

Travel Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact the school on 9393 5800

Policy Statement |

This policy and [Travel Rules of Use – school-based staff](#) set out the requirements for all school-based staff who are travelling as part of their job. This policy and the Travel Rules of Use – school-based staff aim to ensure that travel delivers public value, benefits the education sector and impacts positively on student learning, while maintaining the safety and security of our travellers.

Summary |

- The policy must be read in conjunction with the Travel Rules of Use – school-based staff (the Rules) (refer to [Guidance tab](#)). The Rules set out all the key processes and procedures that must be followed when planning, booking and travelling.
- This policy and the Rules provide direction for school staff who are travelling and travel approvers about the guiding principles and practical requirements for travel.
- While this policy does not apply to students who are travelling, it does apply to personnel accompanying the students. For information about student travel refer to [Excursions](#).

Policy position |

Travel is a key enabler for the Department of Education (DE) to discharge its core functions and to advance the Government’s objectives in delivering a world-class education system. DE is committed to ensuring students develop the skills and intercultural capabilities needed to succeed in an increasingly globalised world and become active, global citizens. Travel enables all our staff, including teachers and Principals to share knowledge, learn from best-practice, establish strategic partnerships and develop intercultural insights to support their work and student learning. Travel is also important for promoting Victoria’s quality education to other jurisdictions, to support the growth of International education as one of the State’s largest export sectors.

Purpose |

The people of Victoria expect the public sector to act with integrity, accountability, ethics and transparency in performing all aspects of its varied roles.

The DE Travel Policy (the “Policy”) and the DE Travel Rules of Use (the “Rules”) provide direction for Travellers and Travel Approvers around the guiding principles for DE travel and how these principles are put into practice to best enable the discharge of core DE functions.

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant set of Rules.

It aims to ensure that travel delivers public value and benefits the education sector, and impacts positively on student learning, while maintaining the safety and security of our Travellers, so the Department can effectively deliver on its core functions while meeting obligations under the legislative framework (see Section 1.6).

The policy and rules align with the Victorian Government Travel policy, which takes precedence over this document should inconsistencies arise.



Travel Policy

General Principals |

The following principles give clarity and certainty for official travel-related decisions. Regardless of the funding source, travel is to occur in a manner that:

reflects clear value and benefit for the education portfolio

reflects integrity, accountability, ethics and transparency

assesses the travel relative to the next best alternative for that expenditure

contains costs and adheres to the highest probity principles.

Getting the best value from travel expenditure means making smart choices about who travels, how, where, and when. Travel should be undertaken where it is expected to offer a return on investment. Alternatives, like video calls and support from staff on-site at destinations, should be pursued first.

Scope |

Compliance with the policy and Rules is a requirement for school-based staff, contractors or consultants delivering official business or travelling on school excursions, including:

- the teaching service, including principals
- other school-based staff
- school council members.

The policy and Rules do not cover student travel. School-based travellers accompanying students on school trips and excursion may have additional obligations. These are detailed in [Excursions](#) .

For the purpose of this policy and associated Rules, these staff are identified collectively as 'DET'.

Travellers, and travel administration or support staff, have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with the policy and Rules, and to comply with relevant requirements.

Governance |

The policy is issued under the delegated authority of the Secretary of the Department of Education. Compliance with the Policy and its associated Rules is a requirement for all staff.

This policy and Rules replace previously issued travel policies and procedures for Corporate and School-based staff.

The policy and Rules are managed and maintained by the Procurement Division, Financial Policy and Infrastructure Services. These documents will be reviewed routinely to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and achieve their stated aims. Amendments may be made to the Policy and Rules with the approval of the Executive Director, Procurement Division, and of the Secretary, where appropriate.

Travel activities and expenses are subject to audit.

Legislative Framework |

The Department requires that this policy must be compliant with relevant legislation, codes and policies, including:

- [Whole of Victorian Government Travel Policy](#)
- [Victorian Public Sector Codes of Conduct](#)
- [Public Administration Act 2004 \(see: Public Sector Values and Employment Principles\)](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#)
- [Ministerial Orders 199 \(Teaching Service\)](#)
- [Ministerial Orders 200 \(School Council Employees\)](#)
- [Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013.](#)



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- [Travel and Personal Expenses — Teaching Service](#)
- [Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality](#)
- [Complaints, unsatisfactory performance and misconduct](#)
- [Personal grievances \(Review of Action\)](#).

These documents are subject to change and take precedence over the Policy and Rules.

Freedom of information and awareness |

Government travel is regularly subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and Parliamentary Questions. Travellers are required to retain comprehensive records of all approved travel and supporting documentation for any expenditure claims relating to the approved travel.

All Travellers are reminded that they are travelling on government business on behalf of the Victorian Government and all matters relating to travel and conduct prior, during, and after the travel are subject to public scrutiny. Conflict of interest is to be avoided by adherence to DE's policies and guidelines.

Definitions |

Best price of the day |

- for airline bookings: the lowest fare offered at the time of booking, provided that this fare satisfies business requirements, as detailed in the Best Fare of the Day Guidelines on the VGPB website, and travel options identified in the Rules. (<http://www.procurement.vic.gov.au/State-Purchase-Contracts/Travel-Management-Services>)
- for hotel bookings: the lowest rate available at suitable hotels at the destination location, with due consideration to factors such as proximity and access to transport. The Travel Approver will determine the most appropriate star rating, based on an assessment of government business requirements and total cost of travel for available hotels (room rate plus transportation costs).

Corporate staff |

DE employees, contractors and consultants delivering DE business, in central or regional offices.

Portfolio Entity staff |

- Chairs of TAFE Boards
- Adult, Community and Further Education Board
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
- Merit Protection Board.

Intra-state travel |

Travel within Victoria, and within 100 kilometres over the Victorian border.

Inter-state travel |

Travel outside Intra-state travel, but within Australia, between Australia and New Zealand, and within New Zealand.

International travel |

Travel to and within all destinations not included in 'Intra-state' and 'Inter-state' travel.



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School-based staff |

Staff, contractors or consultants delivering official business or travelling on school excursions, including:

- The Teaching Service, including Principals
- Other school-based staff
- School Council members.

Travel approver |

Refers to a DE employee with the authority to approve travel for staff members.

Travel booker |

Refers to a DE employee who regularly books travel on behalf of other staff.

Travel costs |

Any costs, fees, allowances or expenses associated with, or incidental to, official government entities' travel, including but not limited to air fares, accommodation, car rental expenses and travel bookings' transaction fees.

Travel manager |

A DE employee who is the Policy owner, and responsible for procedural compliance, monitoring and data collation for reporting.

Travel registrar |

The DE employee(s) responsible for procedural compliance, monitoring and data collation for reporting travel by corporate, portfolio entity or school-based staff.

Travel request authorisation (TRA) |

A formal record of travel approval required for Intra-state travel of more than five consecutive nights, and for all Inter-state and International travel. TRAs for Corporate and Portfolio Entity Travellers are recorded in [Oracle](#) while TRAs for School-based Travellers are recorded in [SharePoint](#).

Traveller |

Any Corporate, Portfolio Entity or School-based staff who undertakes government travel.

Compliance with Policy |

Monitoring and Compliance |

When travelling:

- The Traveller is accountable for compliance with this Policy
- Travel Approvers are accountable for compliance with this Policy.

Compliance with this policy is to be ensured in line with DE HR policies and processes.

Travel Approvers will be advised of their Travellers' identified and substantiated breaches of the Policy and non-compliant practices. It is incumbent on Travel Approvers to take action when a complaint or serious misconduct is brought to their attention.



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Possible consequences, in line with DE policies, include recovery of expenditure, and/or disciplinary action, which could entail termination of employment in cases of serious misconduct.

Please see: [Complaints, unsatisfactory performance and misconduct](#).

Complaints |

If an employee has a complaint about misconduct or improper travel-related conduct, corporate and Portfolio Entity staff should lodge it with the immediate manager of the person the complaint is about. If your complaint is about their immediate manager, this should be discussed with the manager one above. Complaints regarding the teaching service should be made in writing to the Regional Director.

Please see: [Complaints, unsatisfactory performance and misconduct](#).

Education 'Speak-up' service |

DE strongly encourages staff, contractors and consultants to disclose reportable conduct. If an employee has any known or suspected concerns about the appropriateness of someone's travel conduct by way of an unlawful act or omission, unethical behaviour, or any breach of the Policy, disclosures can be made through a third-party service provider. Disclosures will be treated confidentially.

- Hotline service: 1800 633 462
- Email: educationspeakup@risqgroup.com
- Web portal: www.risqgroup/dms/educationspeakup

Appeals |

An initial 'review of action' (personal grievance) may be requested in respect of any action taken within a work location that directly affects an employee that the employee considers:

- is in breach of the Public Administration Act 2004
- infringes the principles of merit and equity, or personnel policy or guidelines by the Secretary
- is otherwise unfair or unreasonable.

An action includes refusal or failure to take action.

Please see: [Personal Grievances](#).

Freedom of Information awareness |

Government travel is regularly subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and Parliamentary Questions. Travellers are required to retain comprehensive records of all approved travel and supporting documentation for any expenditure claims relating to the approved travel.

All Travellers are reminded that they are travelling on government business on behalf of the Victorian Government and all matters relating to travel and conduct prior, during, and after the travel are subject to public scrutiny. Conflict of interest is to be avoided by adherence to DE's policies and guidelines.

Guidance |

Travel Rules of Use – School based staff |

The Travel Rules of Use are mandatory for all staff to follow. The Travel Rules of Use contain the following chapters which can be navigated using the chapter menu on this page:



Travel Policy

1. Introduction
2. Travel quotes
3. Travel funding
4. Travel approvals (including approvals for school trips and excursions, spouse, partner and dependents travel)
5. Travel booking
6. Travel options (including air travel, accommodation and car rental)
7. Travel preparations (including health, vaccinations, risk management, insurance, WorkCover, visas and passports)
8. During travel (including baggage, transit, cancellations, meals and other expenses)
9. Post-travel reporting
10. Key contacts

1. Introduction |

This Travel Rules of Use ('Rules') provides direction, guidance and information to support DET staff to meet requirements of the DET Travel policy ([the Policy](#)). The Rules for school-based travellers should be read in conjunction with the policy (refer to Policy tab). It is mandatory for staff to follow the Policy and the Rules.

Key Policy settings |

The diagram below provides a high-level view of some of the key settings for school-based travellers.

International Travel

Approvals

- For Principals, School Council members, all other staff — Deputy Secretary (SRS) approval
- For excursions — School Council(s) and Regional Director approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) required

Booking timeframes

- Bookings three weeks prior

Reporting requirements

- Post-travel report required

Interstate travel (more than five consecutive nights)

Approvals

- For Principals – Regional director approval
- School Council members, all other staff — Principal approval
- For excursions — School Council(s) and Regional Director approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) required

Booking timeframes

- Bookings two weeks prior



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Reporting requirements

- Post-travel report required

Interstate travel (five consecutive nights or less)

Approvals

- For Principals – Regional director approval
- School Council members, all other staff — Principal approval
- For excursions — School Council(s) and Regional Director approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) required

Booking timeframes

- Bookings two weeks prior

Reporting requirements

- Post-travel report is not required

Intra-state travel (more than five consecutive nights)

Approvals

- For Principals – Regional director approval
- School Council members, all other staff — Principal approval
- For excursions — School Council(s) and Regional Director approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) required

Booking timeframes

- Bookings ASAP

Reporting requirements

- Post-travel report required

Interstate travel (five consecutive nights or less)

Approvals

- For Principals – Regional director approval
- School Council members, all other staff — Principal approval
- For excursions — School Council(s) and Regional Director approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) not required

Booking timeframes

- Bookings ASAP

Reporting requirements



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- Post-travel report not required

Day trip

Approvals

- For Principals, School Council members, all other staff — No 'system' approvals required
- For excursions — Principal(s) approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) not required

Booking timeframes

- No bookings required

Reporting requirements

- Post-travel report not required

2. Travel Quotes |

Best price of the day |

When assessing travel options, travellers and travel bookers must impartially consider the best price of the day and decisions must not be based on personal preferences for a given travel provider, access to lounges, or the accumulation of reward and loyalty points (including status credits). Refer to the travel policy for a definition of best price of the day.

Travel management services company (TMSC) |

The Victorian Government has appointed a sole travel management services company (TMSC), whose contact details are on the [VGPB website](#). Using the TMSC provides significant financial and non-financial benefits to the state, including cheaper average air fares and provision of duty of care and reporting services. Special rates have been negotiated by the state with airlines, hotels and car rental companies which can only be accessed through the TMSC. Schools-based travellers may use alternative channels to source and book their travel requirements in line with the best price of the day guidelines, but the use of the TMSC is recommended.

Application of rules |

Travellers, travel approvers and travel registrars are responsible for the correct application of these Rules and must identify and report breaches to the travel manager.

Group travel |

If schools elect to use the TMSC, group travel bookings must be made through the same channels as individual travel bookings (via TMSC) unless a prior dispensation has been obtained by the TMSC Category Manager. Refer to: [VGPB website](#).



3. Travel funding |

Travellers may represent DET in a variety of funded travel activities. Travel may be fully or partly funded by DET, or through other sources including sponsored travel or self-funded travel. DET has a duty of care to travellers on official business and an onus of public accountability for travellers who are travelling as representatives of the education portfolio. Regardless of the funding source, travellers travelling on behalf of DET (in any capacity) are required to abide by the policy and Rules, including the pretravel approval process (see section 4.2 and 4.3) and personal travel guidelines (see section 4.4)

Partially funded travel |

Where DET is only partially funding travel, the travel request must identify all funding sources and be approved in advance of travel. The external funding source is to be identified along with the breakdown of all funds to be received. Such travel is subject to approval.

Self-funded travel |

Travellers may co-fund or wholly fund official travel. If the traveller is officially representing DET, travel approval must be obtained.

Sponsored travel |

Sponsored travel should be declined unless a legitimate business benefit for acceptance can be demonstrated. Personnel approving acceptance of sponsored travel offers should determine that no conflict of interest or improper influence will result from acceptance and ensure there is a legitimate business benefit from acceptance.

If travel is in the public interest, the department or school should consider paying for the travel, accommodation, and associated costs in full. Personnel should be careful not to accept any sponsored travel offer where this could be perceived as endorsing an organisation or product.

Travellers and travel approvers must ensure that sponsorship arrangements are with organisations where the reputational risk to the state or DET is low or nil. Travellers and travel approvers should carry out reasonable background checks on potential sponsorship associates, their full range of business interests and activities, and ensure any potential risks are identified.

Sponsorship agreements should specify in writing that school acceptance of the sponsorship is not a general endorsement of the organisation or its products by DET or the school, and that the arrangement must not be promoted or publicised as such.

Personnel must declare and receive approval for any sponsored travel offer through the department's online gifts, benefits, and hospitality registry system, before submitting a travel request approval (TRA). Refer to: Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality (staff login required)

4. Travel Approvals |

Electronic travel request authorisation |

All travellers must submit pre-travel requests electronically for intra-state travel of more than 5 consecutive nights, inter-state and international travel. School-based travellers submit pre-travel requests using [Share Point](#)



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Approval process |

The approval process for travel must promote a prompt decision on whether a trip is approved or not. Travel approvers are required to provide a decision on a travel request within ten working days of receiving a complete and compliant application, whether the TRA is approved or not.

International Travel

- For Principals, School Council members, all other staff — Deputy Secretary (SRS) approval
- For excursions — School Council(s) and Regional Director approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) required

Interstate travel

- For Principals – Regional director approval
- School Council members, all other staff — Principal approval
- For excursions — School Council(s) and Regional Director approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) required

Intra-state travel (more than five consecutive nights)

- For Principals – Regional director approval
- School Council members, all other staff — Principal approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) required

Interstate travel (five consecutive nights or less)

- For Principals – Regional director approval
- School Council members, all other staff — Principal approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) not required

Day trip

- No 'system' approvals required
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) not required

* Days trips are likely to incur minimal or no cost and the approval requirements are commensurate. If costs are to be incurred, approval from a Financial Delegate is required.

** Intra-state travel for five nights or less are likely to incur costs which require Financial Delegate approval (for example, accommodation costs)

Approval process for school trips and excursions |

Where school-based travellers are accompanying students on school trips or excursions, the following approval flows apply for the travel of the schoolbased travellers. School-based travellers accompanying students on school trips and excursion may have additional obligations. These are detailed in [Excursions](#)



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Appropriate travel approvers for school-based travellers accompanying students |

International Travel

- For Principals, School Council members, all other staff — Deputy Secretary (SRS) approval
- For excursions — School Council(s) and Regional Director approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) required

Interstate travel

- For Principals – Regional director approval
- School Council members, all other staff — Principal approval
- For excursions — School Council(s) and Regional Director approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) required

Intra-state travel (more than five consecutive nights)

- For staff accompanying students — Principal approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) required

Interstate travel

- For staff accompanying students — Principal approval
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) required

Day trip

- No 'system' approvals required
- Travel Request Authorisation (TRA) not required

Personal leave and official travel |

Personal leave is defined as leave requested by a traveller before, during or after periods of official travel. Official travel is defined as business travel required by or when representing the department and/or school, including any time required to be spent at a location for business purposes, including travelling time.

Official travel may include non-work time at locations other than an employee's base location, in situations where it may not be appropriate (for example, have a negative impact on the employee's health and wellbeing or where it is not economical to do so) for the traveller to return to their base location.

Travel undertaken over weekends and Victorian public holidays before or after periods of official travel, is considered personal leave and may be approved by travel approvers subject to the travel principles (below) being met.

Personal travel requested by employees before, during or after approved official travel inter-state or international travel must be authorised by an executive level travel approver.

When approving requests for personal travel, be it intra-state, inter-state or international, travellers and travel approvers must assure themselves that the personal travel meets the following travel principles:

1. does not have any detrimental effects on official travel



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2. does not result in any additional cost to the Victorian Government
3. meets community expectation and can withstand scrutiny
4. does not give the impression that official travel is being used to subsidise personal travel

The travel principles apply to travel wholly or partly funded by the department or school. Travel principles 1 to 3 apply to self-funded travel. For international official travel, the personal travel allocations outlined in the table below apply.

Personal travel allocations during international travel	
Duration of international official travel	Personal travel days permitted
Less than 7 consecutive days	0
7 to 13 days	2
14 to 20 days	4
21 to 27 days	6
28 to 34 days	8
35 days	10
36 days to 3 months	12
3 to 6 months	15
6 to 9 months	18
9 months to 1 year	20

All travellers are reminded that they are travelling on government business on behalf of the Victorian Government and all matters relating to travel and conduct prior, during and after the travel are subject to public scrutiny.

Spouse, partner and dependents' travel |

Spouse, partner and dependents' travel must be approved by the traveller's travel approver. Travel expenses for these persons are not reimbursable.

5. Travel booking |

Travel booking timeframes |

To benefit from the best price of the day, the following timeframes are recommended for travel bookings, wherever possible:

- intra-state travel (for more than 5 nights) at least 3 days in advance
- inter-state travel at least 2 weeks in advance
- international travel at least 3 weeks in advance.



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Adequate allowances should be built into the travel approval timeframes for this. Travel requirements of travellers, however, may be at short notice. In these instances, the travel approver must assure themselves that the short notice is unpreventable.

Travel booking channels |

While school-based travel arrangements may be made through alternative channels, in line with the best price of the day guidance, the most cost-effective and efficient way to book and manage travel arrangements is to use the TMSC's online booking tool and this is recommended. A traveller profile and a user login/password are required for this. New profiles can be set up by contacting travel registrar in the first instance and, if further support is required, the TMSC directly. For most International trips, a minimum of 3 airline and hotel quotations must be sought before deciding which option to book. The most economical option must be chosen, provided it meets the business objectives of the trip.

Payment methods |

The correct travel charge code(s) must be used when preparing quotes and travel request forms. It is the responsibility of the travellers and the travel approver to ensure correct charge codes are used.

- For school-based travellers, this is managed via [SharePoint](#) (login required)
- School-based travellers should use the [Chart of Accounts for Victorian Government Schools](#)

6. Travel Options |

Air travel |

Air travel should only be undertaken after remote communication tools, such as teleconferencing and videoconferencing, have been considered. The travel approver must be satisfied that there is a demonstrated business need and must consider the following when selecting a fare for travel:

- Fare class: all air travel must be booked using the best price of the day guidelines and in the class of travel permitted under the policy (economy for domestic travel under 3 hours, business class for domestic travel over 3 hours, and either one of economy, premium economy or business class for overseas travel).
- Fare type: where there is a high degree of certainty of arrival or departure times, travellers must consider restricted fare types. Where there is a possibility that a scheduled meeting will not proceed, or there is uncertainty around the time that a scheduled meeting may conclude, travellers must consider whether the additional cost of flexible fares outweighs the cost of possible changes or cancellation fees.
- Value for money: travellers must compare fare classes and types across airlines servicing the particular route required. Each leg (outbound and inbound) must be considered separately.
- Advance booking: in order to benefit from the available best price of the day, domestic travel should be booked at least 2 weeks in advance and overseas travel should be booked at least 3 weeks in advance, where possible.

Approved airlines |

The Victorian Government has access to discounted rates with a wide range of airlines. It is advised that these carriers are used when flying on official business and where this meets travel requirements. Contact the TMSC for a preferred-carriers list. The TMSC will provide fare comparison services through its online



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booking tool and the consulting services offered. Schools-based travellers may use alternative channels to source and book their travel requirements in line with the best price of the day guidelines, but the use of the TMSC is recommended.

Intra-state travel |

Travellers should not drive a vehicle under conditions in which fatigue is likely to arise. Day trips are preferred, and travel should be arranged where possible to avoid overnight stays in the location that the traveller is visiting. As a rule of thumb, Intra-state air travel should only be used where all other transport options exceed 2 hours, one way.

Interstate travel |

If schools elect to use the TMSC, all travel within Australia and to New Zealand must be booked via the TMSC's online booking tool. Travellers must select the cheapest carrier offering flights suitable to government needs, in line with the best price of the day policy and subject to paragraph 6.1. Inter-state air travel of 3 hours or less must be in economy. Business class is permitted for trips that exceed 3 hours (from origin airport to destination airport).

International travel |

International travel may be booked in economy, premium economy or business class. No international air travel is to be undertaken unless demonstrated that appropriate representation could not have been made by DET representatives in the destination country (if applicable) and/or via teleconference. The TMSC has negotiated competitive rates for travel to all international destinations with a range of airlines. If schools elect to use the TMSC, travellers travelling internationally for business purposes must use one of these airlines. The TMSC's travel consultants will outline the carriers' options for each itinerary.

Frequent flyer points and airline/hotel lounges |

Travellers must not accumulate frequent flyer or other reward points when travelling on government business. Frequent flyer schemes or similar loyalty programs have the potential to influence the choice of travel supplier for official travel and undermine the 'best price of the day' principle. The use of benefits derived from these programs may create reputational risks for the Victorian Government. The reimbursement of costs associated with airline or hotel lounge membership must be approved in writing by the secretary.

Emergency travel arrangements |

The after-hours service provided by the TMSC may be used for urgent bookings and urgent travel arrangement changes only. Contact details are available on the [VGPB website](#)

Accommodation |

Accommodation selection - When choosing accommodation, travellers should choose the best price of the day available at the destination location. Due consideration should be given to factors such as proximity to the location of the official business and/or access to public transport options. Travel approvers should also assure themselves that travellers will not be required to drive a vehicle under conditions in which fatigue is likely to arise.



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Car rental |

The use of the TMSC for vehicle hire is recommended. Alternatively, the lowest rate option from 3 quotes may be booked.

Car type |

The default is compact or medium cars, subject to availability. Chauffeurdriven car or limousine hire is prohibited. Exceptions may be authorised by the secretary for approved travel in dangerous locations.

7. Travel preparation |

Pre-travel arrangements |

If schools elect to use the TMSC, it will advise of any immediate travel-related risks via its booking website and consultants.

Health and infirmity |

It is recommended that travellers consult with their GP before travelling overseas. Travellers receiving treatment for a medical condition should also seek medical advice before travel. Failing to comply with medical advice may impact coverage through the [VMIA business travel policy](#).

Travellers are entitled to reimbursement for the cost of GP treatments required for government travel, subject to approval by their travel approver.

While travelling, travellers must take any precautions necessary to maintain good health and avoid situations that might adversely affect their health. In a medical emergency, travellers must seek appropriate care and contact the travel insurance emergency helpline.

Vaccinations |

Official travel can have serious risk implications for the department in travellers safety and security, reputation, data security, legal, financial and productivity. Before undertaking government travel, travellers must research their travel destination and be aware of any safety and security risks that may affect their trip.

Travellers must adhere to the department's [Emergency Management Framework](#) (staff login required) when facing crisis situations and should familiarise themselves with these guidelines prior to travel.

Risk management |

Covid-19 considerations for travel | Contingency planning |

Prior to approving travel, financial delegates and travel approvers must consider and address:

- whether the travel derives benefits not achieved via web, video or phone conferences
- the destination and risks associated with COVID-19 transmission or quarantine obligations
- what contingency plans are required, for example in the case of the travelling employee becoming ill or unable to return home as planned.



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Financial delegates and travel approvers must consider the traveller's health, safety and wellbeing before approving travel requests. Other factors to consider include:

- the employee's preference to undertake travel. If the employee prefers not to travel, this preference should be reasonably considered and balanced with the department's reasonable operational requirements
- the destination, including any Australian Government travel advice for overseas destinations
- any restrictions at the destination or when re-entering Victoria from interstate or overseas
- the risks associated with quarantine obligations in the destination (which may change at short notice)
- other department guidance relating to the management of the risks of COVID-19 including any applicable guidance in the COVID-19 advice for Victorian government schools and/or the department's [COVIDSafe Plan](#) and the [Excursions policy](#) , which may be more restrictive than this policy from time to time.

Contingency planning |

Schools must follow the latest guidance provided in the [COVID-19 advice for Victorian government schools](#) and develop a contingency plan depending on the level of risk of the destination. Aspects to consider include:

- arrangements if travel restrictions change at short notice or if an employee contracts COVID-19 while engaging in work-related travel
- financial delegates/travel approvers and the traveller should consider any security risks, access to health services, costs associated with an extended stay and any impact on personal circumstances should the itinerary not go to plan insurance coverage and restrictions.

Interstate travel |

Covidsafe Settings policy update |

As at 18 May 2022, interstate work-related travel is permitted under current COVIDSafe Settings in line with public health recommendations. Additionally, travellers should be aware of any national public security threats, severe weather warnings, planned public demonstrations, areas of potential crime hotspots and other circumstances that might affect their trip, and be prepared to change their travel plans accordingly.

International travel |

Covidsafe Settings policy update |

As at 18 May 2022, international work-related travel is permitted under current COVIDSafe Settings in line with public health recommendations.

The health and safety of staff travelling on government business is paramount.

In addition to the guidelines that apply to inter-state travel, when travelling overseas, travellers have an obligation to seek advice in relation to any risks that might arise at the destination.

Threats to personal security, including violent and petty crime, are common in many countries. Prior to departure, DFAT country-specific travel advice should be consulted.

Things to look for include:



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- safety and security
- local laws
- entry and exit requirements
- health issues
- where to get help

Staff are advised to read and register with [Smart Traveller on the DFAT website](#)

Approval for travel to countries/areas at risk |

Travel to countries and areas identified as 'Do not travel' or 'Reconsider your need to travel' locations by DFAT must only be approved after careful consideration of the risks involved. Travel approvers must consider whether:

- the same result can be achieved through a tele- or video-conference
- the benefits stemming from the trip outweigh the risks, and
- the travel warnings issued by DFAT apply to the specific locations included in the travel itinerary.

Travel warnings issued by DFAT apply to the specific locations included in the travel itinerary. Refer to the most updated [DFAT list of travel advice by country](#).

Data protection|

When travelling on government business, travellers must meet the requirements of the [Victorian Government's information security policies and standards](#).

Contact card |

If schools elect to use the TMS, its contact card (including after-hours service details) and travel insurance emergency number must always be onhand. A copy can be downloaded from the [VGPB website](#).

Duty of Care |

Government obligations |

The government has a duty of care under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 \(Vic\)](#) to travellers undertaking travel on official business.

Travellers obligations |

Travellers have a duty of care for their own personal safety when undertaking travel.

Travellers must ensure that advice has been sought with regards to any factors that might affect their security whilst travelling. Travellers are also strongly encouraged to avoid areas where crime and civil unrest might occur.

Travel advisories are available at DFAT's [Smart Traveller](#)

Orphanage tourism/volunteerism |

Travellers have a duty of care when visiting or volunteering in orphanages in foreign countries to ensure the potential for these visits does not contribute to children being taken advantage of in those countries. Travel advisories are available at DFAT's [Smart Volunteering](#).



Travel Policy

Insurance |

For guidance on school travel insurance, refer to [Insurance for Schools](#)

Enquiries |

Purchase of travel insurance for school based travel is directly through the [VMIA Client Portal](#). Schools may contact the VMIA Client Advisory Team on 03 9270 6900 or by email contact@vmia.vic.gov.au if they do not have access.

For advice and support with school travel arrangements, email insurance.enquiries@education.vic.gov.au VMIA's 24/7 emergency hotline is 61 2 9978 6666 and they can be contacted by email help@ahiasist.com.au This accesses AHI assist as per the business travel policy. The VMIA insurance policy number to quote is 19096. VMIA travel insurance claims can be lodged online or by emailing contact@vmia.vic.gov.au

WorkCover |

Workers' compensation provisions are covered under the department's workers' compensation insurance policy. Official travel must be endorsed and/or authorised according to this travel policy for it to be covered under the [Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act \(WIRCA\) 2013 \(Vic\)](#).

Note: Each case will be determined on its own merits pursuant to the WIRCA 2013 and there are exclusionary provisions under the Act for certain travel types (for example, to and from work).

Visas |

Visa charges and application fees for entry to countries on official business are reimbursable. Travellers and travel bookers must confirm if visas are required for international travel and arrange visas well in advance.

Passport validity |

Many countries require visitors to have at least a 6-month validity on their passports. Before travelling, travellers should contact the embassy, high commission or consular representative of all the countries they will be travelling to identify each country's passport validity requirements.

It is safest to renew passports prior to travelling. Passport issuance and replacement fees must be paid by the travellers unless the travel approver has approved these costs in advance.

Travel to the United States |

Travellers travelling to the United States on official business must apply for an [Electronic System for Travel Authorisation \(ESTA\)](#) approval immediately after completing their travel bookings and (where possible) well ahead of the departure date. The authorisation form is available [online](#).



8. During travel |

Excess baggage |

DET will not cover excess baggage costs for travellers' personal luggage. Where extra luggage is required, the travellers should investigate the cost of posting additional luggage to the destination.

DET will cover the cost of excess baggage where the excess portion is departmental property required for official business purposes during the trip, and where posting the item(s) is not feasible.

Transport to and from airports |

Fast, reliable and convenient public transport links are available to and from many inter-state and international airports. Where a public transport link exists, travellers are encouraged to use these if feasible and safe to do so, as they provide a significantly cheaper alternative to taxis.

Driving when tired or after a long flight |

Travellers should not be required to drive a vehicle under conditions in which fatigue is likely to arise. Hiring a vehicle after a long flight, for instance, is not recommended.

Taxis |

The cost of taxis to and from places of government business, such as hotels, government and supplier offices is reimbursable when travelling on official business, subject to financial delegate approval. Travellers should use Cabcharge or similar vouchers for taxi travel, where possible.

Please see [taxi and public transport](#) (staff login required) for current arrangements.

Where voucher use is not available, the cost of taxis is reimbursable when it is part of government-funded travel. Please see [reimbursement of travel and personal expenses](#) for more information

Trains and city public transport |

Travellers are encouraged to use public transport and courtesy services where safe and feasible. The cost of trains and public transport is reimbursable when it is part of government-funded travel. Please see [reimbursement of travel and personal expenses](#)

Amenities|

Hotel amenities (internet, car parking and laundry services) can be expensive. Should such expenses be reasonably incurred, they may be reimbursable on approval by the traveller's financial delegate.

Cancellations |

Most hotels have strict cancellation policies. To avoid incurring additional costs, cancellations should be made as soon as possible and at least 24 hours before arrival



Travel Policy

Accommodation at non-registered providers |

The Victorian Government will not reimburse travellers for overnight accommodation at non-registered accommodation providers (for example, when a traveller stays with family or friends).

Meals |

The costs of meals when travelling for official business may be reimbursed. Please refer to [reimbursement of travel and personal expenses](#)

Miscellaneous expenses |

DET will reimburse reasonable, travel-related out of pocket expenses incurred by their travellers during the exercise of their duties in accordance with the [reimbursement of travel and personal expenses](#)

Travel-related expenses |

Using mobile phones overseas |

Using an Australian mobile phone provided by the government when travelling overseas is likely to attract expensive roaming fees. Travellers' respective travel approvers must authorise such use of mobile devices in advance.

Calling cards/local SIM cards |

International calling cards and local SIM cards represent a cost-effective method to place business-related calls whilst travelling overseas. Their use must be considered as an alternative to hotel phones and mobile phone roaming, provided it does not breach the information security guidelines. The cost of such cards will be reimbursed.

Parking and other fines |

The Victorian Government will not reimburse the cost of paying traffic or parking fines, which are the responsibility of the driver.

E-tolls and other tolls |

DET will reimburse e-tolls and other toll fees incurred whilst driving a government-funded rental car, subject to financial delegate approval.

GPS and other accessories |

The rental of a GPS device is allowed and DET will reimburse its costs, subject to travel approver's authorisation. The rental of other car rental accessories is not allowed, unless approved in writing by the travel approver before the travel.

Car rental returns |

Hired cars must be returned with a full tank when feasible as most car rental companies charge refill fees.



9. Post travel reporting |

Overview |

For an overview of post-travel reporting requirements, see below.

Post travel reporting requirements |

TRA Required |

- intra-state travel for more than 5 consecutive nights
- inter-state travel for 5 consecutive nights or less
- inter-state travel for more than 5 consecutive nights
- international travel

Post travel report required |

- intra-state travel for more than 5 consecutive nights
- inter-state travel for more than 5 consecutive nights
- international travel

Quarterly report to Executive board |

- international travel

Annual report |

- international travel

Post travel report |

Travellers must pro-actively manage travel policy compliance in a closed loop from pre-approval through to post-travel acquittal and reporting. The travel report should be completed and uploaded to the travel application on the travel system within 14 days of return from travel.

Required information for the travel report includes:

- report on achievement of the stated strategic and/or operational objectives of the travel
- substantiate travel expenditure for fringe benefits tax purposes
- confirm the approved travel itinerary was undertaken and identify any material changes.

Where travellers have travelled in a group, the lead traveller for the group is to submit a single travel report on behalf of the group.



Travel Policy

Reporting on travel forecasts |

Regional directors will use their TRA data to forecast proposed travel on a quarterly basis, and report on this travel forecast to the travel registrars. Regional directors are to coordinate with principals in their area to develop regional travel forecasts.

DET provides quarterly travel monitoring reports to executive board from approved TRAs (for corporate and school-based travellers' travel).

Information about international travel undertaken by corporate and schoolbased travellers will be included in DET's annual report

Documentation |

All relevant documentation and approvals must be provided to substantiate the travel undertaken. This will enable DET to retain the information in its travel systems for future reference.

Examples of types of documentation to be supplied for any type of travel include tax invoices, public transport tickets, airline tickets, travel requests, accommodation details, travel itineraries, and any other documentation that defines the purpose of the travel.

10. Key contacts |

School based traveller enquiries |

Direct enquiries to your relevant regional travel registrar. Contact details: [regional travel registrars](#)

Travel Management Services Company (TMSC)|

Preferred booking method: CTM online portal: www.ctmsmart.com

Insurance |

Financial Compliance Unit Contact: DET Insurance Advisor on 03 7022 2309

Emergency travel assistance |

Medical emergency or evacuation support Contact: 61 2 9978 6666 (reverse charge, 24-hour global hotline)

Resources |

- [School staff travel applications site](#) (staff login required) — links to school travel system
- [DET Travel Policy](#) (staff login required) — high level whole of DET policy from which the Travel Policy information for schools was sourced
- [TIL Policy](#) (for staff attending approved TIL events/excursions/camps)



Travel Policy

Policy and Approval |

Consultation | College Council & Student Representative Group

Date of approval by College Council | November 2023

Review Date | November 2026

