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DENR MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR
NO. 2024 - 04

SUBJECT: REVISED GUIDELINES ON THE PAYMENT OF CLAIMS FOR OFFICIAL LOCAL TRAVELS

Pursuant to Executive Order (EO) No. 77, series of 2019 entitled "Prescribing Rules and Regulations and Rates of Expenses and Allowances for Official Local and Foreign Travels of Government Personnel," Commission on Audit (COA) Resolution No. 2021-044 entitled "Guidelines Governing the Audit of Traveling Expenses of Personnel Hired Under Job Order (JO)/Contract of Service (COS)," and other pertinent rules and regulations, these guidelines are hereby issued for the guidance of all concerned.

SECTION 1. Basic Policy. It is the policy of the State to ensure that rates of expenses and allowances on official travels are fairly reasonable, cost-effective and within the financial capability of the government. It is also the policy of the DENR to keep travel expenditures at its minimum, authorizing only local travels that are required to perform the functions of the Department and are essential to the effective performance of the official responsibilities of employees.

SECTION 2. Objective. This Circular aims to provide a uniform reference in processing the claims for Daily Travel Expenses, Transportation and Miscellaneous Expenses of all DENR officials, employees and Contract of Service (COS)/Job Order (JO) personnel through clarificatory provisions on the nature/criteria of travels, documentary requirements, allowable use of transport network vehicle service, and necessary internal controls that will ensure the prudent, efficient and optimum use of resources allocated for local travels.

SECTION 3. Scope and Coverage. This Circular shall cover all official local travels of officials and employees, including COS/JO personnel in the central office, bureaus, regional offices, PENROs, CENROs and attached agencies.

For foreign-funded projects which follow a separate/different scheme on the payment of traveling expenses, the stipulated/prescribed rules in the contract/agreement/project documents and/or Project Operations Manuals shall be followed.

SECTION 4. Definition of Terms. As used in this Circular, the following terms shall be defined as:

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- 4.1 **Contract of Service (COS)¹** - the engagement of the services of an individual, private firm, other government agency, non-governmental agency or international organization as consultant; learning service provider or technical expert to undertake special project or job within a specific period.
- 4.2 **Daily Travel Expenses (DTE)** - the amounts authorized to cover expenses for local travel, which consist of 1) costs for hotel accommodation or lodging, including the prescribed taxes and service charges, 2) meals, and (3) incidental expenses, including cost for local or inland transportation and reasonable miscellaneous expenses at the place of assignment.
- 4.3 **Excessive Expenditures²** - signifies unreasonable expense or expenses incurred at an immoderate quantity and exorbitant price. It also includes expenses which exceed what is usual or proper, as well as expenses which are unreasonably high and beyond just measure or amount. They also include expenses in excess of reasonable limits.
- 4.4 **Job Order (JO)³** - piece work (*pakyaw*) or intermittent or emergency jobs such as clearing of debris on the roads, canals, waterways, etc. after natural/man-made disasters/occurrences, and other manual/trades and crafts services such as carpentry, plumbing, electrical, and the like. These jobs are of short duration and for a specific piece of work.
- 4.5 **Processors** - authorized/designated personnel from the Accounting and Budget Divisions/Sections/Units who are responsible for the validation of information and evaluation of documents required for the payment of claims.
- 4.6 **Transportation Expenses** - the actual fares of the authorized modes of transportation, e.g., land, sea, and air for travels from the permanent official station to the destination or place of assignment and back.
- 4.7 **Transport Network Vehicle Service (TNVS)** - a Public Utility Vehicle accredited with a Transport Network Corporation (TNC), which is granted authority or franchise by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) to run a public transport service.

¹ COA-DBM Joint Circular No. 2, s. 2020 dated October 20, 2020, "Updated Rules and Regulations Governing Contract of Service (COS) and Job Order (JO) Workers in the Government"

² COA Circular No. 2012-003 dated October 29, 2012 "Updated Guidelines for the Prevention and Disallowance of Irregular, Unnecessary, Excessive, Extravagant and Unconscionable Expenditures"

³ COA-DBM Joint Circular No. 2, s. 2020 dated October 20, 2020 "Updated Rules and Regulations Governing Contract of Service (COS) and Job Order (JO) Workers in the Government"

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SECTION 5. Criteria for the Payment of Claims for All Official Local Travels. All official local travels shall be properly authorized and approved by the authorized approving officer and shall strictly be in accordance with the following criteria:

- 5.1 It is essential to the effective performance of an official or employee's mandates and COS/JO's functions;
- 5.2 It is required to meet the needs of the Department, agency, bureau or office and there is substantial benefit to be derived by the State;
- 5.3 The presence of the official, employee, COS/JO personnel is critical to the outcome of the meeting, conference, seminar, consultation or any official activity to be attended; and
- 5.4 The projected expenses are not excessive or involve minimum expenditure.

SECTION 6. General Provisions. As a general rule, the mode of transportation and type of hotel/lodging accommodation shall be in all cases, the most economical and efficient.

6.1 Allowable Claims and Rates for Travels Beyond the 50-Kilometer Radius

6.1.1 Maximum Allowable DTE

Regardless of rank and position, the maximum allowable DTE shall be at the following rates:

Destination		Maximum DTE
Cluster I	Regions I, II, III, V, VIII, IX, XII, XIII, BARMM	Php 1,500
Cluster II	CAR, Regions VI, VII, X, XI	Php 1,800
Cluster III	NCR, Regions IV-A, IV-B	Php 2,200

6.1.2 Apportionment

The allowable DTE from the permanent official station shall be based on the following apportionment:

Particulars	To Cover (100%)	Apportionment		
		Cluster	Percentage	Amount
Day of arrival at point of destination (regardless of time) and succeeding day/s thereof	Hotel/ lodging (50%)	Cluster I 1,500	50%	750
			30%	450
			20%	300
	Meals (30%)	Cluster II 1,800	50%	900
			30%	540
			20%	360
			50%	1,100

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on official business	Incidental Expenses (20%)	Cluster III 2,200	30%	660
			20%	440
Particulars	To Cover (50%)	Apportionment		
<u>Day of departure</u> for permanent official station (regardless of time) if other than date of arrival	Meals (30%)	Cluster I Php750	30%	450
			20%	300
	Incidental Expenses (20%)	Cluster II Php900	30%	540
			20%	360
		Cluster III Php 1,100	30%	660
			20%	440

6.2 Claims for Transportation and Miscellaneous Expenses

Travel expenditures shall, at all times, be kept at its minimum level. The following shall be observed:

- 6.2.1 The claims for transportation expenses and reasonable miscellaneous expenses, e.g., terminal fees, parking fees, road tolls except Skyway toll fees shall be on top/in addition to the Daily Travel Expenses.
- 6.2.2 Claims for transportation expenses shall strictly be in accordance with the approved Itinerary of Travel and shall exclude side trips for personal purposes. Only the transportation and miscellaneous expenses covering the following areas shall be allowed:
- 6.2.2.1 From the office or residence to the point of embarkation, and vice versa;
- 6.2.2.2 From the point of embarkation to the point of disembarkation in the place of destination, and vice versa; and
- 6.2.2.3 From the point of disembarkation to the office of destination or place of assignment in the field, and vice versa.
- 6.2.3 Expenses for local or inland transportation and reasonable miscellaneous expenses at the place of assignment shall be considered part of the Incidental Expenses or the 20% component of the DTE.
- 6.2.4 For air travel, only Economy Flights shall be allowed for all officials and employees regardless of rank and position.
- 6.2.5 Only the reimbursement claims for the equivalent cost of the ordinary public conveyance or customary mode of transportation such as jeepsneys, tricycles, buses, utility

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vehicles (UVs) and/or motorcycles, e.g., *habal-habal* shall be allowed.

6.2.6 The use of chartered trips, special hires of public utilities, garage cars, water vessels and other extraordinary means of transportation shall not be allowed unless justified by the prevailing circumstances such as, but not limited to:

6.2.6.1 Carrying large amounts of cash;

6.2.6.2 Carrying bulky equipment and important documents;

6.2.6.3 Inclement weather;

6.2.6.4 Accompanying dignitaries or high-level government officials; or

6.2.6.5 When time is of the essence.

6.2.7 Surge charges and skyway toll fees for the use of TNVS, e.g., Grab Cars shall be deducted from the total reimbursable amount indicated in the official receipt, as these costs are considered excessive. Justification shall only be allowed for carpooling of two (2) or more passengers for 6-seater Grab Cars.

6.3 Claims for Travels Within the 50-Kilometer Radius

6.3.1 For official travel to destinations within the 50-kilometer radius from the permanent official station, the same allowable claims for travel beyond the 50-kilometer radius shall be authorized, provided that:

6.3.1.1 The personnel concerned shall stay in the place of assignment and does not commute daily from the place of assignment to the place of residence or permanent official station and back.

6.3.1.2 The claim for hotel/lodging expenses shall be substantiated by a hotel bill or invoice to prove that the official or employee stayed in the place of assignment for the whole duration of the official travel. A certification or affidavit of loss shall not be considered as an appropriate replacement for lost bills and receipts.

6.3.2 Personnel on official travel who commute daily from the place of assignment to the place of residence or permanent official station shall be allowed the following expenses:

6.3.2.1 Actual fare at the prevailing rates of authorized modes of transportation from the permanent official station to the place of assignment and back;

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6.5. Reimbursement and Prepayment

- 6.5.1 The step-by-step procedure in the payment of claims, including the processing time and persons responsible for each step, can be checked from the Citizens Charter uploaded in the DENR website and posted in conspicuous places in the Central and all field offices.
- 6.5.2 Cash Advances or Prepayments shall only be allowed for permanent employees. COS/JO Personnel are only allowed reimbursement of expenses.
- 6.5.3 Requests for cash advances shall be submitted at least ten (10) days prior to any travel. Otherwise, the travel expenses shall be filed for reimbursement upon return to permanent official station.
- 6.5.4 All Cash Advances/Prepayments shall be liquidated within thirty (30) days upon return to the permanent official station. Failure of the official/employee to liquidate within the prescribed period shall constitute a valid cause for the withholding of his/her salary. No additional cash advance shall likewise be allowed unless the previous cash advance given to him/her is first settled or a proper accounting thereof is made.⁴
- 6.5.5 All claims for Reimbursement shall likewise be submitted within thirty (30) days upon return to the permanent official station. Those filed after ninety (90) days shall no longer be entertained in consideration of the following:
- 6.5.5.1 The effect of fund utilization; and
 - 6.5.5.2 Lapsing of Notice of Cash Allocation (NCA)
- 6.5.6 Drivers for general dispatch are required to properly accomplish the Daily Trip Record (DTR). All necessary information, e.g., name of passenger/s, office/s visited, speedometer reading, total kilometers traveled, fuel consumed, arrival and departure time, etc. shall be provided therein. The DTR shall be submitted as one of the requirements in the reimbursement of fuel refilling expenses.
- 6.5.7 Where government vehicle was used, no transportation expenses for the entire trip or portion of such trip shall be reimbursed. General Dispatch Drivers with approved trip tickets shall ensure that vehicles are on full tank and in good running condition prior to any travel. In circumstances where fuel/gas will not be sufficient, fuel refilling costs may be

⁴ COA Circular No. 97-002 dated February 10, 1997 "Restatement with amendments of the rules and regulations on the granting, utilization and liquidation of cash advances provided for under COA Circular No. 90-331 dated May 3, 1990"

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Incidental Expenses (20%)	II Php900	540	Breakfast	180
			Lunch	180
		Dinner	180	
	III Php 1,100	660	Breakfast	220
			Lunch	220
		Dinner	220	
	440	Incidental Exp.		

6.7.3 It shall be indicated in the Certificate of Appearance (CA) whether accommodation, meals and vehicles were provided by the host office.

SECTION 7. Documentary Requirements. It shall be the full responsibility of the official/employee to present the complete documentary requirements as evidence/proof of claim.

7.1 As the Certifying Officer under Box C of the Disbursement Voucher, the Accountant⁵ shall certify that the amount claimed is proper and that supporting documents are complete based on the documentary requirements prescribed.⁶

7.2 Original and certified photocopies (by claimant) of the following documents, as necessary or applicable, shall be attached:

7.2.1 Duly approved Office Order/Travel Order (original copy);

7.2.2 Duly approved Itinerary of Travel;

7.2.3 Certification from the Chief Accountant that previous cash advances have been fully liquidated and accounted for in the books;

7.2.4 Letter of invitation of the host/sponsoring agency/organization;

7.2.5 Liquidation Report in case of Cash Advances/Prepayment;

7.2.6 Approved Certificate of Travel Completed;

7.2.7 Approved Revised Itinerary of Travel, if the previously approved itinerary was not followed, with attached copy of the previously approved Itinerary of travel;

⁵ DAO 2022-14 dated June 17, 2022 entitled "Manual of Authorities on Financial Matters"

⁶ COA Circular No. 2012-001 dated June 14, 2012 "Prescribing the Revised Guidelines and Documentary Requirements for Common Government Transactions"

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- 7.2.8 Copy of Office Order and the Supplemental Office Order or any proof supporting the change of schedule;
 - 7.2.9 Certificate of Appearance or Attendance;
 - 7.2.10 Received copy of Memo Transmittal of Back to Office Report/Narrative Report on Trip undertaken/Report on Participation addressed to the Head of Agency/Office. The report, duly noted by the Head of Agency/Office or his/her authorized representative shall contain, among others, the following information:
 - 7.2.10.1 Highlights of the training/activity;
 - 7.2.10.2 Pictures, preferably dated;
 - 7.2.10.3 Plan of action for knowledge sharing; and
 - 7.2.10.4 Recommendations
 - 7.2.11 OR/eOR/AR or equivalent in case of refund of excess cash advance;
 - 7.2.12 Paper/print-out of electronic plane tickets, boat or bus/train tickets, terminal fee receipts, paper/print-out of electronic boarding passes or a passenger manifest certified by the concerned airline or shipping company;
 - 7.2.13 Certification by the Head of Agency as to the absolute necessity of the expenses together with the corresponding bills or receipts, if the expenses incurred for the official travel exceeded the prescribed rate per day (certification or affidavit of loss shall not be considered as an appropriate replacement for the required hotel/lodging bills and receipts); and
 - 7.2.14 Quotation of plane fare for similar dates, from at least three (3) airline companies/travel agencies or its equivalent, if plane ticket is purchased outside of the agency's existing service provider. In case of less than three quotations, a certification by the claimant attesting to such circumstance, signed by his/her supervisor.
- 7.3 For expenses, regardless of amount, purchased from/rendered by establishments issuing receipts/invoice, OR/eOR shall be required.⁷
- 7.3.1 For expenses amounting to P300.00 or less, purchased from/rendered by establishments not issuing receipts/invoices, Certification of Expenses Not Requiring Receipts (CERR) shall be attached.

⁷ COA Circular No. 2021-001 dated June 24, 2021 "Clarification on the Use of RER and Certification in relation to Reimbursement of Expenses not requiring Official Receipts"

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7.3.2 For those amounting to more than P300.00 but not exceeding P1,000.00, Reimbursement Expense Receipt (RER) shall be submitted.

7.3.3 In case of payment of toll fees, the CERR/RER shall be supported with the toll fee rates.

7.4 In addition to the documentary requirements prescribed, claims for traveling expenses of COS/JO personnel shall be supported by a certification from the authorized approving official that: (a) the official missions/tasks cannot be performed by/or assigned to any other regular/permanent official and/or employee; and (b) the tasks/activities are necessary to fulfill the obligations as contained in the contract of service.

7.5 As part of the pre-audit functions of the Accounting Division/Unit, the Accountant shall have the authority to require submission of additional documents deemed necessary to substantiate the claim, e.g., related documents such as the agreement between the DENR and other government agencies/non-government organizations (NGOs)/individuals, etc., regarding the payment of accommodation, traveling and other authorized related expenses of personnel/resource persons, etc.

7.6 Failure on the part of the claimant to comply and duly submit the abovementioned documentary requirements shall mean partial or full disallowance of the reimbursement claim.

SECTION 8. Separability Clause. If any provision of this Circular shall be held invalid or unconstitutional, the other portions or provisions hereof which are not affected shall continue in full force and effect.

The Head of Concerned Office (Undersecretary, Assistant Secretary, Bureau Director, Regional Executive Director) as applicable or necessary, may issue memoranda or clarifications for the effective implementation of this Circular and the various programs, projects and activities unique to the respective Office.

SECTION 9. Repealing Clause. This Circular supersedes the provisions on official local travels of DENR Memorandum Circular No. 2019-08. All other similar issuances inconsistent herewith are likewise revoked, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. Effectivity. This Circular shall take effect immediately.

MARIA ANTONIA YULO LOYZAGA
Secretary



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT
AND NATURAL RESOURCES



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