

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Travel Policy

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Relevant Rule:	HSU Rule 89
Relevant Legislation:	Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act (2009); Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic); Corporations Act (2001)
Scope:	This policy, or parts of this policy have application to all HSU Branches

Introduction

The Health Services Union (HSU) is the union representing members employed or usually employed in the health and human service industries in Australia.

In this Policy, the HSU includes the following Branches:

- New South Wales
- South Australia/ Northern Territory
- Tasmania Branch (Trading as Health & Community Services Union)
- Victoria No.1 Branch (Trading as Health Workers Union)
- Victoria No.2 Branch (Trading as Health & Community Services Union)
- Victoria No.3 Branch (Trading as Victorian Allied Health Professionals Association)
- Victoria No.4 Branch (Trading as Medical Scientists Association of Victoria)
- Western Australia

Policy Statement

HSU National Officers and employees are expected to uphold the integrity of the Union in the highest manner when undertaking their duties and in their undertakings with members, employers, outside organisations and suppliers.

HSU National Officers and employees must behave honestly and with integrity in the course of their employment or duties.

HSU National Officers and employees must disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with Union employment or duties.

HSU National Officers and employees must not make improper use of inside information or use their duties, status, power or authority in order to gain, or seek to gain, an improper benefit or advantage for themselves or for any other person.

HSU National Officers and employees must at all times observe The Financial Responsibilities of Officers as determined by the Rules of the Union.

Branch Policy

Where a Branch does not have a policy consistent with this policy, this policy will apply to that Branch substituting the Branch structures, officers and employees with those contained in this policy where appropriate.

Definitions

'Administration Manager' means person appointed to manage the HSU National Office on a day to day basis and appointed as such by resolution of the Executive.

'conflict of interest' includes:

- a) an actual conflict of interest, where a material interest interferes with the proper performance of the duties of the employee or member, and
- b) an apparent conflict of interest, where it could be perceived by others that the material interests of the member interferes with the proper performance of the duties of the member, whether or not this is in fact the case, and
- c) a potential conflict of interest, where the material interests of the member could interfere with the proper performance of the duties of the member in the future.

'Council' means the National Council of the HSU.

'credit card' also means 'debit card'.

'employee' means HSU National employee.

'Executive' means the National Executive of the HSU.

'Finance Committee' or **'Committee'** means the National Finance Committee of the HSU

'Financial Controller' means the person appointed to manage and operate the financial accounts of the Union on a day to day basis and appointed as such by resolution of the Executive.

'group meals' means Executive or Conference dinners.

'HSU National' or **'National'** means National Office of the HSU.

'HSU Rules' means the rules of the HSU registered in accordance with the Act.

'immediate family' means any child, stepchild, parent, stepparent, spouse (including defacto), sibling, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, and any person (other than a tenant or employee) sharing the household of the National employee or National Officer.

'National Officer' whether paid or not, has the same meaning as the phrase 'officer of an organisation' in Division 3A of Part 2 of Chapter 5 of the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*.

'National Secretary' means person elected by National Council as such in accordance with rule 23B to act in accordance with responsibilities under rule 26 of the HSU Rules.

'other approved person' means person/s approved by the National Secretary, Executive or Finance Committee.

'The Act' means the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*.

Policy

1. Travel Related Expenditure

- 1.1. Any National Officer, employee or other approved person are entitled to have the HSU National pay, or to be compensated, for the reasonable travel costs (travel, accommodation, meals, taxis, parking and incidentals) when on HSU National related business.

2. Approval & Reporting

- 2.1. With the exception of the National Secretary, all air travel and accommodation must be pre-approved by the National Secretary or the Finance Committee.
- 2.2. All air travel and accommodation made by the National Secretary must be approved by Finance Committee by way of resolution.
- 2.3. The National Secretary must provide a report to each meeting of the Finance Committee for all air travel and overnight stays paid from HSU National funds. The report must detail the nature of the travel and the reasons the travel was undertaken.

3. Air Travel & Accommodation

- 3.1. In most cases the Administration Manager will book and pay directly for approved air travel and accommodation.
- 3.2. Where this is not possible or practical, the booking and payment can be made by using an HSU credit card where one is provided or available.
- 3.3. Unless in exceptional circumstances, only economy class airfares should be purchased for air travel on HSU National business.
- 3.4. Where possible, the most economical airfare available should be utilised. However, if there is a likelihood that bookings may need to be changed or altered, then a flexible fare should be utilised that avoids the cancellation or change of booking fees.
- 3.5. Bookings should be made as far in advance as possible.
- 3.6. When itinerary changes are necessary, and the Administration Manager is unavailable, additional charges can be paid on the HSU National credit card. Where changes to flights are made, the Administration Manager should be informed by email of the changes and any additional costs incurred for the records.
- 3.7. Accommodation while traveling should provide a safe, comfortable and secure environment, be convenient to the place of work and provide value for money.

- 3.8. It is recognised that from time to time that the cost of accommodation becomes expensive due to accommodation shortages, a city hosting large events, seasonal variations and fluctuations in room rates etc. Taking account of the above matters, the person charged with undertaking accommodation bookings should source the best rate available for suitable accommodation. Where the accommodation rate is unavoidably higher than what would be considered a reasonable rate, an explanation should be recorded.

4. Meal Expenditure

- 4.1. Meal expenditure applies where travel occurs under the following circumstances:

Breakfast	Where the travel begins before 7:00am
Lunch	Where travel begins before 12:00pm
Dinner	Where the travel concludes after 8:00pm

- 4.2. Meal expenditure cannot occur where a suitable meal is otherwise provided such as by the host of a meeting.
- 4.3. The amount of expenditure is the actual cost expended up to the “Reasonable rates” as defined by the current Australian Taxation Office (ATO) Taxation Determination using table ‘1’.
- 4.4. The Financial Controller will ensure all travel expenditure contains sufficient information to establish the exact nature and purpose of the expense or claim.

5. All other travel related expenditure

- 5.1. Where an employee has been issued with a credit card they should, in accordance with sub-clause 4.2 above, charge expenditure to the card directly. The employee must ensure they provide the tax receipt/invoice, in addition to the credit card merchant receipt, in accordance with clause 7.
- 5.2. Where a credit card is not available, HSU National will reimburse the employee for their expenditure, in accordance with sub-clause 4.2 above, by completing an Expense Claim form. Supporting documentation must be provided in accordance with clause 7 as proof of payment.
- 5.3. Prior to the reimbursement of the expense being made to the employee, the National Secretary must approve such payments by signing the Expense Claim form.
- 5.4. Meal expenditure made by the National Secretary must be approved by the Finance Committee by way of resolution prior to payment being made.
- 5.5. A copy of all Expense Claim forms will be provided to each meeting of the Finance Committee.

6. National Officers and other approved persons

- 6.1. Where National Officers and other approved persons are attending a national meeting of the Union, including Executive meetings, Finance Committee meetings or other like meetings, HSU National will pay the travel costs to the extent of an economy class airfare, accommodation, taxis, airport parking, incidental allowance, meals and group meals. The meals and incidental allowance payable are those detailed in clause 4 and 8.
- 6.2. Where the costs are incurred by the individual, the individual may make a claim for reimbursement. Where a Branch pays for the costs, the Branch may make a claim for reimbursement.
- 6.3. Where HSU National organises group meals, an approved officer or employee will pay for the meal using an HSU credit card. The cost of group meals, including alcohol, will be consistent with the applicable reasonable costs under clause 4.
- 6.4. All other travel costs associated will be the responsibility of the individual or the relevant Branch.
- 6.5. Supporting documentation must be included in accordance clause 7 as proof of payment for any claims for reimbursement.
- 6.6. Where the attendee at a National Council meeting is a member of Executive, the HSU National will pay travel costs.
- 6.7. Where the attendee is a Branch Delegate to National Council the HSU National will pay for group meals and costs directly associated with meeting cost (excluding air travel, accommodation, and meals other than group meals).
- 6.8. An incidentals allowance may be claimed for reimbursement for overnight travel in accordance with clause 8.
- 6.9. The Finance Committee may approve other costs associated with the holding of a National Council meeting as required.

7. Supporting documentation

- 7.1. All expenditure must have the appropriate supporting documentation, in accordance with the Australian Taxation Office requirements which include provision of an itemised tax receipt/ invoice. Details should include the issuer, date, expenditure, GST value and amount as proof of payment.
- 7.2. If the expense includes payment for more than one individual, the receipt/tax invoice must be annotated to indicate:
 - Total number of attendees
 - Names of employees and officers (traveller or non-traveller)
 - Number of other attendees
 - Reason: eg conference or meeting

8. Incidentals Allowance

- 8.1. Where any National Officer, employee or other approved person is required to undertake work related travel requiring overnight accommodation an incidental allowance may be claimed for each overnight stay. The incidental allowance payable is that defined by the current Australian Taxation Office (ATO) Taxation Determination using table '1'.
- 8.2. The National Secretary and employees must complete an Incidentals Allowance form to claim the allowance.
- 8.3. Prior to the allowance being processed for employees through payroll, the National Secretary must approve such payments by signing the Incidentals Allowance form.
- 8.4. Incidental allowance claims made by the National Secretary must be approved by the Finance Committee by way of resolution prior to the allowance being processed through payroll.
- 8.5. All incidental expenses, bar tabs, mini bar tabs etc. are the responsibility of the individual and cannot be claimed from, nor will be paid, by HSU National.

9. Airport Parking, Taxis & Hire Car Rental

- 9.1. All airport parking and taxi travel may only be utilised by travellers on official HSU National business.
- 9.2. Travelers should use reasonable professional judgment and discretion in determining the need for airport parking and taxi use.
- 9.3. Except as provided for on 9.4, taxi travel paid for by the HSU National must not be used for personal travel.
- 9.4. The use of taxi travel from home to work and work to home is prohibited except for:
 - 9.4.1. travel from work to home after hours and where personal safety is a consideration.
 - 9.4.2. travel to and from work when unexpected work-related events or emergencies occur that require taxi travel outside normal business hours.
 - 9.4.3. for special circumstances (e.g. transporting heavy items or mobility issues).
 - 9.4.4. travel from or to airport from home when traveling on HSU National business.
- 9.5. Hire car rental may be used where economical and practical. All vehicle rentals must be for economy-class vehicle, unless three or more people are traveling together and/or when travellers have to carry excess baggage and/or equipment for HSU National purposes. Hire car rental must be pre-approved by the National Secretary.

Any driving and parking infringement penalties are the responsibility of the individual in accordance with the *Motor Vehicle Policy*.

10. Public Transport – Buses, Trams, Trains etc

- 10.1. Where it is convenient and economical to do so, train, tram, bus or other forms of public transport may be utilised when travelling on HSU National business. Costs incurred will be reimbursed using the Expense Claim Form. Where appropriate, HSU National will provide employees with a Myki, Opal or like card to enable use of public transport for HSU National business.

11. Toll Usage

In accordance with the *Motor Vehicle Policy*.

12. Frequent Flyer Program Benefits

- 12.1. It is recognised that frequent travel often involves travel outside of standard hours and National Officers and employees being away from home for extended periods of time. In recognition of the personal impact of business travel, National Officers and employees may retain frequent flyer points earned as a result of HSU National travel.

13. Accompanying Spouse, Partner and Dependent Travel

- 13.1. Costs associated with spouse, partner or dependent travel will not be paid for by the HSU National except on the prior approval and by resolution of the Executive. In approving expenditure associated with spouse, partner or dependent travel, the Executive will detail in the minutes the reasons for approving the spouse, partner or dependent travel. Spouse, partner or dependent travel will only be approved where it is directly related to the conduct of the National Officer's or employee's duties (e.g. attendance at an official function or ceremony such as where the spouse or partner is invited).
- 13.2. HSU National acknowledges that from time to time a spouse, partner or dependent will accompany the traveler when travelling. Where this occurs, it must not result in an additional cost to the Union. The HSU National will not fund any cost incurred for an accompanying spouse, partner, or dependent except as provided for in sub-clause 12.1.

14. Compliance and Review of this Policy

- 14.1. A substantial or repeated breach of this policy by a National Officer or employee covered by the scope of this policy will be deemed to be a disciplinary offence in the case of an employee or misconduct under the HSU Rules in the case of a National Officer.
- 14.2. At least biennially, the Finance Committee will undertake a review of the operation of this Policy to ensure that the policy is adequately regulating the travel expenditure of the HSU National and that the policy is being fully complied with and report the findings of the review to the Executive.
- 14.3. The Finance Committee and the Executive will each have a standing 'Governance Issues' agenda item for each meeting to provide a regular forum for the discussion of HSU National governance issues.

- 14.4. The National Secretary will ensure that all relevant policies and procedures are made available to Officers and employees and that appropriate training (including an induction process) is provided to ensure they understand the Union's financial policies and procedures and their own responsibilities.

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