

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

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Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

Introduction

This document comes in two parts:

Part one sets out the Government of Jersey's policy and principles regarding business travel and expenses

Part two sets out the procedure and provides instructions on how to implement the policy. The procedure is intended as a guidance only and may change from time to time.

Part one The Policy

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|----------|--------------------------|-----|--|
| 1 | Policy purpose | 1.1 | This policy and its procedure set out the Government of Jersey's position on business travel. It also gives clarity to employees when travelling on business about what is and is not allowable. |
| | | 1.2 | This policy aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give clarity and understanding regarding the procedures for business travel.• be clearly written and easy to understand• ensure our compliance with the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019. |
| 2 | Policy scope | 2.1 | This policy is applicable to all States of Jersey and/or Government of Jersey bodies. It must be followed by accountable officers and officers directly involved in booking or undertaking travel for business reasons met from public funding. |
| | | 2.2 | Patient travel is outside the scope of this policy. |
| | | 2.3 | For this purpose of this document, travel includes the following (which are bookable through the Government of Jersey's corporate contract with HRG); <ul style="list-style-type: none">• flights• accommodation associated with travel• trains (including Gatwick Express but excluding London Underground)• off-island car hire• ferry |
| | | 2.4 | In addition to the requirements set out in this document, the expenditure and procurement section of the <i>Public Finances Manual</i> sets out the general requirements in relation to the use of approved corporate suppliers and on the use of purchase cards. |
| 3 | Policy principles | 3.1 | These principles are expected to be followed by all employees. Any departures from them must be documented by departments and justified to any person or body scrutinising their actions. |

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

They are expected to act as a guideline for conduct and behaviour if a detailed rule on a particular set of circumstances is not available.

- 3.2 Staff must remember that they are spending public money and are therefore expected to exercise prudence when planning trips off Island and making travel arrangements.
- 3.3 Trips off-island should be necessary and undertaken by the lowest cost means that is practical.
- 3.4 Off-island travel should be for the benefit of the Government of Jersey and any personal benefit must be incidental and properly declared.
- 3.5 Expenses claimed must be genuinely incurred, reasonable personal costs as a result of travel in line with allowances.
- 3.6 No employee can authorise his or her own travel.
- 3.7 Where practical, travel off-island should be planned well in advance to minimise costs.
- 3.8 The Code of Practice; Travel and Expenses, issued under the Employment of States of Jersey Employees Law 2005, requires compliance with this policy and procedure.
- 3.9 The Code of Conduct provides guidance on how employees should behave in their day-to-day work, including guidance on claiming expenses. The Code of Conduct also makes reference to accepting gifts and hospitality. Employees are reminded to complete departmental gift and hospitality registers where appropriate.
- 3.10 Departmental travel policies may be issued in order to support compliance with this Policy and any relevant HR policies and codes. Departmental policies are only permitted to strengthen the controls in this financial direction, not to dilute them. As with departmental schemes of delegation, departmental travel policies must be approved by the Treasurer of the States.

Part two **The Procedure**

Where the procedure stipulates “*must*” then the instruction must be followed. Where the direction stipulates “*should*” then it is expected this approach is taken. Departments must retain evidence where an alternative approach is taken.

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

- 4 Planning and authorisation**
- 4.1 Unless exceptional operational circumstances apply (see below) all trips must be approved in advance.
- 4.2 For most trips, approval must be sought in advance from the officer holding the budget from which the costs will be met. However, as set out in this document some travel requires approval directly by an Accountable Officer. In these instances, approval can be delegated in the departmental *Scheme of Delegation* to any senior officer reporting directly to the accountable officer, except that no officer can approve his or her own travel. The same officer cannot approve as budget holder and accountable officer or delegate i.e. where this additional level of approval is required it must be by two different officers except in very small departments where the accountable officer is the only budget holder. In these cases, the accountable officer can authorise in both capacities.
- 4.3 All travel by accountable officers themselves must be approved by another accountable officer or director general. Senior officers reporting to an accountable officer cannot authorise their own accountable officer's travel.
- 4.4 In exceptional circumstances approval can be sought after travel takes place. In all cases departments should retain evidence of the reasons why authorisation was not sought. Retrospective approval must be sought from the budget holder, accountable officer or delegate depending upon the type of travel involved in accordance with this document had the travel been authorised in advance. Exceptional circumstances will normally be where travel out of office hours is urgently needed and it would genuinely not have been practical to seek authorisation. It will also apply where an employee has an urgent need for travel or accommodation when away from Jersey due to, for example, adverse weather conditions or traffic disruption. This provision will not apply where authorisation could have been sought earlier.
- 5 Pre-authorisation form**
- 5.1 All travel must have a pre-authorisation form completed and approved in line with the departmental Scheme of Delegation (or accountable officer or delegate in certain instances as outlined below) – see section 18 for minimum requirements. An electronic form is available on MyStates. Departments are encouraged to use this where it is practically possible in order to meet the requirements of this policy. For some departments use of the electronic form is not possible or practical. In these cases, an alternative system is permitted which must meet the requirements set out in section 18. The costs input to the pre-authorisation forms should be the maximum costs thought likely to arise. A degree of flexibility should therefore be included to allow for minor price increases e.g. for flights. If the authorised cost is exceeded once booking has taken place,

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

then additional authorisation should be sought. Only the actual costs of booked items and expenses claimed will be recorded in JDEdwards, not the pre-authorized amounts. Where all costs of a trip are to be met from the same business unit then the objective should be to obtain a single authorisation for all elements of cost for all travellers and make a single booking on HRG.

- 5.2 Obtaining pre-authorization via the online form generates a unique approval number (the "T-number"). There are two purposes to this:
- To be able to make the booking(s) through HRG. Bookings cannot be made without a T-number.
 - To collect costs in JDEdwards to allow the costs of trips to be reported, in line with this document and public commitments given. Where more than one authorisation has to be sought for a trip (for example where there is more than one traveller and they have different budget holders) then it is still possible for a department to agree to use one of the T-numbers generated for the HRG bookings and the expenses claims to aid reporting.

- 6 Class of travel** 6.1 All travel between Jersey, the UK and Europe must be at economy (or equivalent lowest) class unless otherwise authorised by the accountable officer or delegate. The accountable officer or delegate can approve business class travel in appropriate, exceptional circumstances using this guidance;
- Circumstances in which an accountable officer may consider approving non-economy travel include:
- If an employee is travelling with a Minister or elected Member who is travelling non-economy.
 - If an employee would otherwise suffer physical discomfort.
 - If the work commitment commences immediately on arrival.
 - If non-trivial preparation is needed during the flight where it would not be achievable in economy class.
- 7 Long haul flights** 7.1 All flights over six hours in duration (excluding the Jersey-UK leg) must be authorised by the accountable officer or delegate. The accountable officer or delegate can approve business class travel in exceptional circumstances, see the guidance above at 6.1.
- 8 Sea travel** 8.1 Employees may travel by sea where it can be demonstrated that this is the cheapest option or that there is another good reason for doing so. This decision must be approved in advance in accordance with the departmental *scheme of delegation*.

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

- 9 Booking process**
- 9.1 Except where otherwise provided for in this document, bookings must be made through HRG where HRG offers the travel required.
- 9.2 In exceptional circumstances bookings can be made directly with hotels, airlines, etc. without using HRG. In all cases departments must retain evidence of the reasons why bookings were not made through HRG. Exceptional circumstances will normally be where travel out of office hours is urgently needed and it would not have been practical to phone the HRG team. It will also apply where an employee has an urgent need to book travel or accommodation when away from Jersey due to, for example, adverse weather conditions or traffic disruption. This provision will not apply where booking could have been planned and made earlier, in which case a breach must be recorded.
- 9.3 Bookings using BA on Business points are made by Corporate Procurement outside HRG.
- 9.4 **Timely booking**
Pre-authorisation should be sought, and bookings made as soon as is reasonably practical after the need for travel has been identified and at least 14 days before travel where practical to do so. Evidence suggests costs increase significantly after this point.
- 9.5 **Flexible tickets**
Unless arrangements are likely to be changed before the departure date, a fixed ticket should be purchased. If no fixed tickets are available a flexible ticket may be booked but the reasons should be documented. Where travel is likely to be changed before the travel date, flexible tickets should be booked but pre-authorisation must be obtained from the accountable officer or delegate. As soon as travel is confirmed (i.e. not subject to change), the cost of a fixed ticket should be obtained and, if cheaper, any flexible ticket already booked should be redeemed and the fixed fare booked.
- 9.6 **Use of HRG**
No officer is permitted to book travel using HRG without having received training from a member of the Corporate Procurement team or a *super user* (i.e. a user authorised by Corporate Procurement to carry out training) other than in exceptional circumstances, for example where an employee is away from Jersey and it is necessary to phone HRG out of hours. No employee is permitted to have more than one active HRG account. All users (bookers and travellers) must ensure that

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

their personal HRG profile (including business address) is up to date at all times.

9.7 **Booking UK and European travel**

Unless exceptional circumstances apply, bookings for travel beyond the UK and Europe must only be made by phoning or emailing the HRG team. Bookers must contact Corporate Procurement to ascertain whether BA on Business points are available to be used for the flights. If so they should be used if this would result in lower cost to the department. Where a department has a requirement for frequent bookings outside of normal office hours then an alternative approach can be proposed in the (local) departmental travel policy where agreed by the Treasurer of the States and approved by way of an annual exemption from the Treasurer.

9.8 **Personal loyalty points**

Where employees accrue personal loyalty points from business travel they will be expected to make these available for future business travel where there are sufficient points to pay for a business trip. These bookings will need to be made outside of HRG but authorisation must still be sought in accordance with section 5. Taxes and charges (which cannot be paid for using points) can be reclaimed as expenses.

9.9 Employees who travel more than 12 times in a financial year (or more than two international or business-class trips) must include any personal points accrued in the gift and hospitality register for their department.

9.10 **Train travel**

When taking the train, employees must travel in the cheapest available class, except where the purchase of a more expensive ticket has been approved. If a more expensive ticket is booked this must be approved by the accountable officer or delegate or in line with the departmental scheme of delegation and the request should be supported by good business reasons. Train bookings made three days or more prior to travel must be booked through HRG – tickets will be sent in the post. Where the need for train travel is identified less than three days before travel, it is not compulsory to book in advance through HRG. Bookings must not be delayed to avoid the use of HRG. Oyster cards may be purchased by departments and used for London Underground travel. Where contactless debit/credit payment (where no receipt is provided) is used for London Underground tickets, payments can be reclaimed through the normal expenses process utilising bank/credit card statements as evidence of expenditure.

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

9.11 **Hotel bookings**

Hotel bookings must be made through HRG unless an exemption has been agreed by the Director – Strategic Procurement (or their delegate), or exceptional operational circumstances apply. UK and European hotel bookings should be made online. Bookings beyond the UK and Europe must be made by phoning or emailing the HRG team. Hotel bookings should be made at the same time the associated travel is booked. If, taking into account the traveller's reasonable needs, the cheapest available room night is not being booked there must be good reason to justify the more expensive option. The reason(s) should be documented and retained with the booking confirmation. Advance payment for hotels must only be made if there is no reasonable doubt that the travel will be undertaken. Where accommodation is included in the cost of a course or conference then the booking need not be made through HRG, nor the cost of accommodation separately coded.

10 **Non-business travel** 10.1

Extended travel for leisure

Any travel which includes extended stays for leisure should be authorised by the accountable officer or delegate, including weekend trips where business travel is on a Friday or Monday. This does not apply where an employee is travelling the day before a meeting or course and there is no accommodation cost to the Government of Jersey. This also does not apply where one leg of the travel (or half the cost of the return trip) is met by the employee. Any additional costs as a result of the leisure element must be met by the individual. All bookings where the cost is being met by the Government of Jersey must be made through HRG unless otherwise provided for in this document.

10.2 **Family members**

Employees are not permitted to book travel for family members through HRG and pay the difference personally. Travel for family members must be booked and paid for personally and outside of HRG.

10.3 **Upgrading at own expense**

An employee travelling on official Government of Jersey business may book travel through HRG at a class above that authorised provided they pay the difference (or are invoiced for the difference) between the fares personally at the time of booking, e.g. between economy and business class, or between business class and club class. Employees can use personal loyalty points earned from personal travel for this purpose. Documentary evidence of any difference must be retained with the booking confirmation documentation.

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

Departments should ensure that the information in JDEdwards relating to the reimbursement allows identification of the trip concerned.

11 Reporting

11.1 Recording travel expenditure in JDEdwards

All departments must record travel expenditure using a standardised set of object accounts in line with guidance issued by the Treasury. Departments should ensure that lodge card information in JDEdwards allows identification of the trip concerned.

11.2 Publication of travel costs

All expenditure on either flights or hotels per individual over £500 will be published twice yearly on gov.je website. This will redact names and any other sensitive data. Once better data is available the cost of *trips* over £500 will be published. In accordance with section 5, the number of authorisations sought and bookings made should be minimised and for an entire trip wherever possible. Trips should not be split into separate authorisations and bookings to avoid being included in published reports.

12 Expenses

12.1 Obtaining receipts

Unless there are extenuating circumstances (approved by the accountable officer or delegate), expense claims will only be reimbursed on the production of appropriate supporting documentation, e.g. a debit/credit card receipt and the associated itemised restaurant bill or hotel bill. Receipts must be obtained for all taxi fares and as part of the claim the employee must document the reason for the journey and why public transport was not used (see section 15). Employees must not claim in respect of taxis for personal trips.

12.2 Claiming for incidental travel

The cost of public transport and/or taxis can be reclaimed for journeys to/from the airport/station and to/from accommodation and the place of work whilst away. Guidance in section 16.1 sets out when it may be appropriate for taxis to be claimable. Employees may use their own car to travel to and from the airport and reclaim the cost of parking, providing that the cost of doing so is cheaper than using a taxi or public transport, as appropriate.

12.3 Staying with friends and family

Where an employee chooses to stay with friends or family rather than in a hotel, an allowance may be given if claimed. This must be approved in advance by the accountable officer or delegate. The maximum allowance claimable is £35 per night given the

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

potential saving in accommodation costs to the Government of Jersey. Where an allowance for staying with friends or family is claimed by an employee then subsistence allowances may not also be claimed. Travel costs may be claimed in line with the requirements set out in this direction. The total allowance and expenses claimed should be the most cost-effective option (i.e. the cost of the allowance claimed for staying with friends plus the cost of additional travel associated with staying with friends or family should not exceed what a hotel would have cost).

12.4 **Parking and driving fines**

Parking fines, and any other driving fines, are not normally reclaimable and should be met personally and promptly by the employee incurring the fine. In exceptional circumstances (for example illness) the accountable officer may authorise reimbursement.

12.5 **Subsistence**

Subsistence allowances are to provide for meals (and light refreshments) which are not included in any charge for accommodation or event. The maximum subsistence and other expense amount normally claimable on production of receipts are included in section 16 below. Any amounts claimed in excess of these limits must be approved by the accountable officer or delegate.

12.6 **Travel by consultants**

Departments should encourage consultants visiting Jersey to allow their travel and accommodation to be booked by the Government of Jersey using HRG. Where they prefer to book travel themselves, contracts should detail which expenses are claimable. For the purpose of this document *consultants* includes any visiting individual who is not an employee of the Government of Jersey but whose expenses will be met by the Jersey taxpayer. See the Procurement Best Practice Procedures Toolkit.

12.7 **Car hire**

Car hire can be booked through HRG where the approver considers that this represents the lowest cost option. Car hire is only acceptable in appropriate circumstances, for example if there are several employees travelling together, it will save money compared to taking a taxi, or if the destination is not near to public transport facilities. The Government of Jersey has a preferred hire car company for UK car hire which should be used where available.

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

13 Insurance

- 13.1 All employees undertaking a business journey outside Jersey will automatically be covered in the vast majority of cases under the Government of Jersey travel insurance policy. However, there are instances where additional insurance arrangements may be necessary, e.g. where an employee intends to travel to an *'area of unrest'* (any country, or area within a country, which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is advising against all travel to), or is required to carry an unusually large amount of physical cash.
- 13.2 Occasionally large numbers of employees will travel together on the same aircraft. If more than six staff are to travel together the Government of Jersey's insurers should be notified at least seven days before the trip takes place. Employees should seek appropriate advice where in doubt and ensure they are adequately insured.
- 13.3 The Government of Jersey travel insurance arrangements cover car hire within the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. Where the Government of Jersey preferred hire car company is not used, users should refer to the UK hire car vehicle summary (on the insurance web site) before making a booking to ensure that the requirements when booking car hire with an alternative provider are met. Where Enterprise is not used the individual could be asked to secure a deposit against their personal credit card to guarantee the excess. Where a car is hired in a location not covered by the corporate policy, the complete package (i.e. including insurance) offered by the car hire company should be taken.
- 13.4 Travellers who are not employees, or acting as employees, are not covered by the Government of Jersey travel insurance policy. Those not covered include visiting experts and advisers, interview candidates travelling to/from Jersey, clients or relatives of clients whose travel has been paid for by Government departments as part of service delivery. Departments are responsible for clarifying what the arrangements are for groups and individuals not covered by the Government of Jersey's standard travel insurance prior to paying for or arranging their travel.

14 Third party hospitality

- 14.1 The standards to be followed in relation to the acceptance of third-party hospitality including travel, accommodation and meals for employees are set out in the Code of Conduct. For employees, all instances must be recorded in departmental gift and hospitality registers. Hospitality should never be accepted during a competitive tender process by any employee in any way connected with that process.

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

15 Taxis

- 15.1 Taxis may be used if this is the *best value for money* form of transport (e.g. two or three employees travel together) or if there are other good reasons for doing so, such as:
- *Speed* - e.g. the employee is running late for a meeting or flight;
 - *Practicality* - e.g. the destination is situated a long way from any public transport, the employee is travelling with large amounts of luggage or equipment or this is the only means of transport in the event of a transport strike; and
 - *Safety* - e.g. travelling outside of commuting hours or in an unknown area to ensure personal safety.
 - *Medical reasons* – e.g. disability.

The claim should specify the reason a taxi was used.

Employees may travel by taxi where the conditions above are not met but they must fund the cost themselves.

Taxi fares may be claimed in Jersey but only if one or more of the above conditions is met and no other means of travel are practical e.g. bus, walking, pool car or lift with a colleague.

16 Subsistence and other expenses, including meals

- 16.1 As a general rule, expenses while travelling should not be claimed if they would not be claimable for a normal business day in Jersey. If additional expense is unavoidably incurred, details of permitted subsistence allowances are as follows:
- If breakfast is included in the hotel room rate but not taken the cost of an additional breakfast may not be claimed. Where breakfast is not included in the room rate officers may claim up to £10 for breakfast per day.
 - Officers may claim for lunch and/or dinner, up to a maximum value of £30 (combined) (inclusive of VAT/GST) per day. Pre-approval must be obtained for meals. Where possible they should be booked as part of the accommodation package.
 - Alcohol is not permitted when claiming subsistence unless approval has been received from the budget holder or accountable officer (or delegate). Approval should be sought at pre-authorisation stage wherever possible.
- 16.2 Tips, gratuities and service charges may only be claimed where these are non-discretionary and added to receipted bills.
- 16.3 Reasonable personal telephone calls home (up to a maximum charge of £5 per day) are permitted and any calls required by the employee's own department may also be reclaimed. Wherever possible, departmental mobile phones should be used rather than hotel room telephones.

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

16.4 Reasonable costs incurred for an employee on Government of Jersey business to return to Jersey in the event of an emergency will be met in full.

16.5 **Expenses that are not normally payable**

- personal articles - e.g. toiletries, magazines, newspapers
- office supplies
- barber/hairstylist
- traffic and parking fines
- hotel movies, games and other discretionary charges
- laundry and dry cleaning
- additional travel insurance coverage
- claims for room service (above the allowance of £30 for lunch and/or dinner)
- alcohol

However, in appropriate circumstances employee may submit claims for the above subject to approval from the budget holder or accountable officer (or delegate). Approval should be sought at pre-authorisation stage wherever possible. For example, claims for room service may be permitted where a member of staff is travelling alone. In certain circumstances (e.g. lost luggage), retrospective claims may be submitted for approval.

17 Authorisation

17.1 The following are the minimum requirements for pre-authorisation:

- Booker name
- Traveller name; job title and department
- Number of travellers
- Final destination
- Reason for travel
- Alternatives considered for travel
- Non-standard factors requiring accountable officer or delegate authorisation (non-economy flight, flight longer than six hours excluding Jersey-UK leg, extended stay for leisure, flexible ticket, staying with friends or family, subsistence allowances exceed the maximum amount normally claimable).
- Start date
- End date
- Business unit
- Estimated costs (travel, accommodation, subsistence, other)
- Budget holder detail
- Other authorised detail

Business Travel (Policy and Procedure)

18 Control sheet

| Version | Date Issued | Issued by | Reason for Change |
|---------|-------------|----------------|--|
| 1.0 | 1/1/2020 | MG (HR Policy) | 1 Policy developed to replace States of Jersey Financial Direction; Travel and Accommodation, due to the implantation of the Public Finances Manual. |