# Operational Policy: Reimbursement of Expenses to Families (NAG 4)

## Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ

## Statement of Intent:

The Blind and Low Vision Education Network NZ (BLENNZ) has a responsibility to ensure that expenditure incurred by ākonga and their whānau that is funded by the Ministry of Education is reimbursed in a timely and fair manner.

There will be continuity of process and amounts that can be claimed across BLENNZ.

This policy outlines costs that can be claimed and the process through which this will occur. Costs associated with ākonga clothing, personal items, pocket money and medical expenses cannot be claimed. Costs associated with extra curricular activities undertaken by ākonga are not the responsibility of BLENNZ and cannot be claimed. Travel to IEP meetings for non residential ākonga and low vision clinic appointments cannot be claimed.

Any exception to the above must be approved by the relevant Senior Manager.

## Policy Requirements:

The Ministry of Education currently provides funding directly to BLENNZ to cover costs associated with:

* Travel to and from the BLENNZ Homai Campus for ākonga residing in either the Homai Campus hostel or the transition programme.
* Travel to and from the BLENNZ Homai Campus for ākonga and a parent/caregiver where the ākonga is a prospective residential student. Travel costs for a parent/caregiver will also be funded to support the ākonga transition into the programme.
* Travel to and from the BLENNZ Homai Campus for a parent/caregiver of a residential ākonga to attend an annual IEP meeting.
* Travel to and from the BLENNZ Homai Campus for ākonga and one parent/caregiver attending an IEP Immersion course programme through the Homai Campus school. Where approved payment will also be covered for a staff member from the local school to attend.
* Travel to and from National Assessment for one parent and ākonga.
* Ākonga travel to and from National Network Immersion Courses.
* Parent/caregiver travel to and from a National Network Immersion Course as determined by the course requirements.

Costs associated with taxi travel for ākonga attending the Homai Campus School and the BLENNZ Early Learning Service is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education under the Special Education Transport Assistance Programme.

### Mileage:

This can be claimed per return trip (maximum one return trip per day) as follows:

First 25km No claim

26km and over If family are Community Service Card holders

80km and over Families who do not hold a Community Service Card.

The first 25km must be deducted from the total claim.

The mileage claim rate will be 28 cents per kilometre in line with reimbursement rates offered

by District Health Boards.

Mileage will be reimbursed through MTA Gift Cards. No cash is to be provided to families without prior approval from the relevant Senior Manager.

### Parking:

Where airport parking is required, fiscal responsibility should be the norm e.g. the cost of parking needs to be reviewed against the cost of taxi travel to and from the airport etc.

### Meals:

Wherever possible meals will be provided by BLENNZ. Reimbursement for meals can only be sought for those occasions meals are unable to be provided directly by BLENNZ during the course of a day. Where meals are not provided (e.g. when staying off campus and purchasing breakfast in the morning or dinner at night) and are required to be reimbursed, the rate guide for reimbursement (inclusive of non alcoholic drinks) is as follows:

Breakfast $18.00 (adult) $12.00 (child 5-10 years) $7.00 (child 0-4 years)

Lunch $15.00 (adult) $12.00 (child 5-10 years) $7.00 (child 0-4 years)

Dinner $38.00 (adult) $22.00 (child 5-10 years) $10.00 (child 0-4 years)

Reimbursement will be based on actual and reasonable costs and will be reimbursed to families within 7 working days by direct credit into their bank account. GST receipts must be provided.

Breakfast will not be reimbursed on the morning of travel unless approved in advance by the relevant Co-ordinator and/or Senior Manager. An example where approval might be given would be if a family was required to leave home prior to 7.00am in order to arrive at the airport for an early departure flight. Dinner will only be reimbursed on the day of return on approval of the relevant Co-ordinator and/or Senior Manager. An example of when this could occur would be if a family would not arrive at their home until well after normal evening meal time. Snacks will be made available for families and ākonga to access prior to their departure from BLENNZ.

Reimbursement will not normally be provided for morning and afternoon tea, snacks and incidental expenses. One off requests require the approval of the relevant Co-ordinator / Senior Manager.

Under no circumstances will alcohol be reimbursed.

BLENNZ reserves the right to review all claims and to adjust them if required. Any adjustments will only be made after discussion with the whānau/family involved.

## Supporting Documents:

Ministry of Education-BLENNZ Annual Resourcing Notice

[Ministry of Health - link to travel assistance claims](http://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/claims-provider-payments-and-entitlements/national-travel-assistance)

Approved: 

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Next Review: 2024