



**ACT Health**


# Travel for Official Purposes – Outside the ACT

For managers, employees and other people  
undertaking official travel outside the ACT.

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# Purpose

This procedure:

- contains information to assist managers and employees to manage travel arrangements for employees who undertake official travel outside the ACT;
- outlines the administrative processes to be followed, and
- supports the [Public Sector Management Standards 2006, Part 7.1 – Travel, domestic and international](#)<sup>1</sup>.

This procedure must be read in conjunction with the:

- [Travel Management Services User Reference Guide](#)
- [travel approval process](#), and
- [Short Term Care Hire of Motor Vehicles User Reference Guide](#).

# Scope

This procedure applies to all ACT Health (ACT HD) employees who:

- undertake official travel outside of the ACT, including on when undertaking travel for the purposes of training, education, study (including Training Education and Study Leave and Conference Leave<sup>2</sup> and Professional Development Leave<sup>3</sup>)
- manage or approve official travel, and
- administer travel arrangements for ACT HD employees or other people travelling on behalf of ACT HD.

This procedure also applies to non-ACT HD staff undertaking travel, to the extent that such travel involves the use of ACT HD funding, for example, consumer representatives, spouses accompanying ACT HD employees, people attending for job interviews, consultants and contractors.

Employees travelling within the ACT and region will apply the ACT Government Policy on [Local Area Travel](#).

This procedure includes information about:

- travel options and alternatives
- travel management
- booking travel and accommodation

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1 The 2006 PSM Standards were replaced by the PSM Standards 2016, however Part 7.1 was preserved.

2 Refer to the ACT Public Sector Medical Practitioners Agreement 2013-2017 section M.

3 Refer to the ACT Public Sector Health Professional Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021 clause Q10.

- changes and cancellations
- authorisation
- air travel class
- accommodation ratings
- loyalty programs and airline lounge membership
- international travel and security provisions
- reimbursement of reasonable travel-related expenses
- corporate credit cards
- cash advances
- taxis and regulated ride sharing
- work health and safety
- travel insurance
- official travel by people who are not ACT HD employees, and
- leave or non-official travel and activities associated with official travel.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the ACT Government <a href="#">travel approval process</a> and submit it to the delegate and approved <u>prior</u> to booking of any travel</li> <li>• Provide any additional information the delegate may request to assist in the decision process</li> <li>• Book travel in accordance with the ‘lowest logical fare’ – the most economical available fare that suits the requirements of a traveller in enabling business objectives to be met and ensures effective use of the traveller’s time</li> <li>• Make travel and accommodation bookings in consultation with the business unit Travel Coordinator</li> <li>• Comply with the travel insurance procedures</li> <li>• Comply with safety and security requirements for the specific journey</li> <li>• Notify the ACT Government contracted travel provider (currently QBT/AOT Group LTD) and/or a short term car hire provider if required) and the manager/travel coordinator, of any changes or cancellations associated with their travel as soon as possible.</li> </ul>
Delegates and managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise employees and other travellers about their obligations in accordance with this procedure</li> <li>• Approve travel and expenses, in accordance with their delegations</li> <li>• Consider the security and work health and safety risks associated with travel and implement risk controls as required (managers may require access to subject matter experts to determine the risks and controls)</li> <li>• Monitor the travel arrangements and costs</li> <li>• Prepare reports about travel expenditure.</li> </ul>

Position	Responsibility
Business unit managers/travel co-ordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise employees and other travellers about their obligations in accordance with this procedure</li> <li>Monitor the travel arrangements and costs</li> <li>Prepare reports about travel expenditure.</li> </ul>
People Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate the procedure to managers and employees</li> <li>Advise managers, delegates and employees about the procedures.</li> </ul>
Shared Services	Maintain contracted service provider arrangements.

## Procedure

### Travel options and alternatives

Employees considering travel and the delegates approving the travel will consider the travel options and alternatives to travel, to ensure that the most economical and practical option is selected. The assessment must include whether there are effective alternatives to travel, such as video conferencing.

### Travel management

The ACT Public Service (ACTPS) uses the following service providers for travel (as at January 2021):

- QBT as the Travel Manager
- AOT Group LTD as the Accommodation Manager (Accessible through the QBT system), and
- Budget and Avis for short term car hire.

These providers must always be used for domestic and international air travel, accommodation, car rental and other travel related services unless the provisions in the following paragraph apply.

There may be circumstances when it is necessary to make a reservation through travel providers other than QBT (for example, where employees are required to make a co-contribution to the cost of the travel in order to offset FBT liability, or where it can be demonstrated that a cheaper fare can be obtained for exactly matching travel requirements). In these circumstances, Director-General approval is required. A quote from QBT will need to be obtained that exactly matches the options sought from an alternative travel provider. A copy of both quotes must be submitted before approval can be granted, and a copy retained with the travel application for audit. Travel costs will not be reimbursed unless prior approval is obtained from the delegate.

## Booking travel and accommodation

Travel and accommodation bookings will be completed in consultation with the business unit managers or travel coordinator (where this role is used).

Details of how to book accommodation, air travel and car hire can be found at the [Shared Services Portal](#). This includes the necessary contact details and forms. The relevant business unit manager or travel coordinator will also assist and can provide the necessary details such as the business unit 'profile number'.

All travel must be booked at the 'lowest logical fare' – the most economical available fare that suits the requirements of a traveller in enabling business objectives to be met and ensures effective use of the traveller's time. In this context, travellers will need to consider options such as group travel (10 or more people) as additional discounts may be negotiated.

## Changes and cancellations

The traveller MUST notify QBT/AOT Group LTD (and a short term car hire provider if required) and the business unit manager or travel coordinator, of any changes or cancellations associated with their travel as soon as possible. Charges may be imposed for failure to notify, late cancellations and no-shows.

To change or cancel flights or report a lost or stolen ticket, QBT must be contacted promptly on 1300 797 357. A booking reference number or the flight details will be required by QBT for any change to scheduled itinerary.

Subject to applicable fare conditions and flight provider, fares may be refunded or credited. To maximise the use of ticket credits, branch travel coordinators must also check whether there are any ticket credits available as part of the booking process.

## Authorisation

It is the traveller's responsibility to allow adequate time for the delegate to authorise the travel.

The [travel approval process must be followed](#) and submitted to the delegate and approved prior to booking of any travel outside the ACT, including where the travel is being externally funded.

The [QBT Internet site](#) is the preferred way to book flights and must be completed by the traveller.

The delegate must:

- ensure that official travel is essential and will be of benefit to ACT HD, and
- must be satisfied that the travel proposal is the most effective form of travel that balances the time taken for the journey against its cost (including costs beyond the actual air, car or bus travel, such as salaries of the staff involved, cost of parking and taxi fares).

The delegations for travel approval are set out in the [ACT HD Delegations Manual](#). Delegates are also required to check that they hold the financial delegation for the amount involved, as well as the HR delegation. Domestic travel must be approved by both the traveller's manager and their business unit's delegate. In some cases, this may be the same person. Travel must not be authorised by the individual traveller under any circumstances.

The ACTPS will, from time to time, provide additional instructions that affect travel decisions, for example during the response to COVID-19.

Where travel is undertaken in connection with professional development in accordance with a provision of an enterprise agreement, the approval requirements specified in the agreement must also be followed<sup>4</sup>.

## Externally-funded travel

Travel paid for by an external party (including research-related travel), must be approved under the procedures outlined above. The Executive Group Manager, Corporate and Governance must be briefed about the proposed travel and any potential conflict of interest before the travel is approved.

## Private Practice Fund Travel

Travel paid for by the Private Practice Fund must be approved under the procedures outlined above, consistent with the provisions of clause 105 of the ACT Public Sector Medical Practitioners Enterprise Agreement 2013-2017.

## Air travel class

All air travel must be undertaken within the class specified in the following table.

Level	Domestic	International
Director-General, Executives and Staff Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lowest logical fare, economy class, for all trips or parts of trips under four hours in the air</li> <li>Lowest logical fare, business class, for all trips or parts of trips exceeding four hours in the air.</li> </ul>	Lowest logical fare, business class
Non-Executives	Lowest logical fare, economy class, for all travel.	Lowest logical fare, economy class

<sup>4</sup> For example, an application for professional development support in accordance with the ACT Public Sector Health Professionals Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021 clause N3.4 that involves international travel must be submitted to the Head of Service for approval.



## Accommodation rating

Accommodation must be booked within the maximum standards set out in the table below. A higher standard of accommodation may be approved, in some cases, based on the consideration of the:

- availability of suitable accommodation
- security considerations
- proximity to the venue, and
- overall costs including associated transport costs (for example, cost of taxi to and from the venue) and meal costs if applicable or the availability of special deals.

The business case for the use of above standard accommodation must be attached to the travel form for approval by the delegate.

Level	Domestic	International
Director-General	4.5 star	4.5 star
Executives and staff specialists	4 star	4 star
All other employees	3 star	3.5 star

## Loyalty programs and airline lounge membership

Joining loyalty programs (such as a frequent flyer program,) is a matter for the individual employee. Frequent flyer points are no longer accumulated from official travel. However, a flight will count towards the traveller's airline club status progression.

Most airline carriers provide membership to access their 'executive lounge' and other privileges. Discounted memberships are available to all ACT Government employees at their own expense. The ACT Government may pay for an Executive's membership if it is stipulated within their employment agreement.

## International travel and security provisions

Travellers must ensure that any international travel is in accordance with Australian Government advice and that their passport is valid prior to seeking authorisation for international travel. If the employee is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident, a re-entry permit to Australia will be required. The traveller is responsible for ensuring that they hold a valid passport and visas for the entry to each destination, including their return to Australia.

Some countries which require a passport to have at least six months validity after the proposed departure from that country to permit entry.

All employees who travel overseas on official travel must advise their Agency Security Adviser of their travel plans. The Agency Security Adviser may consult with JACS Security and Emergency Management Branch to ascertain if a specialist country briefing or overseas

protective security Travel Management Services User Guide briefing is required. This may involve Commonwealth security agencies.

Employees who hold a national security clearance are required to advise their Agency Security Adviser of all overseas travel, including personal travel. This information will be recorded on their personal security file.

Employees must also consult [Protective Security \(Personnel Security\) Procedure](#).

## Reimbursement of reasonable travel related expenses

Reimbursement will be provided for all reasonable and legitimate travel related expenses incurred on official travel. The [ACT HD Values](#), sound judgement and integrity must be used to keep all such expenses to a practical minimum and ensure that all expenses are reasonable. Information about the type of expenses that may be reasonable and the circumstances in which they may be claimed is at [Attachment A](#).

All expense claims must be supported by invoices or receipts. In exceptional circumstances, such as the loss of documentation, a statutory declaration may be submitted.

All expenses associated with travel must be approved by the appropriate delegate. No employee, including delegates, can approve their own travel expenses.

## Corporate credit cards

Employees issued with a corporate credit card must use the card to settle costs incurred on official travel. Credit cards must not be used for the purchase of airline tickets or accommodation other than in exceptional circumstances, such as cancelled flights or lost tickets, where these costs cannot be paid through the Travel and Accommodation Managers.

All usage must be in accordance with the provisions of the ACT HD Corporate Credit Card Procedures. Corporate credit cards are intended for official use only and must not be used for personal expenses. In reconciling credit card statements following official travel, employees must provide a copy of the approved travel form, the record of transactions, tax invoices/receipts and any other supporting documentation to the appropriate delegate for verification that expenditure is reasonable and related to the relevant official travel. Delegates must countersign statements as evidence that expenses claimed are accurate, valid and comply with the Director-General's Financial Instructions.

**Misuse of corporate credit cards including non-approved or unaccountable expenditure will be subject to recovery and disciplinary action.**

## Cash advances

In exceptional circumstances, where travellers expect to incur out of pocket expenses, which an employee would not be reasonably expected to pay, a limited cash advance may be approved. Advances will generally not be given to corporate credit card holders, unless there is an expectation that significant out of pocket work-related expenses will be incurred that cannot be paid by corporate credit card.

Approval from the relevant delegate is required for the level of advance to be paid. As a guide and unless significant out of pocket expenses are expected, an amount of \$65 for executives and \$50 for non-executives is thought to be sufficient for a full day. For part day travel, advances are provided on a pro-rata basis. All advances must be settled within five days of returning from travel and tax invoices and receipts must be provided for all expenses paid when settling the advance.

## Taxi travel and regulated ride sharing

[Various methods are available](#) to pay for taxi expenses whilst undertaking official travel and information is available from the issuing officer in the business unit.

Whenever possible, taxis will be shared between attendees requiring transport to/from locations in close proximity to assist in keeping transport costs to a minimum. This decision must also consider the current communicable disease prevention guidance.

The use of regulated ride sharing (such as Uber) is only authorised for trips within the ACT.

## Work health and safety

Managers and employee are required to manage WHS risks and take all reasonable and practicable steps to maintain the safety of employees on official travel. Employees who are undertaking travel must:

- provide contact numbers including next of kin details, and itinerary for the duration of travel to QBT, managers and family
- have the necessary medical approval where the employee has existing medical conditions and have sufficient stocks of personal medication (travellers must also check the requirements for travelling to the location/s with their specific medication)
- complete recommended vaccinations for the travel location (noting that vaccinations are a personal choice based on informed consent)
- comply with relevant communicable disease precautions
- follow the travel advisories provided by the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for overseas travel
- consider the security situation/arrangements at the location of travel, including the location of hotels used for accommodation (consider information provided by local contacts and partners)

- consider establishing contact schedules (refer to the WHS guideline topic on Operational Fieldwork for more information)
- obtain travel insurance for international travel purposes (refer to the next section for more information)
- remain alert and observant while travelling
- comply with the [ACTPS Drug and Alcohol Policy](#) and have a zero blood alcohol while driving
- comply with all relevant traffic laws
- drive to the road conditions, including reducing speed when the conditions are not ideal, for example there is reduced visibility
- plan travel and their circumstances to ensure that they do not drive while they are fatigued, and
- report any injury while travelling for official purposes in a Riskman work injury report.

## Travel Insurance

ACTIA's corporate travel insurance policy covers international work-related travel for an employee and any dependants, including the domestic connecting legs of international travel.

Travellers embarking on international travel must register all details with ACTIA at least three weeks before they travel. This will provide travellers with international insurance for the duration of their journey. Decisions on additional travel insurance will be based on risk management principles and include factors such as the nature and destination of the trip. If necessary, the cost of travel insurance can be met as a reasonable work-related expense.

There is no domestic travel insurance available to employees undertaking official travel. This means that the airline carrier's insurance (as per the terms and conditions of the carrier) applies to any loss of fare or lost or damaged property.

## Travel by Other People

In some circumstances, ACT HD will fund travel and associated expenses by people who are not employees of ACT HD. This might include consumer representatives, spouses accompanying ACT HD employees, people attending for job interviews, consultants and contractors.

Reimbursement or payment for any travel by non ACTPS employees requires the prior approval by the Director-General or delegate, and will not be authorised, unless the travel is essential and directly related to the effective accomplishment of official business.

In cases where the traveller plans to be accompanied by a partner or family member, where there is no additional cost, but they will be sharing facilities purchased by ACT HD (for

example, hotel accommodation and car hire), they must inform the delegate when seeking approval to travel.

## Leave and Non-official Travel

Employees wishing to extend official travel for non-official purposes, such as recreation or study leave, must obtain approval prior to making the travel arrangements. Such requests must be included on the travel form request.

Depending on the amount of leave taken, the traveller may be required to contribute to the travel costs. Expenses incurred during the non-official travel will be met by the traveller. Wherever possible, official and non-official expenses are to be separated. When this is not possible the difference between official and non-official expenses incurred must be clarified during the reconciliation process. [Attachment B - Leave and Non-official Travel](#), sets out examples to assist travellers and delegates assess when a co-contribution may be required.

Insurance obtained for official travel will not cover the traveller for the duration of the non-official travel. In this case the traveller must consider taking out their own travel insurance.

## Records Management

All records must be managed in accordance with the *Territory Records Act 2002*, and Directorate policies and procedures.

## Evaluation

Outcome Measures	Method	Responsibility
All travel undertaken by ACT HD employees complies with the Whole of Government Contract and this Procedure.	Random audits of travel related documentation.	Corporate and Governance Group

## Related Documents

### Legislation

- *Public Sector Management Act 1994*
- *Public Sector Management Standards 2006, Chapter 7, Part 7.1, Travel – domestic and international*
- *Territory Records Act 2002*

- ACT Public Sector Medical Practitioners Enterprise Agreement 2013-2017: Section M – Learning and Development
- ACT Public Sector Health Professionals Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021 clause N3.4

## Supporting Documents

- [ACT Health Directorate Delegations Manual](#)
- [Shared Services](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Guideline](#)
- [Financial Instructions](#)
- [Travel Management Services User Reference Guide](#)
- [ACT Health Corporate Credit Card Intranet information](#)
- Using a Private Vehicle for Official Services Procedure
- [Travel Management Services User Reference Guide](#)
- [Short Term Care Hire of Motor Vehicles User Reference Guide](#)
- [Cabcharge Fastcard and Digital Pass Procedure](#)
- [ACTPS Local Area Travel Policy](#)
- [ACTPS WHS Guidance COVID19 and WHS Requirements for Travel in ACT Government Vehicles](#)

## Definitions

Term	Definition
Official travel	Travel for a purpose that is directly related to the business operations of ACT Health

## Version Control

Version	Date	Comments
1.0	1 March 2021	Replaces DGD17-020

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# Attachment A - Reasonable Expenses

Travellers are responsible for ensuring that expenses incurred are necessary to conduct business efficiently and effectively. The ACT HD values, sound judgment and integrity will be applied.

Acceptable travel related expenses incurred as a result of official travel are considered by the delegate on a case-by-case basis according to the destination, duration and nature of the travel.

## Meals

Travellers will be reimbursed for actual, reasonable and appropriate meal expenses, provided that receipts are produced.

Meal expenses will not be reimbursed for travel that is less than ten hours or during single-day travel, when meals would normally be provided by the traveller in the normal course of the working day.

Meal expenses are not reimbursable when included in other travel expenses (for example; when the cost of attending a conference includes lunch).

## Alcohol

While the consumption of alcohol is not permitted when on duty or during core business hours without prior approval by the Director-General, there may be occasions during official travel where it is appropriate to purchase alcohol and seek reimbursement of the expense. Approval for the reimbursement of such expenses must be sought from the Director-General, to the extent possible, prior to the event. Refer to the [Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy](#).

## Incidental expenses

Incidental expenses are reimbursable when they are directly related to official travel. These include reasonable work-related expenses incurred during travel, not normally incurred in the normal course of the working day.

Expenses that may be claimed include:

- tickets for bus, ferry, rail travel
- car rental and hire costs
- taxi fares
- parking costs
- tolls
- laundry and dry cleaning (if away from home for three nights or more)
- telephone costs – business and a short call home once every day except when the employee has a work mobile phone
- postage and internet costs for work-related purposes

- photocopying and business services where these could not be arranged prior to departure or at the offices visited
- clothing when visiting extreme climates (requires prior approval)
- local taxes, stamp duties and transaction costs for work-related activities
- travel insurance (requires prior approval)
- pre-travel medical costs
- excess baggage for work-related documentation or equipment, and
- visas and special documentation requirements.

Non-reimbursable expenses include:

- traffic or parking fines
- regulated ride sharing (e.g. Uber), which is only permitted for use within the ACT
- mini-bar and in-house movies
- toiletries
- gym fees
- in-flight refreshments
- recreational expenses, and
- meal expenses for travel of less than ten hours.



# Attachment B - Leave and Non-official Travel

An employee undertaking official travel may take be permitted to take leave or undertake non-official travel directly before, between or after the official travel. The costs that the employee will be required to meet will depend on the extent and timing of that leave.

## Travel costs

Depending on the amount of leave or non-official travel taken, the employee may be required to contribute a percentage of the travel cost. If the total period of annual leave taken in conjunction with work-related travel exceeds the time spent for the work-related purpose, all travel costs, excluding those directly associated with the work-related element (i.e. accommodation, conference fees, other reasonable expenses), will be met by the employee. Weekends are not counted for either annual leave or work-related leave.

## Accommodation

Accommodation will only be paid for nights that relate directly to the work-related travel and any associated travel days. All other accommodation is the responsibility of the employee (including costs of accommodation for weekends taken in conjunction with work-related travel).

## Travel days

Time spent travelling to and from interstate and international work-related activities is considered incidental to those activities and therefore the traveller is not required to take leave for that time.

For international travel of greater than eight hours duration, one day after the travel is allowed as a rest day to recover from the travel and is therefore considered as incidental to the work-related activity. (However, if the rest day falls on a weekend, no additional day is provided.)

## Fringe benefits tax (FBT)

FBT may be payable when annual leave is taken in conjunction with work-related travel and there is no co-contribution made by the employee. The following principles will therefore apply to ensure that no FBT obligation arises, and relate to both domestic and international travel:

- Any annual leave taken prior to or following completion of work-related activity (excluding weekends) requires a co-contribution from the employee of 50 per cent of the cost of the travel excluding those directly associated with the work-related purpose (i.e. accommodation, conference fees, and other reasonable expenses), because the travel is deemed in this instance to serve a shared purpose.

- Weekends directly before or directly after work-related activity do not count as leave and therefore do not require a co-contribution.
- Annual leave of less than or equal to one week taken between two conferences does not require a co-contribution as the travel is not deemed to have a shared purpose.
- Annual leave of greater than one week taken between two conferences requires a co-contribution by the employee as this travel is deemed to have a shared purpose. The co-contribution is calculated as a percentage of the travel cost, excluding costs directly associated with the work-related purpose (i.e. accommodation, conference fees, reasonable expenses). The percentage is calculated as follows: **(non-incident days ÷ total travel days) × 100.**

### Cost to the employee of leave taken during official travel – some examples

Example	Description	Co-contribution
1) Attending an international expo.	Employee leaves Friday, attends the expo from Monday to Wednesday, flies out and arrives home Thursday after a flight of more than eight hours, with Friday a travel rest day. Employee returns to work on Monday.	No
2) Attending a three-day training course	Employee attends an interstate training course from Monday to Wednesday but takes two days leave Thursday and Friday.	50 per cent of the cost of the air fare or other form of travel.
3) Attending two national conferences	Employee attends conference #1 from Monday to Wednesday in Sydney and conference #2 on Thursday and Friday in Melbourne. Employee returns home on the Sunday.	No
4) Attending two three-day conferences which are five days apart	Employee takes annual leave for the days between the conferences (excluding any travel time between the two locations).	No
5) Attending two five-day conferences which are ten days apart	The employee takes nine days annual leave between the conferences (it takes a day to reach the destination of the second conference).	A pro rata amount of the air fare or other form of travel must be paid by the employee.

Example	Description	Co-contribution
<p>6) Attending two two-day international conferences which are twelve days apart</p>	<p>The employee takes eleven days annual leave between the conferences (it takes a day to reach the destination of the second conference).</p> <p>The leave is longer in duration than the work-related activity, even taking into account the international travel and rest days.</p>	<p>The employee pays the full travel costs.</p> <p>ACT HD pays the costs directly associated with the conferences (that is: accommodation, conference fees, other reasonable expenses).</p>