



THE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT SERVICES GRANT

Distribution Policy dated 10 Jun 19

Purpose

1. The purpose of this document is to set out the guidelines for the management and distribution of the annual Government Grant for Support Services.

Content

2. As follows:
- a. Purpose of the Grant.
 - b. Expenses eligible for reimbursement.
 - c. Expenses not eligible for reimbursement.
 - d. Making a claim.
 - e. Approving a claim.
 - f. Denying a claim.
 - g. Allocation between Local and National.
 - h. Processing of claims by RNZRSA.
 - i. Review of Policy.
 - j. Applying for the Grant to VA.
 - k. Conditions of the Grant.

Purpose of the Grant

3. The Government Grant is received specifically to fund the delivery of RSA Support Services to eligible persons within the community and the training and development of the RSA Support Services network by officially appointed RSA Support Services volunteers and staff.

4. It is not designed to wholly subsidise all associated operating costs, and local RSAs will still need to generate general welfare funds to cover shortfalls.

Expenses eligible for reimbursement

5. See **Annex A** for detail.

Expenses not eligible for reimbursement

6. See **Annex B** for details.

Making a Claim

7. See **Annex C** for the process of making a claim. All claims must be accompanied by a completed 'Individual Activity Sheet'.

Approving a Claim

8. The approving authorities¹ for claims are as follows:

- a. **Local Support Services Staff:** DSM.
- b. **DSA:** District President or RNZRSA Operations Manager.
- c. **RNZRSA staff:** CE.

9. At all times, the approval authorities will take a pragmatic and common sense approach to applying this policy when considering claims, and will seek to approve payments within its spirit and the conditions of the grant.

Denying a claim

10. The RNZRSA and DSMs reserve the right to deny a claim if it is felt that it falls outside the specific criteria and general spirit of this policy, and/or the individual is not a duly appointed support staff member or approved delegate.

11. Any denied claims will be discussed with the claimant and reviewed if additional supporting evidence is provided.

Allocation between Local and National

12. The allocation between local, district and national activities will depend on the amount granted. As a guide the grant will normally be allocated as follows:

- a. **Local:** \$7k per month.

¹ Authority: Presidents Forum minutes of 15 Oct 15

- b. **National / District:** Balance.
- c. **Important:** if claims received exceed the monthly allocation of 7k then claims will only be partially reimbursed on a pro-rata basis.

Processing of Claims by RNZRSA

13. In order to process claims in an efficient, business-like manner, and in accordance with internal financial management requirements, claims will be processed as follows:

- a. Claims will be **processed and paid on a monthly basis.**
- b. Claims need to be **received by RNZRSA by the 15th of the following calendar month** in order to be processed for payment by the end of that calendar month.
- c. On the 15th of each month, the 10k monthly budget will be apportioned over all received claims.
- d. Claims received after the 15th of each month will **not be processed** and will be returned so the claimant can seek reimbursement from their local RSA.
- e. Claims received after the 15th **may** be considered if **extenuating** circumstances exist – through no fault of their own - and is supported by the DSA².

14. Incomplete applications will be returned to the claimant. Factors that will delay payment include:

- a. No 'Individual Activity Sheet.'
- b. Incomplete information.
- c. Illegible writing.
- d. Incorrect calculations.
- e. No signature.
- f. No bank account.
- g. No receipts / other supporting documents.
- h. Not received by the 15th of the following month.

² This is **not** a 'get out of jail free' for claimants who are habitually late with their claims.

Review of policy

15. This policy will be reviewed by the Support Services Committee annually during the grant application process and as circumstances warrant.

Applying for the Grant to VA

16. The RNZRSA is responsible to apply to the Head of VA each year for the grant. In order to allow VA to budget, this submission should be sent to VA by the end of each Calendar Year, for the next Financial Year.

17. VA will provide guidance on the content of the report but it should contain the following as a minimum:

- a. Key considerations for the Minister.
- b. Key statistical reporting from the Individual Activity Sheets.
- c. Summary of the grant's use over the previous financial year.
- d. A high-level forecast of expenditure for the next financial year.

Conditions of the Grant

18. The Grant is made by the Minister of Veterans' Affairs with the following conditions:

- a. It is **not guaranteed** and needs to be applied for each year.
- b. The RNZRSA is responsible to Veterans' Affairs (VA) for the sound financial management of the grant.
- c. The RNZRSA is required to record the specific types of support services activities undertaken (this is the purpose of the 'Individual Activity Form').
- d. The RNZRSA is to provide VA a detailed report on the expenditure of funds against activities within one month of the end of each Financial Year.



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Support Services Manager

Annexes:

- A. Expenses eligible for reimbursement
- B. Expenses not eligible for reimbursement
- C. Making a Claim

Distribution List

National President
 Chief Executive
 Presidents Forum
 District Support Managers
 Base Camp – Support Services Page
 Base Camp Weekly

For Information

Veterans' Affairs

Version Control

Version	Effective Date	Detail
1	9 Mar 17	Original re-issue.
2	4 Feb 19	Increase mileage reimbursement rate from .70c to .73c per km. Monthly budget for LSA expenses reduced from 10k to 7k per month based on two years average expenditure, encouragement for local RSA to use local poppy/welfare funds and requirement to fund increased range of RNZRSA projects.
3	10 Jun 19	Updated DSA to DSM. RNZRSA Operations Manager approving authority for DSM claims (vice RNZRSA SSM). Pg 2. Travel to visit relatives not eligible for reimbursement. Pg. 9.

**Annex A to
Gov Grant Dist Policy
Dated 10 Jun 19**

EXPENSES ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

1. In order to ensure as fair a distribution as possible - particularly for smaller RSAs with less welfare funds – and to comply with the government reporting requirements conditional to the funding, it is necessary to provide clear guidance on the type of expenditure that will be reimbursed by the fund.
2. The approved support services expenses are as follows:
 - a. **Local RSA:**
 - i. For officially appointed Support Advisors and Home & Hospital Visitors only.
 - ii. Mileage³ to :
 - 1) Provide assistance and advice to eligible persons, and/or advocate on their behalf with other agencies.
 - 2) Visit eligible persons in their homes, retirement homes or hospitals.
 - 3) Transport eligible persons to medical appointments – **but only if** there is no entitlement to a travel allowance from VA⁴.
 - 4) Attend funerals.
 - 5) Attend approved Support Services training activities.
 - iii. Costs associated with conducting or attending other approved Support Services activities.
 - iv. Essential car parking fees associated with approved mileage.
 - v. Toll calls.
 - vi. Stationary.
 - vii. Computer consumables.
 - viii. Postage.

³ With effect 1 Feb 19 this is set at .73c per km.

⁴ If a veteran is travelling for treatment associated with an accepted condition they are eligible to claim related travel costs. Claims cannot be accepted for this as it is effectively 'double dipping' from public funds and will not withstand the audit process, exposing the RSA to financial and reputational risk, as well as jeopardising future grants. If Local RSAs are providing transport they will need to make arrangements with the veteran to reimburse full or part costs for the transport provided. The RNZRSA is working with VA to find alternate claim procedures to make this easier for local RSAs but will require the cooperation by local RSAs in the meantime.

b. District:

- i. For officially appointed District Support Advisors (DSAs) only.
- ii. DSA operating expenses (where District funds are not available) including, but not limited to:
 - 1) Support Services recruitment and selection.
 - 2) Support Services training and development.
 - 3) Support Services planning and coordination.
 - 4) Support to national and local Support Services projects.
 - 5) Support to Reviews and Appeals.
 - 6) IT requirements.

c. National:

- i. For RNZRSA Support Services staff and officially appointed RSA Support Advisers resident overseas.
- ii. RNZRSA Support Services operating expenses including, but not limited to:
 - 1) Delivery of Strategies and Annual Plans.
 - 2) Support Services Committee costs.
 - 3) RNZRSA Engagement and Advocacy plans.
 - 4) Appeal Management.
 - 5) Approved Support Services development projects (e.g. training and development).
 - 6) Management of Trusts and Funds.
 - 7) Research and Peer Review.
 - 8) Support to local RSAs and DSAs.
 - 9) Support Services to eligible persons resident overseas (as per 'Local RSA').
 - 10) Access to professional reading material.
 - 11) Conferences.

12) Costs related to data collection and financial administration.

13) DSA IT and equipment requirements.

- d. **Persons other than appointed Support Services staff:** who have been officially appointed to act as such, may be reimbursed provided their appointment is approved prior to carrying out support services activities, by the DSA (if local) or the Support Services Manager (other).

**Annex B to
Gov Grant Dist Policy
Dated 10 Jun 19**

EXPENSES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

1. This funding is **not** for the transport and/or activity costs of general welfare activities (other than for medical issues as previously explained) as this is the purpose of Poppy and/or General Welfare funds.

2. Examples of expenses which will **not** be reimbursed are as follows:

- a. Mileage for the transport of Veterans, in relation to an accepted medical condition, and who are eligible for VA travel assistance (as previously explained).

Rationale: This practice reduces the funds available for those Returned and Service members and their dependants who are not entitled to such VA assistance. It also contradicts the general spirit and conditions under which the grant is made.

- b. Expenses associated with visiting a family member, including parents, uncle, aunt, children, sibling or a cousin, are not eligible for reimbursement.,

Rationale: The RNZRSA considers that, in most reasonable circumstances, this is a routine familial duty and that seeking limited government grant funds to reimburse personal travel costs is not appropriate for a charity to fund. Local Associations are reminded that to be eligible for Government Grant Funding all volunteers, LSA or Home and Hospital Visitor, must be officially appointed by the local executive. Exceptional circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Persons seeking an exception must provide a detailed submission to their District Support Manager, outlining the exceptional circumstances. The DSM will then add their recommendation and forward the submission to the RNZRSA Support Services Manager, who holds the approving authority.

- c. Transportation of people to and from entertainment venues / activities and the cost of such (e.g. Housie, picnics etc).

Rationale: This would create an unsustainable draw on the limited funds available and is the purpose of Poppy and/or General Welfare funds. Thus a clear line is drawn that government funding will only be applied to transport eligible persons for medical reasons only.

- d. Provision of care parcels and other similar welfare material.

Rationale: This is the purpose of Poppy and/or General Welfare funds.

- e. Travel to uplift Poppy funds and deliver them to banks.

Rationale: For the purposes of this policy, this activity is not deemed within the general intent of the grant and would create an unsustainable draw on the fund.

- f. Salaries for Support Services Staff.
- g. A good **rule of thumb** for transportation of people: If the activity is not directly related to obvious medical reasons – then other funds should be used.

MAKING A CLAIM

NB: Scanned and emailed copies of all forms are acceptable and will speed up processing times.

Local:

1. Individuals are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of their own claim forms.
2. Claimants record their monthly activities on the '**Individual Activity Form**'.
3. Claimants complete the '**Claim Form – Support Services**'.
4. Claimants send **both** completed forms to the DSA for checking and approval.
5. The DSA sends **both** forms to National Office for processing **no later than the 15th of the following month.**

DSA:

6. The same process except that DSAs are to have their claim forms signed by their District President (DP) or the RNZRSAS Support Services Manager.

RNZRSA Staff:

7. Raise applicable claim forms to CE approval.

