



SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (SINGAPORE)

Guidance Note 2013

Subsidies for Overseas Trips/Vacation, Approved by 2013 AGM

- In order to make it convenient for the members to claim subsidies for their overseas trips, and at the same time, to ensure good governance while processing of the claims, the Society has prepared this Guidance Note.
- Failure to comply with any of the instructions/guidelines stated under this Guidance Note or Claim Form may result in the entire claim being rejected or delayed.

Terms and Conditions (“T&C”)

General

- (1) Members, who joined the Society after 12 May 2012, will not be eligible for the subsidy.
- (2) Subsidy is meant for reimbursement of the full cost of one (1) overseas trip/vacation only, made within the period – 11 May 2013 to 31 March 2014 (inclusive of the dates) - regardless of who or the number of people travelling with the member.
- (3) The maximum subsidy, which an eligible member can claim, is as follow.
 - (a) \$250: If the member had joined the Society between 1 January 2007 and 12 May 2012 (inclusive of the dates).
 - (b) \$500: If the member had joined the Society before 1 January 2007.

Note: A member can contact Hon. Secretary, Mr. John Gerizim (HP: 9092 6599), if he/she has any enquiry about the date of his/her membership.

- (4) If the overseas trip costs less than the maximum subsidy that the member is allowed to claim, the difference is not claimable.

Submission of claim

- (5) A member shall have to submit the following claim documents, after the trip.
 - (a) Claim Form 2013: Pls fill out details in the prescribed Form (Ref.: SOCEH/AGM2013/Form01-02), which is enclosed herewith, and submit it together with the Travel Document(s) mentioned below.
 - (b) Travel Documents: Pls submit photocopies/printed copies of invoices (hereinafter also referred to as bills, tickets and receipts) and if necessary, other supporting documents, from travel/travel related companies or organizations as per FAQ 2 to 4 (page 3). Where applicable, originals must be produced, if requested.
- (6) The Travel Documents, mentioned above, must contain the following details.
 - (a) Name of the member and the name of the travel/travel related company
 - (b) Date(s) of the trip
 - (c) Amount paid for the trip/expenses. (Where the amount is in foreign currency, the member should also submit the exchange rate. Otherwise, the Society will convert, using a rate, solely at its discretion.)
 - (d) Overseas destination(s) of the trip

- (7) The members can send their claim documents by mail/post at the following address.

Society of Environmental Health (Singapore)
P.O. Box 191
Alexandra Post Office
Singapore 911507

Note: (a) The address must be exactly the same as above.

(b) Since the P.O. Box may not be available after 31 March 2014, the members are requested to mail their documents as soon as possible after the trip.

- (8) Alternatively, the members can arrange to submit their claim documents to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Teo Kok Siong[†] (HP: 9633 9813), either through any Management Committee member or through other arrangements. However, pls do not send your documents by e-mail, as the Society needs hard copies of the documents.

- (9) The claim documents should be received by the Society on or before 15 April 2014.

(10) The members must keep a back-up copy of their claim documents with them, before submitting the documents. The documents submitted to the Society will not be returned to the members. Also, the Society shall not be responsible for any loss of documents or cheque during the transit. For additional details, pls refer to the footnote/disclaimer[†].

(11) The members shall be wholly responsible for submission of their claim documents and ensuring that the documents are received by the Society.

(a) If the member has submitted the documents by hand or in person, the Society will not usually send any acknowledgement.

(b) If the member has submitted the documents via mail, and if he/she has not received any acknowledgement within 2 weeks (via SMS/phone call/letter or other means), the member shall check with Hon. Treasurer - rather than assuming that the Society has indeed received the documents.

Processing of the claims and payment

(12) Subject to the successful processing of the claim, a crossed cheque will be issued in the name of the member. The cheque will be sent either by mail or by hand if such arrangements are made by the member.

(13) The Society will process the claims in good faith. However, if any member is found to have obtained the subsidy fraudulently, the Society reserves the right to recover all money paid to the member, and any cost incurred in the process of recovering such payment, legal or otherwise, shall be borne by the member.

* However, pls do not overwhelm Hon. Treasurer with queries and coordination work.

† Disclaimer

While all efforts are made to provide accurate information in this Guidance Note 2013 and Claim Form 2013, in case they are found to contain any typographical or grammatical error, where the sense allows, such an error shall not invalidate the relevant clauses.

The Society disclaims any liability with regard to the use of this Guidance Note or any misunderstanding or misrepresentation(s) that may occur, and shall not be held liable for any loss or damage(s) whatsoever resulting from the use or reliance on information contained within. The members are advised to seek clarification from the Society (e.g. before the trip) in case of any doubts.

Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQ”)

Note: This set of FAQ should be read in conjunction with the T&C. It provides guidelines, instructions and clarification on certain policy issues.

FAQ on subsidy

- Q.1 My “one” overseas trip consists of several destinations. Can I claim the subsidy for the total cost, in this case?
- A.1 Yes. You can claim subsidy for either total cost or part of the total cost of the trip.
- Q.2 Which companies are considered as travel/travel related companies for the purpose of submitting a claim for subsidy?
- A.2 Where the sense allows, the term travel/travel related companies will include travel agents and trip organizers that sell or arrange overseas transportation, accommodation, tours or trips for travellers, etc. Thus, apart from the traditional travel agents, such companies will also include cruise operators, airlines, overseas hotels, companies that sell on-line travel packages, non-traditional organizers of group trips (e.g. clubs, community centres, religious organizations, employers and others), etc.
- Q.3 During my overseas trip, I did some shopping. Could I submit bills from provision shops, jewellers, departmental stores, souvenir/gift and such other shops?
- A.3 No.
- Q.4 Could I submit train, coach, ferry, taxi and petrol station receipts, and also bills for my dining expenses, e.g. bills from restaurants and eateries?
- A.4 Yes, but submit only if those receipts/bills contain the member’s name. Bills/receipts without the member’s name should not be submitted (important!). Also, only submit photocopies of such receipts/bills.
In general, members are requested to submit claims for only major expenses, and avoid submitting stacks of bills and receipts.
- Q.5 Cost of my own trip is lesser than the max. amount of subsidy that I can claim. However, the total cost, including the cost relating to the persons travelling with me, is higher than the max. subsidy. Can I claim the max. subsidy?
- A.5 Yes, as long as the cost for all such persons is reflected in the Travel Documents issued by the travel/travel related companies, and the relevant documents do contain the details mentioned in para 6 of the T&C. (Pls refer to para 2 of the T&C.)
- Q.6 The total cost of my overseas trip includes the cost of airfare, hotel accommodation, breakfast in the hotel, port/airport tax, airport transfer, etc., which are essentially travel related. Can I claim subsidy for all these costs?
- A.6 Yes, as long as such cost relating to travel related expenses is reflected in the relevant Travel Documents issued by the travel/travel related companies, and the relevant documents do contain details mentioned in para 6 of the T&C. However, pls limit the invoices to major expenses.

- Q.7 Can I claim subsidy for local expenses such as taxi fare for going to Changi airport, or staying in a local hotel?
- A.7 No.
- Q.8 My trip started before 30 March 2014. However, it ended after 30 March 2014. Can I still submit a claim for subsidy?
- A.8 You can submit your claim for the cost incurred towards the onward trip to your destination (e.g. one-way airline ticket) and other relevant expenses (e.g. hotel accommodation) incurred on or before 30 March 2014. Where necessary, the members can divide the package/consolidated cost reflected in the invoices to determine the bona fide expenses, which can be claimed.

FAQ related to claim documents and payment

- Q.9 I have lost my invoice. What should I do?
- A.9 Pls obtain a duplicate copy from the relevant travel company and submit it.
- Q.10 My full name is not mentioned in the invoice issued by the travel company. Is it okay?
- A.10 Member's name should be present in the invoice. However, where the sense allows, it is all right if full name is not mentioned.
- Q.11 Can I hide certain sensitive information in my Travel Documents (e.g. credit card no.), using correction fluid?
- A.11 Yes, as long as details required under para (6) of the T&C are not erased.
- Q.12 Should the date of Travel Documents be within 11 May 2013 to 31 March 2014?
- A.12 This is not necessary if a member had booked the trip before 11 May 2013. However, the trip should have been made within the stated period.
- Q.13 I had made the overseas trip. However, at the time of making payment, my credit card did not work, and my spouse, friend or colleague had made the payment. Can I still claim the subsidy?
- A.13 Yes, but the invoice/travel documents must reflect the member's name; e.g. if it is a hotel bill, the member's name must be reflected in it. Thus, although it is not necessary that the payment for the trip/expenses must be made by the member, care should be taken to ensure that the member's name is included in the relevant travel documents as per para 6 of the T&C. (For issues regarding payment by a member during a group tour, pls refer to FAQ 19 to 21.)
- Q.14 I had paid for the overseas trip/vacation for my family, but I was not able to make the trip. Can I still claim the subsidy?
- A.14 No.

FAQ on claim documents and processing of claims

- Q.15 Can I submit documents through e-mail?

- A.15 No. The Society needs hard copies of the documents for record purpose.
- Q.16 Do I need to submit copies of my boarding passes and pages of my passport showing immigration stamps?
- A.16 No. However, you should keep the relevant documents with you, in case the Society wants to verify the travel claim.
- Q.17 I had sent my documents, but the Society did not receive them. What should I do?
- Q.17 Pls re-submit the documents. Also, keep a back-up copy with you.
- Q.18 How fast my claim will be processed?
- A.18 In general, the Society will try to process the claims as fast as practicable. As a guide, however, members can expect to collect their cheques within about 1 to 2 months. However, at times, processing of the claim may take longer than expected due to any unforeseen circumstances or due to submission of odd/exceptional claims by the members. The members are requested to be patient in such situations.

FAQ on group tours

- Q.19 We have formed a group of 10 members, who will be going overseas with our families. Do we have to prepare the Claim Form individually?
- A.19 Yes. Each member must prepare and sign the Claim Form individually, since the amounts of max. subsidies may vary amongst the members. For common information, the members can photocopy one Claim Form and use the photocopies to prepare their individual Forms.
- Q.20 To earn a group discount, one member, viz. "XYZ", will make the necessary lump sum payment of \$10,000 to the travel company, and later, XYZ will collect the money from other members. Can XYZ claim subsidy on behalf of other members based on the lump sum amount?
- A.20 One member can only claim the max. subsidy that he/she is allowed to claim (i.e. \$500/\$250). The member, XYZ, thus cannot claim a subsidy of \$10,000, on behalf of all 10 members.
- Q.21 In the example above, how can individual members claim their respective subsidies if one invoice was issued by the travel company in the name of XYZ?
- A.21 Each member can submit the Claim Form and photocopies of Travel Documents showing the member's name and other relevant details as mentioned under para (6) of the T&C.
