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RRSC TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE POLICY

Introduction

This policy establishes guidelines for employee travel and subsistence expenses to ensure fair reimbursement and cost-effective management at RRS. Understanding who is eligible to travel and subsistence expenses is fundamental for maintaining compliance and ensuring fair practice within RRS. Generally, employees can claim these expenses for journeys made for work-related purposes that are not part of their regular commute to a permanent workplace. This includes travel to temporary work locations, local or international meetings, or conferences.

The scope of what can be claimed under travel and subsistence is also defined by the nature of the expenses incurred. Typically, this includes public transport fares, mileage costs if using personal vehicles, parking fees, and necessary accommodation and meal expenses during business trips. Each category has its own set of guidelines about what is considered reasonable. For instance, meal expenses might only be reimbursable up to a certain limit per day, reflecting reasonable costs rather than luxury dining.

Documentation is key in substantiating these claims. Employees must keep detailed records, including dates, destinations, and the purpose of each trip, to validate the necessity of the expenses.

Definitions

Accommodation: means the rental of lodging facilities while away from one's place of abode, but on authorised official duty.

Air Travel: means travel by airline on authorised official business.

International Travel: means travel outside the borders of the Republic of Rwanda.

Official Business: means performing the Institution's functions in terms of their mandate and strategic, operational and performance plans.

Place of Duty means the place, other than the Place of Work, where the Official performs official business

Place of Work means the place of work identified in the Official's contract of employment.

Subsistence Allowance: means the money paid to a Traveller travelling on Official Business to cover cost of travel, meals, and other associated expenses.

Travel Advance means the funds advanced to an Official or Traveller prior to embarking on an official trip.

Travel Expenses means expenses incurred by a Traveller while he/she is on an Official Business trip. Examples of Travel Expenses may include money spent on lodging, transportation and meals.

Scope

This policy applies to all RRS employees traveling for business purposes, including domestic and international trips.

Principles and procedures

- Each Traveller must exercise good and ethical judgement when incurring Travel Expenses.
- Each Traveller must obtain prior approval from the Authorising Official for any travel arrangements.
- The Authorising Official must consider, prior to approving travel requests:
    - The necessity to travel; limited to the absolute critical trips in support of the RRS's mandate
    - The benefit to the RRS.
    - Use of alternative face to face technologies i.e. Skype, video conference; and
    - Compliance with the RRS's Travel Policy
- Each Traveller conducts business in a manner that excludes considerations of personal advantage while complying with all applicable policies.
- Each Traveller must maintain, for Official Business purposes, the validity of necessary personal travel documents such as a passport, visa, international driver's licence, etc.
- All requests for International Travel must include the following:
    - A motivation for the visit, especially its benefit for the RRS and the collaborators
    - The financial implications of the visit

- Before a Traveller departs to an international destination, he or she is responsible for obtaining, with the assistance of the Travel Agent, information relating to the following:
    - What is the most appropriate method of payment for Accommodation and services, e.g. cash, virtual cards, cash cards, daily allowance advance or foreign debit cards.
    - What is the most practical currency
    - Assess political and security situation in the country travelling to

Travel Approval

Travellers are not allowed to approve their own travel requests and travel expenditure. All business travel must be pre-approved by the relevant manager or department head. A travel request form should be submitted at least 90 days for international travel and 15 days for local travel before departure. All travel approvals must be in writing and signed by the Authorising Official prior to departure. In cases where obtaining verbal authorization from the Authorising Official, it is the responsibility of the Traveller to have the authorisation ratified by the Authorising Official.

Ground transportation

- The Institutions must utilize the most cost-effective mode (e.g. Car Rental, public transport, Shuttle Service, etc) of transportation at all times.
- Travellers are encouraged to make use of public transport (i.e. Uber, Gautrain, taxi, etc.) or Shuttle Services when travelling to and from the field or airport if it is safe and more cost effective than the cost of Car Rental and, or, the cost of parking and, or, kilometres claimed.
- Where several Travellers/Officials are attending the same official function or meeting, they must always attempt to reduce the cost to the RRS by using one vehicle where circumstances permit.
- Driver for RRS vehicles must be approved by relevant manager
- Any fines, penalties and administration fees payable because of the contravention of any traffic rules and regulations will be for the Traveller's own personal account, whilst using an institutional or rental vehicle.

Use of public transport

- The Traveller will be reimbursed when making use of public transport for official business with prior authorization of the trip.
- The Traveller must submit a receipt as proof of payment.

- In the absence of the proof of payment, the Traveller must provide the reasons for the absence of the receipt or proof of payment. This must be approved by his/her supervisor

Accommodation

- Hotel bookings should be made within the RRS's budget guidelines.
- The RRS will carry the cost of Accommodation for all Travellers who are travelling on official business.
- The Travel Agent must ensure that the domestic Accommodation costs do not exceed the maximum allowable rates.
- Luxury or upgraded accommodations will not be reimbursed unless pre-approved.
- The Traveller must check out at time of departure, verify the cost on the invoice, sign the final invoice and settle any other expenses. If the Traveller fails to check out and not settle the additional charges and not sign the invoice, the RRS will settle the account, and if the Traveller is found liable, recover the amount from the Traveller.

Meals and Subsistence Allowance

- Employees are entitled to a daily subsistence allowance to cover meals and incidental expenses (20,000RWF per one overnight).
- Alcoholic beverages and personal entertainment are not covered.
- For international travellers we will comply with the limits provided here

Travel Advances

- Employees may request a travel advance for expected expenses.
- Any unspent funds must be returned within 5 working days of completing the trip.

Personal Travel

- If personal travel is combined with business travel, only business-related expenses will be reimbursed.
- Any additional costs for personal travel must be borne by the employee.

Policy Compliance

- Failure to comply with this policy may result in non-reimbursement or disciplinary action.
- The policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with company objectives and regulations.

RRS TRAVEL POLICY

Effective Date: April 2025

Policy Owner: Finance/HR Department

Approved By: CEO

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