

PALM scheme international airfares and domestic transportation matrix (travel matrix)

This document provides Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme employers with the maximum one-way and return international airfare and domestic transportation amounts for the purposes of PALM scheme worker deductions and reimbursements in chapter 7 of the PALM scheme guidelines. It includes amounts for meals and accommodation, where these are required.

Employers should use the closest comparable destination listed below to determine the appropriate cap for their location. Instructions for how to apply the travel matrix are below the tables.

Accommodation cap

If unavoidable overnight accommodation costs are incurred during the worker's journey from their port of departure to the placement location, the maximum amount that can be deducted from workers is **\$160 per night per room**. This is in addition to the flight caps outlined in tables below.

Workers can only be charged for the actual cost of the room or the cap, whichever is lower. Where rooms are shared by workers, the actual cost of the room or the cap, whichever is lower, must be split evenly between the workers.

Meal caps

Where a worker requires meals during their journey due to an overnight stay, extended layover or if not provided as part of the airfare and the employer has paid these costs, the following caps apply with regards to amounts that can be deducted from the worker. Workers can only be charged for the actual cost of the meals or the cap, whichever is lower.

- Breakfast - \$32.00
- Lunch - \$36.00
- Dinner - \$61.00

The caps have been determined using the Australian Taxation Office's [determination for reasonable travel and meal allowance expenses](#).

Table 1: maximum one-way international airfares and domestic transportation

	Regional destination	Timor-Leste	Fiji	Tonga	Vanuatu	Tuvalu	Nauru	Samoa	Solomon Islands	Kiribati	Papua New Guinea	Vietnam
ACT	Canberra	\$1,000	\$650	\$1,100	\$800	\$1,250	\$1,550	\$1,050	\$950	\$1,150	\$800	\$950
NSW	Sydney	\$800	\$600	\$750	\$600	\$1,150	\$1,350	\$600	\$800	\$1,250	\$450	\$500
	Griffith	\$1,000	\$900	\$1,050	\$850	\$1,650	\$1,700	\$1,250	\$1,100	\$1,450	\$800	\$1,150
	Moree	\$1,100	\$950	\$1,050	\$800	\$1,900	\$2,050	\$1,300	\$1,200	\$1,800	\$750	\$1,200
	Coffs Harbour	\$1,000	\$850	\$1,100	\$850	\$1,650	\$1,850	\$1,250	\$1,100	\$1,700	\$800	\$1,400
NT	Darwin	\$450	\$800	\$1,100	\$900	\$1,650	\$1,800	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$1,350	\$850	\$1,200
	Alice Springs	\$950	\$900	\$1,300	\$1,050	\$1,850	\$2,350	\$1,550	\$1,200	\$1,750	\$900	\$1,200
SA	Adelaide	\$850	\$650	\$1,050	\$800	\$1,250	\$1,600	\$1,150	\$850	\$1,350	\$700	\$850
	Renmark	\$900	\$850	\$1,100	\$800	\$1,550	\$1,800	\$1,350	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$950	\$1,100
	Port Augusta	\$850	\$650	\$1,050	\$800	\$1,250	\$1,600	\$1,150	\$850	\$1,350	\$700	\$850
TAS	Hobart	\$900	\$800	\$1,050	\$850	\$1,550	\$1,500	\$1,150	\$1,000	\$1,250	\$750	\$750
	Launceston	\$950	\$750	\$1,000	\$800	\$1,450	\$1,600	\$1,150	\$1,000	\$1,250	\$700	\$850
VIC	Melbourne	\$750	\$650	\$900	\$650	\$1,300	\$1,450	\$1,050	\$950	\$1,250	\$650	\$500
	Mildura	\$900	\$850	\$1,100	\$800	\$1,550	\$1,800	\$1,350	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$950	\$1,100
	Shepparton	\$750	\$650	\$900	\$650	\$1,300	\$1,450	\$1,050	\$950	\$1,250	\$650	\$500
	Pakenham	\$750	\$650	\$900	\$650	\$1,300	\$1,450	\$1,050	\$950	\$1,250	\$650	\$500
WA	Perth	\$850	\$850	\$1,200	\$950	\$1,600	\$1,900	\$1,200	\$1,050	\$1,450	\$800	\$450
	Margaret River	\$850	\$850	\$1,200	\$950	\$1,600	\$1,900	\$1,200	\$1,050	\$1,450	\$800	\$450
	Broome	\$1,050	\$1,200	\$1,700	\$1,100	\$2,300	\$2,350	\$1,450	\$1,450	\$1,950	\$1,050	\$1,200
	Pinjarra	\$850	\$850	\$1,200	\$950	\$1,600	\$1,900	\$1,200	\$1,050	\$1,450	\$800	\$450
	Katanning	\$850	\$850	\$1,250	\$950	\$1,600	\$1,900	\$1,250	\$1,100	\$1,450	\$800	\$450
QLD	Brisbane	\$750	\$700	\$950	\$800	\$1,300	\$1,250	\$1,050	\$650	\$850	\$450	\$600
	Cairns	\$1,100	\$700	\$1,250	\$800	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,100	\$650	\$1,150	\$600	\$900
	Bundaberg	\$1,050	\$800	\$1,050	\$950	\$1,450	\$1,650	\$1,300	\$850	\$1,750	\$600	\$1,550
	Toowoomba	\$1,300	\$1,000	\$1,200	\$1,100	\$1,600	\$1,550	\$1,500	\$1,050	\$1,850	\$850	\$1,050
	Townsville	\$950	\$700	\$1,050	\$850	\$1,500	\$1,450	\$1,050	\$850	\$1,200	\$500	\$1,250
	Rockhampton	\$950	\$800	\$1,100	\$800	\$1,550	\$1,600	\$1,250	\$850	\$1,300	\$550	\$1,300
	Kilcoy	\$750	\$700	\$950	\$800	\$1,300	\$1,250	\$1,050	\$650	\$850	\$450	\$600

Table 2: maximum return international airfares and domestic transportation

	Regional Destination	Timor-Leste	Fiji	Tonga	Vanuatu	Tuvalu	Nauru	Samoa	Solomon Islands	Kiribati	Papua New Guinea	Vietnam
ACT	Canberra	\$2,000	\$1,300	\$2,200	\$1,600	\$2,500	\$3,100	\$2,100	\$1,900	\$2,300	\$1,600	\$1,900
NSW	Sydney	\$1,600	\$1,200	\$1,500	\$1,200	\$2,300	\$2,700	\$1,200	\$1,600	\$2,500	\$900	\$1,000
	Griffith	\$2,000	\$1,800	\$2,100	\$1,700	\$3,300	\$3,400	\$2,500	\$2,200	\$2,900	\$1,600	\$2,300
	Moree	\$2,200	\$1,900	\$2,100	\$1,600	\$3,800	\$4,100	\$2,600	\$2,400	\$3,600	\$1,500	\$2,400
	Coffs Harbour	\$2,000	\$1,700	\$2,200	\$1,700	\$3,300	\$3,700	\$2,500	\$2,200	\$3,400	\$1,600	\$2,800
NT	Darwin	\$900	\$1,600	\$2,200	\$1,800	\$3,300	\$3,600	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$2,700	\$1,700	\$2,400
	Alice Springs	\$1,900	\$1,800	\$2,600	\$2,100	\$3,700	\$4,700	\$3,100	\$2,400	\$3,500	\$1,800	\$2,400
SA	Adelaide	\$1,700	\$1,300	\$2,100	\$1,600	\$2,500	\$3,200	\$2,300	\$1,700	\$2,700	\$1,400	\$1,700
	Renmark	\$1,800	\$1,700	\$2,200	\$1,600	\$3,100	\$3,600	\$2,700	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$1,900	\$2,200
	Port Augusta	\$1,700	\$1,300	\$2,100	\$1,600	\$2,500	\$3,200	\$2,300	\$1,700	\$2,700	\$1,400	\$1,700
TAS	Hobart	\$1,800	\$1,600	\$2,100	\$1,700	\$3,100	\$3,000	\$2,300	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
	Launceston	\$1,900	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$1,600	\$2,900	\$3,200	\$2,300	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$1,400	\$1,700
VIC	Melbourne	\$1,500	\$1,300	\$1,800	\$1,300	\$2,600	\$2,900	\$2,100	\$1,900	\$2,500	\$1,300	\$1,000
	Mildura	\$1,800	\$1,700	\$2,200	\$1,600	\$3,100	\$3,600	\$2,700	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$1,900	\$2,200
	Shepparton	\$1,500	\$1,300	\$1,800	\$1,300	\$2,600	\$2,900	\$2,100	\$1,900	\$2,500	\$1,300	\$1,000
	Pakenham	\$1,500	\$1,300	\$1,800	\$1,300	\$2,600	\$2,900	\$2,100	\$1,900	\$2,500	\$1,300	\$1,000
WA	Perth	\$1,700	\$1,700	\$2,400	\$1,900	\$3,200	\$3,800	\$2,400	\$2,100	\$2,900	\$1,600	\$900
	Margaret River	\$1,700	\$1,700	\$2,400	\$1,900	\$3,200	\$3,800	\$2,400	\$2,100	\$2,900	\$1,600	\$900
	Broome	\$2,100	\$2,400	\$3,400	\$2,200	\$4,600	\$4,700	\$2,900	\$2,900	\$3,900	\$2,100	\$2,400
	Pinjarra	\$1,700	\$1,700	\$2,400	\$1,900	\$3,200	\$3,800	\$2,400	\$2,100	\$2,900	\$1,600	\$900
	Katanning	\$1,700	\$1,700	\$2,500	\$1,900	\$3,200	\$3,800	\$2,500	\$2,200	\$2,900	\$1,600	\$900
QLD	Brisbane	\$1,500	\$1,400	\$1,900	\$1,600	\$2,600	\$2,500	\$2,100	\$1,300	\$1,700	\$900	\$1,200
	Cairns	\$2,200	\$1,400	\$2,500	\$1,600	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$2,200	\$1,300	\$2,300	\$1,200	\$1,800
	Bundaberg	\$2,100	\$1,600	\$2,100	\$1,900	\$2,900	\$3,300	\$2,600	\$1,700	\$3,500	\$1,200	\$3,100
	Toowoomba	\$2,600	\$2,000	\$2,400	\$2,200	\$3,200	\$3,100	\$3,000	\$2,100	\$3,700	\$1,700	\$2,100
	Townsville	\$1,900	\$1,400	\$2,100	\$1,700	\$3,000	\$2,900	\$2,100	\$1,700	\$2,400	\$1,000	\$2,500
	Rockhampton	\$1,900	\$1,600	\$2,200	\$1,600	\$3,100	\$3,200	\$2,500	\$1,700	\$2,600	\$1,100	\$2,600
	Kilcoy	\$1,500	\$1,400	\$1,900	\$1,600	\$2,600	\$2,500	\$2,100	\$1,300	\$1,700	\$900	\$1,200

Using the travel matrix

The costs in the travel matrix are for international airfares and domestic transport. Domestic transport includes all travel costs from the arrival airport to the worker's accommodation or workplace location. **To calculate the amount that may be deducted from PALM scheme workers for travel costs, or claimed from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) through a [reimbursement of travel costs](#) claim:**

1. Calculate the actual cost of the one-way or return international airfare and domestic transportation.
2. Reduce the amount by \$300 to account for the PALM scheme employer contribution (applied once per worker for the total return travel costs).
3. Use the tables to determine the maximum amount that can be recouped from workers for international airfares and domestic transportation.
Notes:
 - a. Use the closest final travel location, which may not be the same as the final worksite location.
 - b. The matrix does not capture every location and only the most common. If the relevant region is not listed on the matrix, use the closest comparable region.
4. If accommodation is required, workers can only be charged for the actual cost of the room or the cap of \$160 per night per room, whichever is lower.
 - a. Where rooms are shared by workers, the actual cost of the room or the cap, whichever is lower, must be split evenly between the workers.
5. If meals are required, workers can only be charged for the actual cost or the caps outlined above, whichever is lower.
6. If any amount is left over, from **either** the flight and/or accommodation costs, it must be borne by the PALM scheme employer.

Examples of applying the matrix

The total one-way travel cost for a long-term worker from Port Vila, Vanuatu travelling to Hobart is \$1,000

\$1,000 minus \$300 (PALM scheme employer contribution) = \$700

The total cost of lunch for the worker during the flight is \$25 (as this was not provided)

The matrix cap for travel is \$850

The matrix cap for meals (lunch) is \$36.00

The PALM scheme employer can recoup **\$725** (flight and meal costs) back from the worker

The total one-way travel cost for a long-term worker from Tarawa, Kiribati travelling to Broome is \$1,900 with an overnight stay in Perth at \$180

\$1,900 minus \$300 (PALM scheme employer contribution) = \$1,600

The matrix cap for travel is \$1,950

The matrix cap for accommodation is \$160

The PALM scheme employer can recoup **\$1,760** back from the worker (flight and accommodation costs)

The PALM scheme employer must bear the cost of the \$20 difference between the actual accommodation cost and matrix cap

The total return travel cost for a short-term worker from Dili, Timor-Leste travelling to Alice Springs is \$1,450
\$1,450 minus \$300 (PALM scheme employer contribution) = \$1,150
The matrix cap is \$1,900
The PALM scheme employer can recoup **\$1,150** back from the worker

The total one-way cost for a long-term worker from Nuku'alofa, Tonga travelling to Renmark is \$1,700
\$1,700 minus \$300 (PALM scheme employer contribution) = \$1,400
The matrix cap is \$1,100
The PALM scheme employer can recoup **\$1,100** back from the worker
The PALM scheme employer must bear the cost of the additional **\$300**

Costs above the matrix cap for employers in remote locations

PALM scheme employers who are located in a *remote* or *very remote* region (as defined by the [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\) Edition 3](#)) and face significant unavoidable expenses above the applicable matrix amount may submit a request for a one-off increase to the cap.

Employers must submit a request to DEWR, including evidence that the proposed cost is the best value for money and is considered a reasonable transport option for the worker.

Document history

Date	Summary of changes	Authorised by
October 2024 (4 November 2024 commencement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inclusion of all Australian state and territory capital cities.• Matrix expanded to include Vietnam.• Minor format changes.	Director, Operational Policy Team, DEWR
July 2024 (1 August 2024 commencement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matrix expanded to top regional and rural locations.• All costs re-costed and updated based on market rates.• Accommodation and meals separated out from general travel costs.	First Assistant Secretary, Pacific Labour Operations Division, DEWR
June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removed reference to quarantine arrangements and obligations.• Updated the purpose of the matrix and added note regarding matrix being under review.• Simplified information around Nauru and Tuvalu flight costs.	Director, Operational Policy Team, DEWR