

A travel expense policy template

Travel Expense Policy

Last updated:

1. Purpose

To establish a clear and comprehensive framework for reimbursing business travel expenses and ensuring compliance with Australian Taxation Office (ATO) guidelines.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees who incur expenses while travelling for business purposes.

employees who incur expenses while travelling

Eligible expenses

1. Transportation:

Employees are expected to choose the most cost-effective means of transportation.

- **Flights:** Employees should book economy class tickets for domestic flights and the cheapest fare available within reason. International travel is permitted, and business class may be authorised for flights exceeding 10 hours. Speak to your leader for approval.
- **Flight ancillaries:** Airfare types that include baggage and seat selection are permitted. Flexible fares may be allowed should the travel be last minute or not secure. Baggage and seat selection fees are allowed if the original ticket type does not include it.
- **Car hire:** Car rentals are permitted, and employees are expected to choose the level that is relevant to the travel and passenger requirement. Employees using personal vehicles will be reimbursed at the current ATO approved rate per kilometre, including costs related to fuel, tolls, and parking fees incurred during the trip.
- **Car ancillaries:** Employees should opt for unlimited kilometre limits and pay for additional drivers where required. Insurance is not necessary as covers the total costs.
- **Ground transport:** Costs associated with trains, buses, and taxis or rideshares are fully reimbursable when directly related to business activities and commuting to and from a work event, the airport, and the office when travelling for work.



2. Lodging

Accommodation should be reasonably priced, and employees should seek the best deal available. This may mean a more expensive overnight rate, but it includes breakfast or parking, saving the overall trip costs.

- **Preferred brand:** The preferred brand of is Accor. Should an Accor hotel not be available, employees can book an alternative brand. Airbnb is permitted as a last resort if hotels and motels are unavailable or long-term accommodation is better suited for travel.
- **Limits:** Accommodation is capped at \$250 per night (AUD). Luxury accommodations are not permitted unless pre-approved due to exceptional circumstances.
- **Accommodation ancillaries:** Car parking, hotel Wi-Fi, and mini-bar consumption are permitted.

4. Meals and incidentals

- **Eligible meal expenses include:**
 - Breakfast, lunch, and dinner during business travel.
 - Reasonable snack purchases to maintain energy for work-related activities (during long meetings, travel days, etc).
 - In-room hotel dining chargers, including mini-bar consumption.
 - Meals purchased during travel (at airports, during layovers, and in-flight).
 - Alcohol is permitted in moderation and only when dining.
 - Tips for meal service (up to 20% of the meal cost) are reimbursable if required in the country of travel.

- **Rates**

Reimbursement will be based on local rates set by the ATO below. Employees must provide itemised receipts for meals that exceed the limit. The limits per day currently set out are:

- Breakfast: \$30
- Lunch: \$35
- Dinner: \$60
- Alcohol: \$40
- Snacks & Drinks: \$30

There is rate flexibility for travel to remote, regional and other countries. However, employees should do their best to stick to the above limits.

- **Incidentals**

Other incidental expenses (tolls, and parking fees) incurred during business travel are reimbursable, provided they are documented, reasonable, and relevant to the business travel.

Non-eligible expenses

The following expenses are not reimbursable and will be denied.

- **Personal expenses:** Any costs that are not directly related to business travel, such as personal entertainment (movie tickets, leisure activities, shopping).
- **Companions:** Friends and family are permitted to share accommodation and ground transport, although they will not be reimbursed for any additional expenses related to them.
- **Alcohol:** While meal expenses can include a reasonable amount for beverages, excessive alcohol consumption is not reimbursable. Any alcoholic beverages must be noted separately and are only reimbursable in the context of a business meal.
- **Upgrades:** Employees will not be reimbursed for airline ticket or hotel upgrades unless pre-approved or deemed necessary (log-haul flights or accessibility reasons).
- **Unnecessary ancillaries:** Unless specified above, all other ancillary charges are not permitted. This includes luxury take-homes, spa access, late check-out or early check-in fees, lounge access, and fast-track through security or customs.
- **Commuting costs:** Regular commuting expenses between home and the primary workplace are not reimbursable under this policy.
- **Other:** Fines or parking tickets incurred during travel (traffic violations, parking fines) are not reimbursable. Rewards programs and memberships are not permitted to be claimed.

3. Reimbursement

Employees must submit expenses within 14 days of the trip's completion. The claim must include all original receipts. Missing receipts may result in denial of the claim or a statutory declaration request.

Claims must be made using

For claims without a receipt, a statutory declaration is required for expenses over \$20.

4. Approval Process

All travel must be pre-approved by the employee's direct manager for claims to be accepted. Claims are approved by your direct line manager and processed in a special run by the finance team within 7 days of approval.

5. Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with ATO regulations and incorporate feedback from employees.



Need help? Reach out below.

Name:

Email:

Phone: