

NMS Rules for Coverage of Travel Expenses

Valid for the year 2021

1 To Whom do These Rules Apply?

These rules for coverage of travel expenses apply to all NMS employees who do not sort under the current collective agreement (TA) as well as to anyone who is invited to attend meetings and gatherings where travel expenses are to be covered by NMS. This includes travels, workshops and other gatherings organized by the regional projects in NMS. Per March 2020 these are: Use Your Talents Innovation Project, Tamar Campaign, and Conflict Awareness Project. The rules in this document also apply to Field Coordinators. These rules may also be used by other projects when staff or participants travel internationally.

NMS is a mission organization, where most of the funds are raised by churches and individuals who support the vision of “a living church across the earth”. We therefore emphasize the need to ensure value for money in all our projects.

NMS works in many different countries, with different rules and practices when it comes to travel expenses and compensation for participating in workshops, meetings and seminars. If any of the rules in this document contradict the national laws, the partner must inform NMS immediately, so that there is time to agree upon revised rules.

2 Approvals

All travels and its budget should be approved by the budget manager in advance.

- If travelling for a project, the budget holder is the project manager.
- If travelling for NMS, the budget holder is the responsible department leader.

All travel bills should be approved by the same budget manager before payment is made.

2.1 Settlement of Travel Bill

Upon return the traveller needs to present a travel bill including valid receipts corresponding to these rules, for the travel bill to be approved by the budget manager.

The traveller must present the travel bill within 48 hours after returning (Sunday is not included). If the traveller needs more time to settle his/her travel bill, he/she needs to apply for an extension within the 48 hours. Application is sent to the budget manager.

Only after the approval of the travel bill by the budget manager may the traveller be reimbursed for his/her travel expenses by the local NMS office.

The NMS local office is not allowed to pay advance or reimburse travel expenses without the approval of the budget manager.

2.2 Advance

When needed the traveller may ask for an advance to effectuate the travel.

The advance payment, based on a suggested budget, must be approved by the budget manager in advance of the travel, and only after approval may the local NMS office/project effectuate the advance.

Upon return, the traveller will, based on the approval of the travel bill by the budget manager, be reimbursed the remaining amount (if receipts exceed the amount of the advance), or the traveller will have to repay the surplus payment from his/her advance (if the total amount of the receipts is less than the advance received).

3 Expenses are covered on valid receipts

The main rule in NMS, is that expenses are covered by presentation of valid receipts.

The traveller may be granted an advance or will use his/her own money and be reimbursed after the trip. In both cases, the final bill is settled upon presenting valid receipts for all costs. This is the preferred system for NMS.

However, there are some countries where it is difficult to get receipts for food, especially while travelling outside major cities. In these countries, NMS may allow the use of per diem payments.

3.1 Per diem

NMS considers that per diem can be used in the following countries:

Ethiopia, Cameroon, Madagascar, Mali, Thailand.

If per diem is to be paid, the budget manager must approve this in advance. The budget manager may decide that all participants get expenses covered by receipt. If per diem is to be paid, the budget manager must approve this in advance.

The per diem rate is different in the different countries. Rates will be updated annually. The current rates are found in [Appendix 1](#).

The per diem rate is the same for all. There is no differentiation between leaders, ordinary employees and volunteers.

Per diem is only given to persons who have travelled outside his/her hometown and/or duty station.

When a refund is given based on receipts, the person cannot at the same time get a per diem.

Per diem covers the meals; breakfast, lunch and dinner.

The full per diem amount will only be paid if NMS/the project does not provide meals.

If NMS/the project covers food, the following will be deducted:

- Breakfast covered by NMS/project: 20% deducted
- Lunch covered by NMS/project: 40% deducted
- Dinner covered by NMS/project: 40% deducted

Example 1:

if a person is provided with accommodation that includes breakfast and gets his or her lunch in the workshop. After lunch, the person travels back home, and arrives home at 10pm. The person will then be paid 40% of the per diem rate, to enable him/her buy dinner on the road.

Example 2:

On a travel day, if the person is expected to return home before dinner time, but

may have to eat lunch on the road, they will get 40% paid out as a per diem for the travel day but will be expected to eat at home upon return.

4 Specific Rules for Travel

4.1 Approved Expense Categories

NMS covers expenses in the following categories (upon receipt):

- a. Transport
- b. Food (breakfast, lunch, dinner)
- c. Accommodation
- d. Visa and travel insurance for the travel in question

NMS does not cover alcohol.

4.2 Approved Means of Transport

The approved means of transport is public transport (bus and train) only.

Other types of transport (such as private car, rental car, airplane) must be approved by the budget manager in advance and will only be approved when deemed necessary.

If the traveller chooses another type of transport other than public transport without approval, NMS will cover the equivalent of the public transport cost.

4.3 Approved Means of Accommodation

The traveller is obliged to find reasonable accommodation. If there is doubt of which type of accommodation that would be acceptable, the accommodation must be approved by the budget manager in advance. Private sleepover will not be covered by NMS. There will not be paid out a general amount for accommodation, but only upon valid receipt. In general, the project/NMS will provide accommodation for all participants. If other accommodation is preferred by the participant (e.g., private sleepover, this must be approved by the budget manager and no payment will be provided).

4.4 Visa Application

If the visa application demands travelling and overnight stay apart from the planned travel, this needs to be included in the budget and approved by budget manager in advance.

4.5 Procurement of Passports

Cover of expenses for obtaining a passport can be granted exceptionally upon application in advance.

4.6 Other Expenses

Any other expenses (e.g. warm clothing, malaria prophylaxis, vaccines, or other things deemed necessary) **MUST** be approved by the budget manager in advance.

5 Other Issues

5.1 False Receipts

If the traveller presents false receipts for his/her travel bill, he/she may be asked to reimburse the whole advance and the whole travel bill **will** be rejected for reimbursement.

5.2 Incidentals on International Travel

When a person travels internationally, he/she will be paid an incidental of USD 10 per night spent outside one's home country. This amount is meant to cover expenses for which it is difficult to obtain receipts, e.g. local travel, tips, porters etc. Some of NMS partner churches pay incidentals/pocket money to their staff on international travel, even if NMS pays the travel costs. In such cases, NMS will not pay incidentals. Any per diem (if applicable, such as payment for dinner or similar) will be given on top of the incidentals.

5.3 Exclusions

In following these guidelines, we ask that travellers use common sense. NMS/an NMS funded project will cover your expenses when you travel, so when you do not have any expenses, you cannot claim for a refund or a per diem. We do not want to create pages full of rules and regulations. For example, where a meal is provided, no per diem rate or repayment by receipt may be claimed. This may occur in e.g., the following instances:

- Breakfast is included at a hotel
- A meal is provided on an aircraft
- A friend or colleague buys you a meal

5.4 Use of Cash

NMS encourages projects to consider ways of minimizing the use of cash, e.g. by obtaining bank cards, using mobile money etc.

APPENDIX: Per Diem Rates 2021

Country	Currency	Per diem food capital city	Per diem food other towns/villages
Cameroon	CFA	15000	10000
Ethiopia	ETB	540	360
Madagascar	MGA	50000	50000
Mali	CFA	5000	2500
Thailand	TBH	500	500

		Capital/big cities	Medium cities
Cameroon		Yaounde Douala	Ngaoundere Gaoura All others
Ethiopia		Addis Ababa	All others
Mali		Bamako	All others
		Mopti	
		Sevare	
		Sègou	
		San	
		Koulikoro	

Approved by NMS 12.02.2021