Europe and Asia.

- Tipping of up to 20 per cent of the invoice value (before sales tax) is expected in the United States of America (US) and Canada for meals and taxi fares.
- A gratuity or service charge is becoming increasingly common in the United Kingdom. Where included on the bill, this can be paid, up to a maximum of 20 per cent.
- A \$1 tip may be paid for each bag carried in the USA and Canada.
- Tipping expenses are not included as part of the incidental expenses daily cap.
- A [Missing receipt form](#) is to be completed to substantiate tips where receipts were not obtainable.
- The department reserves the right to not reimburse employees for tips if they are considered excessive.

Incidental expenses

Consistent with the latest Victorian Public Sector Agreement, incidental expenditure is defined as reasonable out of pocket expenses actually and necessarily incurred in the course of authorised duties. Such expenses are subject to the daily cap prescribed on the ATO Maximum Rates Schedule (as adjusted from time to time). The incidentals rate for the maximum salary band can be used by all travellers. The current incidentals rate is \$32.90 per day (inclusive of GST). Incidental expenditure above this daily limit is to be met by the traveller.

Note:

- Items listed as 'other expenses' in the section below are not included within this daily cap.
- The cap is a daily limit and cannot be aggregated.
- The daily limit is not pro-rated for part day travel.
- The incidentals limit is in \$AUD and applies to both domestic and overseas travel, with overseas incidental expenses to be converted to Australian dollars at the exchange rate received.
- The most common incidental expenses are travel related snacks and non-alcoholic drinks. The quantity of food and drink claimed is to be reasonable for the period of the travel.
- If as part of their contract of engagement, travellers are entitled to higher incidental limits, then these higher limits apply.

The following expenses cannot be claimed as they are not considered 'necessary':

- fines associated with travel (e.g. traffic, parking and public transport fines)
- airline upgrades
- alcohol (under any circumstances)
- personal reading material other than newspapers
- haircuts / personal grooming
- personal services (such as massages, spas, pedicures and manicures)
- entertainment expenditure (including movies)
- downloads of music, TV programs, movies or online reading material
- excessive personal phone calls / personal internet usage
- new luggage
- personal credit card membership fees
- clothing / toiletries (unless genuinely forgotten and / or the travel extended beyond the period expected)

Note:

- The default position is that clothing / toiletries should be taken from home to cover the expected duration of the travel.
- Unless genuinely forgotten or the travel period was extended, the only clothing / toiletries claimable are items not normally required at home (e.g. items directly attributable to the work travel). An example of an item directly attributable to field work may be additional deodorant (due to working in the heat / an inability to shower whilst camping).
- Where claimable, the quantities of clothing / toiletries claimed cannot exceed what is necessary for the duration of the travel (e.g. two tubes of toothpaste would be deemed excessive for an overnight trip). Work travel is not to be used as an opportunity to stock up on items for home use.

- To be 'genuinely forgotten' items are not claimable if purchased before the commencement of a trip.
- Medicinal / pharmaceutical items (unless genuinely forgotten, the travel extended beyond the period expected and / or the items can be directly attributable to the work trip)

Note:

- Usual medications / vitamins should be taken from home to cover the expected duration of the travel.
- To be 'genuinely forgotten' usual medications / vitamins are not claimable if purchased before the commencement of a trip.
- Medication to address a short-term illness / injury picked up on a work trip is claimable (e.g. cold and flu, headache or hay fever tablets to address a health issue experienced on the trip). To be claimable, these items cannot be purchased in advance of travel.
- Medication to address a foreseen risk from a trip (e.g. hay fever tablets for field work) are claimable where not usually required by the Traveller. This medication can be purchased in advance or whilst away.
- Gifts / souvenirs, sightseeing costs or other personal expenses.

Except for emergency event and planned burns related travel, the cost of laundry can be claimed if either:

- The travel period exceeds seven days
- The travel period extends beyond that originally planned.

There are some further restrictions in relation to what can be claimed for emergency event and planned burn travel.

See: [Travel expenses associated with emergency events and planned burns](#)

Other expenses

Excess baggage can be claimed at departmental expense in respect of work-related equipment.

Car parking fees will be paid / reimbursed where advance approval for car parking costs was obtained or it was not considered practical to seek approval in advance.

Surface travel expenses (e.g. local public transport, taxi fares or rideshare costs) can be claimed in respect of work-related travel (e.g. for transit between accommodation, airport and conference / meeting venues). Cabcharge should be used for Australian taxi travel where possible.

Luggage storage costs can be claimed within reason.

Work-related internet and telephony charges are permitted.

Baby-sitting / childcare costs can be claimed (within reason) where there was less than 24 hours' notice provided of the need to travel. Such costs are only reimbursable upon evidence that this expenditure was actually incurred (e.g. a tax invoice / receipt).

The above expenses do not form part of a daily expenditure limit for incidentals. Such expenses can be paid through any method.

Telecommunications whilst overseas

Using a departmental mobile phone whilst overseas may attract significant international roaming fees.

As part of the travel approval process, authorisation needs to be obtained for the use of telephony services / the internet. If this does not occur, the related costs will be the responsibility of the traveller.

International calling cards and local SIM cards represent a cost-effective method to using hotel phones and mobile phone international roaming. Where approved in advance, the cost of such cards can be reimbursed or paid for by the department.

Some private telecommunications are permitted to enable travellers to stay in contact with family and friends. Such use is to be minimised to 'reasonable' levels. Travellers will not be reimbursed for excessive costs.

Telecommunication costs do not form part of the daily cap for incidental expenses.

Conditions for travel advances

Travel advances are payable subject to the following conditions:

- Only employees are eligible to receive travel advances.
- Where practical, travellers holding a corporate card should use this rather than seeking a travel advance.
- Travel advances cannot be for more than a period of eight weeks at a time.
- Travel expenses can be provided for the total of anticipated out of pocket expenses.
- Airfares, ground transport and accommodation are to be paid in advance of travel to the extent practical, and therefore excluded from any travel advance calculation.
- Travel advances are not to be sought until final travel approval has been received.
- Travel advances are to be paid through Oracle as an expense reimbursement
Note: Travel advance calculations are to be attached to the expense claim and reviewed for reasonableness and accuracy by the traveller's financial delegate manager.
- Travel advances are to be reconciled and acquitted within four weeks of return at the exchange rate received, as evidenced by personal credit card / bank statements or foreign currency conversion dockets (with personal details blacked out).
- Any unspent travel advance is to be repaid to the department.
- A claim can be submitted for qualifying travel expenses which are more than the travel advance received.

Travel insurance

The department has travel insurance coverage for business travel of greater than 50kms, for

- Employees
- Other authorised travellers
- Accompanying family members (who are under the age of 85, unless otherwise agreed).

If a traveller requires emergency travel insurance advice or assistance, they are to phone AHI Assist by:

- phoning: +61 2 8330 1222 (24/7 Emergency Hotline).
- emailing: help@ahiassist.com.au
- texting: +61 488 863 244.

The traveller is to quote the department's policy number 19096.

Further information is available from www.vmia.vic.gov.au/insure/policies/business-travel.

Health considerations

The health and safety of travellers on government business is of paramount importance to the State.

Before travelling overseas, travellers have an obligation to gather advice on the vaccinations required and are advised to familiarise themselves with the travel health section of the DFAT website.

Refer to: www.smarttraveller.gov.au/tips/travelwell.html

Travellers are required to take any precautions necessary to maintain good health whilst travelling and avoid exposure to any situations that might impact upon their health.

In a medical emergency, travellers are to seek appropriate care and contact the travel insurance emergency helpline (where appropriate).

Resumption of duties

Resumption of duties can occur when employees are travelling in a private capacity either internationally or domestically.

Resumption of duties may be appropriate to:

- Address a previously unknown work issue
- Attend a conference
- Undertake a speaking engagement.

Resumption of duties is not to be used to subsidise private travel.

To the extent practical, approval for the resumption of duties is to occur at least six weeks in advance.

Approval for the resumption of duties is to occur in accordance with standard travel approval requirements. **See:** [Travel approval](#)

At the discretion of the Travel Approver, employees recalled to duty may be reimbursed for:

- Salary (i.e. Their leave can be reverted for the period of the resumption of duties)
- Conference fees
- Meals
- Accommodation
- Additional transport costs
- Incidental expenses.

Reimbursement is only available for the period that duties are resumed and will not include airfares associated with private travel.

Key related policy, legislation and other documents

Policies

[Corporate card policy](#)

[Departmental expenditure policy](#)

[Financial delegations policy](#)

[Travel: Taxi / rideshare use and Cabcharge policy](#)

[Travel: Vehicle use policy](#)

Procedures

[Corporate card policy](#)

[Departmental expenditure policy](#)

[Financial delegations policy](#)

[Travel: Taxi / rideshare use and Cabcharge policy](#)

[Travel: Vehicle use policy](#)

Forms

[Travel: Final expenditure report](#)

[Travel: Overseas travel application form](#)

[Travel: Overseas travel post trip report](#)

Supporting documents

[MYKI work instruction](#)

[Victorian Public Service Travel Policy](#)

Definitions

The key terms underlined and used throughout this policy are in the [Policies and procedures online glossary](#).

Approval and review

Approved by	Executive Director, Finance, Infrastructure and Procurement Services
Policy owner	Finance, Infrastructure and Procurement Services
Contact	Finance Service Desk Email: finance.servicedesk@delwp.vic.gov.au
Date issued	NOV 2020
Last review date	JUL 2023
Review schedule	Annual
Replaces	Travel Policy