



Meals and Accommodation –Other Than Medical Employees

Human Resources Policy

Effective Date: March 2010

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1 PURPOSE

To outline certain provisions for meals and accommodation for employees other than medical employees.

2 APPLICATION

This policy applies to Queensland Health employees, tertiary students and official visitors in relation to the following provisions:

- Employees where no Award prescribes a charge for meals
- Nurses (Queensland Public Hospitals) Award 2004
- Nurses (Queensland Public Health Sector) Award 2004
- Employees of District Health Services
- Rural and remote incentive
- Installation of telecommunications equipment in residences
- Tertiary students
- Employee meals and morning and afternoon teas
- Rental bond.

This policy does not apply to medical officers. Medical officers are to refer to Meals and Accommodation/Assistance – Medical HR Policy for information regarding provisions for meals and accommodation.

3 GUIDELINES

Guidelines may be developed to facilitate implementation of this policy. The guidelines must be consistent with this policy.

4 DELEGATION

The 'delegate' is as listed in the Queensland Health Human Resource Delegations Manual as amended from time to time.

5 REFERENCES

- *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*
- Nurses and Midwives (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (EB7) 2009
- District Health Services Employees' Award – State 2003
- Queensland Health Code of Conduct
- Queensland Health Corporate Policy Statement APP 9.3 - Telephone Facilities, Services and Equipment
- Remote Area Nursing Incentive Package (RANIP) HR Policy C2
- Accommodation Assistance - Rural and Remote Incentive HR Policy D5 (preserved)
- Meals and Accommodation/Assistance – Medical HR Policy

6 SUPERSEDES

- IRM 2.2-1 Official Visitors and Employees Where Award Does Not Prescribe a Charge

- IRM 2.2-2 Board and Lodging – Nursing Staff
- IRM 2.2-3 Installation in Residences of Telecommunications Equipment, Including Telephones
- IRM 2.2-6 Accommodation and Meal Charges - Tertiary Students
- IRM 2.2-7 Provision of Staff Meals and Morning and Afternoon Teas
- IRM 2.2-8 Rental Bond Authority
- IRM 2.2-10 Meal Ticket – Employees Covered By The District Health Services Employees' Award - State
- IRM 2.2-11 Accommodation Assistance – Employees of District Health Services

7 POLICY

This policy is to be interpreted in conjunction with specific Awards, Agreements, administrative arrangements and policies applying to occupational groups.

7.1 Dining room facilities

Dining room facilities are to be available for the use of all employees and official visitors.

7.2 Employees covered by an Award

Employees covered by an award which prescribes charges for meals and accommodation are to be charged the rates contained in the relevant Award.

7.3 Employees not covered by an Award

The following meal and accommodation arrangements apply to employees who are not covered by an Award that prescribes such charges:

- The charges for meal allowances as set out in the District Health Services Employees' Award - State 2003 are to be applied to employees of district health services.
- The charges for accommodation only as set out in the District Health Services Employees' Award – State 2003 are to be applied to employees living in public sector health facilities when an award does not prescribe charges.

When health service districts provide accommodation for an employee and their family (and no relevant award prescribes charges for meals and accommodation):

- the rental and other charges are to be fixed by the district and are to be related to commercial accommodation/rental charges applicable to that standard of accommodation within the community.

7.4 Nurses (Queensland Public Hospitals) Award 2004

The Nurses (Queensland Public Hospitals) Award 2004 prescribes when nurses are responsible for certain charges for meals and accommodation.

Live-in nurses

Unless otherwise provided in this policy, live-in nurses under the above Award are to be charged:

- the prescribed weekly rate in clause 21.1.1 of the award when meals and accommodation are provided
- the prescribed rate in clause 21.1.2 when accommodation only (no meals) is provided.

Live-out nurses

Live-out nurses are to be charged for meals taken at the hospital in accordance with clause 10.2.1 of the District Health Services Employees' Award – State 2003. This provision is as a result of the implementation of a 38 hour week for nurses.

7.5 Nurses (Queensland Public Health Sector) Award 2004

The Nurses (Queensland Public Health Sector) Award 2004 prescribes when nurses are responsible for certain charges for meals and accommodation.

Live-in nurses

Unless otherwise provided in this policy, live-in nurses under the above Award are to be charged:

- the prescribed weekly rate in the applicable clause 38.1 or 71.1 of the Award when meals and accommodation are provided
- the prescribed rate in the applicable clause 38.3 or 71.3 of the Award when accommodation only (no meals) is provided.

Live-out nurses

Live-out nurses are to be charged for meals taken at the hospital in accordance with clause 38.2 or 71.2 of the Award.

7.6 Directors of nursing and assistant directors of nursing

Directors of nursing (DONs) and assistant directors of nursing (ADONs) may choose to be provided with accommodation only when separate and distinct cooking facilities already exist, i.e. separate residence, flat, etc. (solely owned by Queensland Health). This option is not to be applied to other categories of nurses, even if basic cooking facilities are available in quarters.

DONs and ADONs are then required to supply their own meals and are to be charged the lodging rate in accordance with the relevant Award. No foodstuffs and/or supplies are to be provided by the hospital.

7.7 Employees of health service districts

Accommodation assistance is not to be provided to employees already living in the location when engaged by the health service district.

When meals and accommodation are provided to employees, they are to be charged for in accordance with the relevant Award, or as specified in this policy.

Accommodation assistance

Accommodation assistance is provided on the basis of Award and Agreement provisions, and other entitlements outlined in relevant policies or administrative arrangements.

Additional accommodation assistance may need to be provided to employees including, but not limited to, the following circumstances:

- A requirement to provide an incentive to attract an employee so that service needs can be met.
- When suitable accommodation is not readily available in a location, making it difficult to attract employees.

When it is considered that additional accommodation assistance is necessary, a recommendation in writing is to be made to the district CEO. The recommendation is to be in the form of a business case identifying why the additional accommodation assistance is essential to meet operational requirements.

Each recommendation for additional accommodation assistance is to be considered carefully on its merits. Funding of additional accommodation assistance costs is to be met from within existing district budgets (refer section 8.3).

7.8 Rural and remote incentive

Refer to Accommodation Assistance - Rural and Remote Incentive HR Policy D5 (preserved) for assistance available to employees in specified rural and remote locations.

7.9 Installation of telecommunications equipment in residences

Telephone services are provided by Queensland Health in residences to facilitate the business of the employer by enabling key employees in health service districts to be quickly and easily contacted. The residence may be owned, leased, or rented by the employer or employee.

Refer to Corporate Policy Statement APP 9.3 - Telephone Facilities, Services and Equipment.

Costs of private telephone calls

The cost of private calls (including local, national, international, and mobile calls) is the responsibility of the employee (refer section 8.4 for reimbursements applicable in certain circumstances).

7.10 Tertiary students undertaking placements in Queensland Health facilities

Health service districts may provide accommodation and meals to tertiary students. Districts retain the right to limit the provision of accommodation and meals for all tertiary students. Districts are only to provide accommodation and meals when the district is prepared to meet the cost from existing resources (refer section 8.5).

7.11 Staff meals and morning and afternoon teas

As part of the second tier salary/wage increase, from 1 March 1988 a policy for the provision of meals and morning and afternoon teas was agreed upon between relevant unions and Queensland Health (refer section 8.6 for details of arrangements).

7.12 Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA)

The *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008* requires landlords to forward all bond money received to the RTA. The processes for the completion of a bond lodgement form and entry condition report are outlined in section 8.7.

8 APPLYING THE POLICY

8.1 Nurses (Queensland Public Hospitals) Award 2004

When meals and/or accommodation are supplied to nurses the following is to apply:

Nurses who use quarters for casual accommodation

Nurses who use quarters for casual accommodation (i.e. a nurse who would normally live out and may wish to occupy a bedroom between shifts or in exceptional circumstances for a short period) are to be charged in accordance with the provisions prescribed in clause 21.1.2 of the Award (or part thereof), plus actual costs at Award rates for all meals taken.

Nurses absent on leave

Live-in nurses absent on leave who do not take meals and do not relinquish their accommodation are to be charged the accommodation rate prescribed in clause 21.1.2 of the Award during the leave period.

Exclusive use of a bedroom

Nurses with exclusive use of a bedroom (including storage of property in the bedroom) are to be charged meals and accommodation at the weekly rate prescribed in the Award.

Accommodation only

It is not the option of an employee to be provided and charged with accommodation only. The exceptions to this are when:

- the employee is a DON or ADON who has chosen to be provided with accommodation only when separate and distinct cooking facilities exist
- the employee is a live-in nurse who is absent on leave, is not taking meals and has not relinquished their accommodation.

The amount prescribed in the Award is for board and lodging and the charge is not to be split in other than the above circumstances.

Accommodation charges for family

When district health services provide accommodation for an employee and their family (and no relevant Award prescribes charges for meals and accommodation):

- the rental and other charges are to be fixed by the district and are to be related to commercial accommodation/rental charges applicable to that standard of accommodation within the community.

8.2 Nurses (Queensland Public Health Sector) Award 2004

When meals and/or accommodation are supplied to nurses the following is to apply:

Nurses who use quarters for casual accommodation

Nurses who use quarters for casual accommodation (i.e. a nurse who would normally live out and may wish to occupy a bedroom between shifts, or in exceptional circumstances for a short period) are to be charged the accommodation fees prescribed in the applicable clause 38.3 or 71.3 of the Award, plus actual costs at Award rates for all meals taken (clauses 38.2 or 71.2).

Nurses on call

Live-out nurses who are on call and are required to remain on close call within hospital precincts are provided with board and lodging free of charge for the on call period.

Nurses absent on leave

Live-in nurses absent on leave who do not take meals and do not relinquish their accommodation are to be charged the weekly accommodation fees prescribed in clauses 38.3 and 71.3 of the Award during the leave period.

Accommodation charges for family

When district health services provide accommodation for an employee and their family (and the Award does not prescribe charges for meals and accommodation):

- the rental and other charges are to be fixed by the district and are to be related to commercial accommodation/rental charges applicable to that standard of accommodation within the community.

8.3 Employees of district health services

The options for accommodation assistance for each category are:

Category	Options for accommodation assistance
Award/administrative entitlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free accommodation or • Full rental subsidy up to the market rent
Remote incentive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals and accommodation supplied with charges according to relevant Award rates or • Rental subsidy up to market rent minus accommodation component charge as outlined in the relevant Award
Attraction incentive to meet operational requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any combination of the above options (at the discretion of the district CEO)

8.4 Installation of telecommunications equipment in residences

8.4.1 Connection

The following applies for the connection of a telephone:

- The employee is to arrange connection directly with the telecommunications carrier and submit the paid account for reimbursement by the district.
- The district is to meet the cost of the installation and the rental charges.
- The new connection is to be billed in the name of the employee at the address where the service is to be established.
- Districts may facilitate arrangements with the carrier to minimise delays in installation of the service.

8.4.2 Reimbursement

The arrangements for reimbursement are as follows:

- The district is to reimburse the cost of official national and international calls, and official calls to mobile phones. All other charges are at the employee's cost.
- An allowance not exceeding the cost of 280 metered local calls per annum is allowed for management employees (with prior approval of the district CEO), and DONs who live out under the provisions of the relevant Award. For all other employees (with prior approval) the allowance is not to exceed the cost of 166 metered local calls per annum.
- Reimbursement of installation and rental charges for employees' private telephone services is not to exceed the standard rates for a telephone line and single handset equipment. If the employee has a package arrangement with a telecommunications carrier, reimbursement is made only for the costs directly attributable to the provision of a telephone line and associated handset and equipment (and not the entire package). It may be necessary for the employee to supply details of the particular carrier's standard telephone line and handset installation and rental charges when submitting claims.
- Claims for reimbursement of telecommunications charges are only to be considered for payment if the claim is submitted within 12 months from the billing date.

The number of metered local calls appears on the billing statement issued by the telecommunications carrier. Districts are to accept responsibility only for call charges in the above outlined circumstances and only when the above procedures are followed.

8.4.3 Telephone usage

All official national calls made from the telephone in the residence are to be dialled direct to ensure that the minimum cost is incurred. The calls are to be recorded in a register and reconciled with the billing statement received from the telecommunications carrier.

8.4.4 Hospital switchboard and health facility extensions

When an employee (e.g. island community nurse) is provided with a telephone service as an extension from the hospital or health facility switchboard or other approved telecommunications feature or product, the district is to make appropriate arrangements to ensure that a register is kept of all official national calls.

Employees are to make their own arrangements for outgoing private calls. Options may include pre-paid telephone cards or reverse charge calling.

8.4.5 Short term employees

A district may arrange the connection of the telephone service for local access only (and meet the cost of installation, rental charges, and official local calls) when:

- it is impractical for employees to connect the service in their own name, e.g. short term temporary employment, short-term relieving, etc.
- the initial engagement is for less than three months.

Employees are to make their own arrangements if national call access is required for private calls. These options may include pre-paid telephone cards or reverse charge calling.

8.4.6 Mobile phones

A mobile phone may be substituted for a fixed installation. The use of mobile phones is strictly restricted to official calls (including text messaging) only.

8.4.7 Connection of personal computers and facsimiles to external telephone exchange lines

Telephone lines and services, including mobile phones, for which the health service district is the rental account payer, are not to be used for connecting privately owned personal computers/modems to the internet, or operating privately owned facsimile machines.

8.4.8 Taxation issues

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) requires substantiation of monies paid to employees for reimbursement of costs for telephones. It is the responsibility of the employee to justify the proportion claimed for business calls.

8.4.9 Accounting system

Health service districts are to ensure that an appropriate accounting system is in place for reimbursement to employees for any costs associated with official telephones installed in residences.

8.4.10 Review

Periodic reviews of staffing, residential, and telecommunication arrangements are to

be undertaken by health service districts. Any arrangements and associated payments not justified on the basis of official need are to be discontinued.

8.5 Tertiary students

8.5.1 Students from Queensland tertiary institutions

Nursing and allied health students from Queensland tertiary institutions are to be provided with accommodation (free of charge) at hospitals when they are required to undertake a term of clinical practice experience at public hospitals remote from their base location.

Meals may be provided for students from Queensland tertiary institutions. When a meal is provided, the charges for meals prescribed in the District Health Services Employees' Award - State 2003 are to be applied.

8.5.2 Students from interstate and overseas tertiary institutions

Students from interstate and overseas tertiary institutions may be provided with accommodation and/or meals within health facility premises while undertaking a term of clinical practice (in accordance with section 7.3).

8.6 Staff meals and morning and afternoon teas

8.6.1 Morning and afternoon teas

Food for morning and afternoon teas is not provided to Queensland Health employees.

Provision of beverages i.e. tea, coffee, milk, sugar and water, is to continue to be provided to those staff who were receiving such items free of charge as at 1 March 1988.

8.6.2 Breakfast, lunch and dinner

The cost of breakfast, lunch and dinner is as determined by the appropriate Award. Employees without prescribed charges for meals in the relevant Award are to be charged for meals in accordance with District Health Services Employees' Award - State 2003.

- Lunch and dinner are to consist of one course only, with tea/coffee, and bread and butter.
- A choice of one course item can be offered at lunch and/or dinner at the discretion of the health facility. Due consideration is to be given to economic factors.

The provision of further food, e.g. soups, desserts etc. is at the discretion of the health facility, and the cost is as determined by the appropriate Award.

8.6.3 Night meals – nurses

The following conditions apply:

- Nurses living out and working night duty and who take a meal of suitable quality and quantity are to be charged at the applicable Award rate.
- Nurses living in rostered to perform night duty and who take a meal of suitable quality and quantity are not to be charged.
- Nurses living in and not rostered to perform night duty have no entitlement to a night meal.
- Health service districts may provide bread and a range of basic spreads at no charge for nurses working a night shift, irrespective of whether they live in or live out of district premises.
- Health service districts are required to institute appropriate administrative arrangements to provide the required number of meals each night.

8.6.4 Implementation of policy

Districts are to implement appropriate administrative arrangements for the payment of meals by all hospital employees not entitled to receive a free meal under an Award or Agreement provision. Local arrangements may include:

- providing a meal ticket when an employee takes a meal
- requesting an employee to record on their time sheet when a meal is taken
- applying other options which give effect to the requirements to charge for meals.

District CEOs or relevant delegates are to exercise discretion when special circumstances apply for the provision of meals. These circumstances may involve employees working other than ordinary shifts to cope with situations of a prolonged or sophisticated nature, e.g. operating theatre procedures involving long sessions on individual patients.

8.7 Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA)

Forms to be completed for a residential tenancy are available on the RTA website (www.rta.qld.gov.au).

8.7.1 Bond lodgement form

The *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008* requires bond monies collected to be forwarded to the RTA within 10 days of receipt. Health service districts receiving bond monies are to complete a bond lodgement form 2 and forward the signed form and bond monies to the RTA. Districts are to keep copies of documents for official record purposes.

8.7.2 Entry condition report

Health service districts and the employee (tenant) are to complete an entry condition report (general tenancies) form 1a prior to the tenant moving into the rental premises. If this is not possible, the district is to complete their part of the report and provide it to the tenant to complete.

The district is to provide the employee with the entry condition report:

- when they provide the tenancy agreement for signing
or
- on the day the residence is available for the tenant to move in.

The tenant is to complete the entry condition report and return a signed copy to the district within three days of moving into the property.

9 DEFINITIONS

Rental bond	A deposit the tenant pays at the beginning of a tenancy which the lessor/agent can claim if the tenant owes money for rent, damages, or other costs at the end of the tenancy. The rental bond is not the same as paying rent in advance.
Entry condition report	Record of the condition of the residence at the start and the end of the tenancy (fair wear and tear excepted).
Short term	For the purpose of the Queensland Health rural and remote nursing relief program, short term is considered any time up to four months duration.

10 HISTORY

March 2010	Developed as a result of the HR policy consolidation project.
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