

BACKGROUND

This guideline must be read in conjunction with NSW Health Official Travel Policy (10/6013). This guideline applies to nurses, midwives and students who have had a notification or complaint made about them under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW)*, as well as those whose compliance with orders or conditions imposed under the *National Law (NSW)* is being monitored by the Council, and have been invited, or are required under the *National Law (NSW)* to attend an assessment, proceeding or interview.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Assistance means any support provided by the Council to assist an applicant to attend an assessment, interview or panel. Such assistance may include the provision of funding via bookings made by the HPCA, or access to virtual meeting arrangements.

Funding means financial assistance provided by the Council to enable a registrant's attendance at an event scheduled in relation to the *National Law (NSW)*. Such assistance is in the form of booked flights, coach travel and in very rare circumstances, hotel accommodation. It does not include requests for reimbursement of costs, which will not be considered by the Council

Council means the Nursing and Midwifery Council of New South Wales, as established under s 41B of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) No 86a* and includes all committees established by the Council from time to time.

Associated regulatory bodies means Impaired Registrants Panel or Performance Review Panel established under the Law.

Applicant means nurses, midwives and students who have had a notification or complaint made about them under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW)*, as well as those whose compliance with orders or conditions imposed under the *National Law (NSW)* is being monitored by the Council, and have been invited, or required under the *National Law (NSW)* to attend an assessment, proceeding or interview.

The Law means the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law NSW) No 86a* and associated regulations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council is required to ensure the efficient and responsible use of public funds. Council funds are derived from fees paid by registered nurses and midwives. The Council is mindful of its responsibility to ensure expenditure of funds is in the best interests of the public and the professions. Publicly funded resources must be used diligently and efficiently and in accordance with legislation and NSW Government policies.

The Council acknowledges that nurses, midwives and students who have had a complaint made about them, and are being assessed or managed by the Council, encounter costs in complying with their obligations under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW)*.

The Council is mindful of these costs, but prioritises its duty to protect the public safety. The Council acknowledges that travel to attend panels, interviews or assessments, may impose a different cost burden on nurses, midwives and students, depending on where they live. It also acknowledges that such applicants may experience financial duress and/or challenges related to a health impairment.

For these reasons, the Council is able to provide limited assistance to applicants to attend assessments, interviews or panels, in restricted circumstances. Such funding is unlikely to cover all costs incurred by travelling, i.e travel to/from an airport or transport hub, food and incidentals.

Funding of travel undertaken in relation to matters under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW)* is at the discretion of the Council. Consideration of an application may include factors such as the applicant's engagement with the Council's processes. Funding will only be approved in limited circumstances.

If an application is successful, approval is granted for the specific journey outlined in the application. This approval does not guarantee approval of assistance for future journeys.

If an application is successful, the HPCA will provide an itinerary for bookings made confirming the travel and accommodation arrangements, any necessary additional information and emergency contact advice.

If an application is successful, and the applicant fails to travel, the Council may not approve future applications for assistance.

MINIMISING TRAVEL

The Council will consider the availability of alternative methods of communication, such as videoconferencing, when considering an application to travel. Alternative methods of communication will be discussed with the applicant.

APPROVAL TO TRAVEL

All travel funding requests must be approved in writing by an authorised delegate prior to any travel being undertaken. Such funding will take the form of the travel being booked and paid for by the Health Professional Councils Authority. **Requests for reimbursement of expenses previously incurred without approval will not be considered.**

In addition to the limited circumstances in which requests will be considered, the following applies:

- An application for funding must be made at least five (5) working days prior to travel using the NMC application form;
- Only complete applications will be considered;
- The applicant must reside outside a 100km radius of 477 Pitt Street, Haymarket, Sydney or the location of the assessment;
- Funding will only cover airfares, train or coach travel. Overnight hotel accommodation will only be approved in rare circumstances and if absolutely necessary. Such funding will be provided via the HPCA booking the travel;
- Reimbursement of car travel may be considered at the lowest rates included in the NSW Health Official Travel Policy, regardless of the size of car.

A Request for Funding for Travel Application Form is to be completed by any applicant under this guideline, which will provide the Council with an explanation for the request. If approved, the form must be signed by an officer delegated with authority to incur expenditure and certify the availability of funds. The applicant will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing.

FURTHER ADVICE

Further advice on any of the terms and processes outlined in this policy can be discussed by contacting the Council via 1300 197 177 or mail@nursingandmidwiferycouncil.nsw.gov.au

ATTACHMENTS

1. Application form

**REQUEST FOR FUNDING FOR TRAVEL
APPLICATION FORM**

First Name _____

Last Name _____

AHPRA Registration Number _____

Current Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Meeting or Proceeding to Attend _____

Date of Meeting or Proceeding _____

Departure Point (airport or coach terminal) _____

Point of Arrival (location of meeting, assessment or proceeding) _____

I am making this request for assistance because of:

- Financial hardship High costs of travel

I am (please tick all that apply)

- Currently unemployed Receiving a Centrelink (or other Commonwealth) means-tested income support payment Homeless

Statement of Request (please outline the reasons why you are making this application)

Assistance requested:

- Flights Reimbursement of petrol costs Intercity train
 Coach/bus travel Other, please specify _____



REQUEST FOR FUNDING FOR TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

I confirm that I live at least 100km from the location of the meeting or proceeding being held.

I confirm that I have read and will comply with the Nursing and Midwifery Council's *Guideline: Assistance to Attend a Meeting or Proceeding*.

I confirm that this application is based on a genuine need for assistance.

I confirm that this application is a true and accurate statement.

Signature

Date

Approval Authority

Application for travel endorsed and funds available (Executive Officer):

Name	Position	Signature	Date

Approved travel is booked by staff using the HPCA Domestic Travel Application Form.