

Travel and Expenses policy

VisitBritain/VisitEngland Chairmen, Board Members and Chief Executives

VisitBritain / VisitEngland (VB/VE) is a publically funded body and needs to show best use of public money in all its activities including travel and subsistence. When making travel arrangements, we ask that you book in advance whenever possible to obtain the best prices available and that you comply with the provisions of this Policy.

VisitBritain / VisitEngland commits to taking into account sustainability considerations when planning and undertaking official business travel, both in deciding whether travel is necessary and in exploring public transport before other means of travel. Air travel should only be chosen over surface travel if there are significant savings of money or staff time.

It is acknowledged that in certain circumstances it may be necessary to operate outside the Terms of this policy. Any variations should be agreed with the Director of Business Services or the Secretary to the Board.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.1 The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the Chairmen and Board Members adhere to this Policy.
- 1.2 The Chief Executive or Secretary to the Board will authorise the Chairmen's expenses.
- 1.3 The Chairmen or another Board member will authorise the Chief Executives' expenses.
- 1.4 The Secretary to the Board or the Director of Business Services will authorise Board Members' expenses.
- 1.5 All Board members including the Chairs and the CEO are responsible for ensuring that they obtain best value for money and that they comply with this Policy. Any expenditure which falls outside the Policy should be approved in advance by the Secretary to the Board or the Director of Business Services.
- 1.6 All Board members, Chairmen and the CEO must submit comprehensive expense claims, supported by VAT receipts, vouchers or other proof of payment.
- 1.7 The Director of Business Services is responsible for the monitoring and updating of this policy.

2. EXPENSES

- 2.1 You are not expected to fund travel and subsistence expenditure out of your own pockets. It is not possible to cover every eventuality in the Policy and, as a general rule we will reimburse all reasonable expenses incurred.
- 2.2 All claims for reimbursement of expenses should be made on an Expense Claim Form, supported by VAT receipts and other proofs of payment, as soon as possible after the expenditure has been incurred.

3. GENERAL TRAVEL

- 3.1 Travel should be planned as far in advance as possible to take advantage of cheaper fares. Board members should consider cost and VB/VE's carbon footprint by evaluating the need to travel and by using lower carbon travel alternatives. Public transport should be used in preference to private cars, Air travel should only be chosen over surface travel if there are significant savings in time or money.

4. RAIL

- 4.1 Rail travel will normally be Standard Class. However, if the journey is longer than 3.5 hours and you need to work on the train a First Class discounted fare is acceptable.
- 4.2 Please note that rail fares are often cheaper if two single tickets are purchased rather than a return ticket and all tickets should be booked as far in advance as possible to keep costs to a minimum.

5. CAR

- 5.1 Where the faster and cheaper alternative to public transport is using your private car, a mileage allowance of 45p per mile will be paid. The comparative cost of hiring a car should also be considered.
- 5.2 If you hire a car you should take out the hire car company's Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) and theft protection (TP). If a vehicle licence fee (VLF) is payable this is also reimbursable but we will not reimburse the cost of personal accident insurance.

6. AIR

- 6.1 Air travel should normally be economy class for journeys of under 5 hours. Premium economy is acceptable for journeys of more than five hours. Business Class is acceptable for journeys of more than eight hours. In all cases the expectation is that Board members, the Chairs and CEO will look for the cheapest practicable fare.

7. TAXIS

- 7.1 As a general rule, taxis should be hired only where public transport is unavailable or when there are special circumstances: e.g. using public transport would cause you significant inconvenience, the journey by public transport would take a disproportionately long time, you are in an unfamiliar location, carrying heavy or bulky luggage, or you judge it unsafe to travel by public transport.

8. ACCOMMODATION AND SUBSISTENCE

- 8.1 Accommodation should be booked as far in advance as possible and the Secretary to the Board can advise if there are negotiated rates. As a guide accommodation up to £180 a night including VAT should be the norm.
- 8.2 When visiting overseas locations expenditure on accommodation (and meals) should be adjusted in light of local prices. VisitBritain Country Managers will be happy to advise on suitable accommodation and to negotiate rates.

9. MEALS

- 9.1 Expenditure on meals should be kept within the following limits: breakfast £15; excluding breakfast, a maximum of £45 inclusive of VAT for meals, snacks and non-alcoholic drinks in a twenty-four-hour period. No alcohol can be charged unless hosting someone from outside the organisation on VB/VE business.

10. ENTERTAINMENT

- 10.1 All entertainment should be on a modest scale; the suggested rates are for food of up to £35 for lunch and £50 for dinner. Any alcohol must be kept to a reasonable level.
- 10.2 The names of people being entertained must be listed when reimbursement is sought.

11. MOBILE PHONES

- 11.1 Reasonable costs incurred in relation to VB and VE business will be reimbursed

12. INSURANCE

- 12.1 We are required to follow the Government's policy of not taking out commercial insurance cover unless it is laid down in Grant in Aid Conditions or it is a statutory requirement (e.g. as with car hire). Therefore, we do not carry insurance to cover your personal property and will not generally accept any liability for its loss or damage although in certain circumstances we have discretion to make a payment of up to £50 in relation to your loss.

13. BUSINESS TRAVEL INSURANCE

- 13.1 We carry travel insurance and you will be covered under that whilst travelling on VB /VE business but not in leisure time before or after the business trip. You are recommended to carry your own cover for leisure times: this is not reimbursable.

14. EXTENT OF COVER

- 14.1 Emergency medical and repatriation/transportation expenses if you are travelling overseas

- Personal accident
- Medical disablement
- Provision of screened blood
- Employee cover where individual is unable to complete assignment
- Cancellation and curtailment
- Travel delay and disruption
- Personal and business effects
- Personal liability
- Legal expenses
- Hazard and kidnap

NB: All medical cover is limited to overseas travel

- 14.2 Cover commences from the time of leaving home or normal place of business through to the time of returning home or to your normal place of business.

- 14.3 A copy of the full policy is available on request.

15. REPORTING PROCEDURES

- 15.1 Any incident necessitating a claim must be reported to the appropriate police authority within 24 hours. Failure to do so may prejudice any insurance claim.

- 15.2 VisitBritain's Director of Business Services should be contacted as soon as possible (prior to notifying the authorities if reasonably possible).

- 15.3 Claims will be facilitated by the provision of full information including crime reference number and the reporting process should be completed within ten days of the incident.

Last reviewed: June 2020