



Australian Government

Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority

IPEA EDUCATION PROGRAM WORKBOOK

Travel family reunion

LEARNING AREA

4





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Learner Induction:

Please ensure you have an appropriate learning environment before undertaking any training.

An appropriate learning environment would include the following:

- A quiet and undisturbed place
- A well-lit area
- A work station or suitable arrangements
- Comfortable temperature/climate conditions
- Access to amenities
- Access to lap-top, mobile phone—or portable device with internet connection
- Access to IPEA instructor or advice line for assistance
- Familiarity with emergency exits and procedures.

Learning Area Outline Descriptor:

This Learning Area will focus on the rules pertaining to family reunion travel expenses connected to parliamentarians.

This Learning Area will inform the learner about the rules pertaining to family reunion travel expenses, and how it impacts upon their role in the parliamentary landscape.

The Learning Journey:

This Activity Objective will give the learner:

- An understanding of the function and role of IPEA in helping parliamentarians and their staff in their roles
- Knowledge about the Parliamentary Business Resources framework, and how it impacts upon their role
- Important information regarding the provisions, conditions and confirmations required for family reunion travel
- Clarity over what is, and what is not acceptable family reunion travel when making a claim
- Important information such as claiming travel expenses, reporting responsibilities, appropriate use of COMCAR etc. whilst accessing family reunion travel
- An understanding of the legislation surrounding family reunion travel
- Knowledge of the 2 components of family reunion travel available to them and their family members
- Definitions of what is a family member, spouse/nominee, designated person, and dependent child in regards to family reunion travel
- An improved professional relationship between IPEA and its clients
- Clarity, by removing any confusion the learner may have about IPEA's role and functions.

Targeted Learning Outcomes:

By the completion of this Learning Area, the learner will know:

- What constitutes as travel for family reunion purposes
- How is a family member defined for family reunion purposes
- How is a designated person defined for family reunion purposes
- How is a dependent child defined for family reunion purposes
- How a parliamentarian nominates for family reunion purposes
- How family reunion travel is accessed
- The 2 types of family reunion permitted to a parliamentarian are
- What other travel costs are permitted with family reunion travel
- How family reunion budgets are calculated.



You can contact IPEA
for advice via:

Phone: (02) 6215 3000

Email: enquiries@ipea.gov.au



Section 1

Provisions, conditions and confirmations

Travel provisions for family members

- Family members may travel to and from the airport with the parliamentarian by COMCAR.
- If travelling independently, the spouse or nominee (and dependents if accompanying) may also travel by COMCAR to commence or complete a family reunion journey.
- In Canberra, the spouse or nominee may travel by COMCAR between the airport and their accommodation, and between their accommodation and Parliament House.
- Dependent children who are not accompanied by the parliamentarian, their spouse or nominee **cannot** use COMCAR but may use a taxi or rideshare to travel to and from the airport. This cost will be reimbursed by IPEA.
- There are additional family travel expenses available for family of senior office holders or where a spouse or nominee is invited to a prescribed event or function. For details please contact IPEA.

Family Reunion Travel: 1 Budget with 2 components

There are 2 components of family reunion travel which have different budgets or limits.

1. Travel to Canberra and within the local area (cost based limit)

This allows family members to travel between the family members or the parliamentarian's home base and Canberra or places in the State or Territory for which the parliamentarian is a senator, or in which their electorate is located.

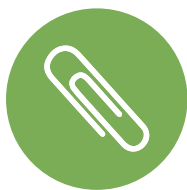
The annual cost based limit is the value of 9 business class return airfares to Canberra for the parliamentarian's spouse or nominee plus 3 economy class return airfares to Canberra for each dependent child. Travel is from their respective home base.

2. Australia-wide travel (trip based limit)

This may be used for family members to travel anywhere in Australia to accompany or join the parliamentarian when they are on parliamentary business.

The annual trip based limit is a total of 3 return business class airfares in total—not each family member—on scheduled commercial transport.

Budget Overspends will be invoiced to the parliamentarian by IPEA.



Note: Further Family Reunion Budget information is covered in Learning Area 7 Budgets.

Learning Activity 1.

FAMILY REUNION TRAVEL: 1 BUDGET WITH 2 COMPONENTS

Q1. Name the 2 components available to parliamentarians and their family under the family reunion travel budget?

1.

2.

Q2. Marry the Travel component (1 and/or 2 from above) with the relevant Travel component details:

Travel component details:	Travel component 1	Travel component 2
9 business class return airfares to Canberra for the parliamentarian's spouse or nominee		
This may be used for family members to travel anywhere in Australia to accompany or join the parliamentarian when they are on parliamentary business		
Travel is from their respective home base		
3 economy class return airfares to Canberra for each dependent child		
The annual trip based limit is a total of 3 return business class airfares in total—not each family member—on scheduled commercial transport		
This allows family members to travel between the family members or the parliamentarian's home base and Canberra or places in the State or Territory for which the parliamentarian is a senator, or in which their electorate is located		
Budget overspends will be invoiced to the parliamentarian by IPEA		



Section 2

Family defined

A parliamentarian's family may travel at Commonwealth expense to accompany or join the parliamentarian when the parliamentarian is travelling within Australia away from their home base to conduct parliamentary business.

- Family includes the parliamentarian's spouse or nominee, dependent children and other eligible family member/s nominated by the parliamentarian.
- A family member, for the purposes of family reunion travel, is defined as:
 - **The parliamentarian's spouse** (including de facto partner) or nominee, a nominee being a person nominated by the Parliamentarian in place of a spouse.
 - **A designated person** in relation to the parliamentarian, who is an individual nominated by the parliamentarian who:
 - Is a member of the parliamentarian's immediate or extended family, or
 - Is substantially dependent on the parliamentarian,
 - Has significant caring responsibilities for—the parliamentarian's spouse or nominee, or dependent child; or another person who is substantially dependent on the parliamentarian.
- **A dependent child** of a parliamentarian means a person whom:
 1. Both of the following apply:
 - The person is less than 16 years of age
 - The parliamentarian is legally responsible (whether alone or jointly with another person) for the day-to-day care, welfare and development of the person, or
 2. Both of the following apply:
 - The person is at least 16 years of age and less than 18 years of age
 - The person is financially dependent on the parliamentarian, or
 3. All of the following apply:
 - The person is 18 years of age or older
 - The person is financially dependent on the parliamentarian
 - The person is undertaking, and has been continuously undertaking, secondary education.

Family reunion travel can be accessed where:

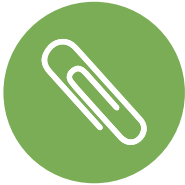
- The parliamentarian is travelling for the dominant purpose of conducting parliamentary business, and
- The family member/s travels to accompany or join the parliamentarian, and
- Travel is for the dominant purpose of facilitating the family life of the parliamentarian.

Nominating

Before accessing family reunion travel, a parliamentarian must nominate their family members in written/email form to IPEA at: enquiries@ipea.gov.au

The email must include:

- The family member's full name,
- Address,
- Relationship to the parliamentarian,
- Closest airport,
- Date of birth (for dependent children only), and;
- Effective date of nomination.



Note: Family structures may change over time, with additions or subtractions from the family unit, so an annual review of family members is recommended.



Learning Activity 2.

FAMILY DEFINED

Q1. Insert the missing word.

'A parliamentarian's family may travel at Commonwealth expense to accompany or join the parliamentarian when the parliamentarian is travelling within Australia away from their home base to conduct _____ business.'

Q2. Select the most appropriate word to fill in the blank space.

Family includes the parliamentarian's spouse or _____, dependent children and other eligible family member/s nominated by the parliamentarian.

nominee	office secretary	defacto
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NOMINATING

Q3. Before accessing family reunion travel, a parliamentarian must nominate their family members in written/email form to IPEA at: enquiries@ipea.gov.au

What information must be included in the email to IPEA about family members?

The family member's:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.



Section 3

Other travel costs

Family members may travel to and from the airport with the parliamentarian by COMCAR.

If travelling independently, the spouse or nominee (and dependents if accompanying) may also travel by COMCAR to commence or complete a family reunion journey.

In Canberra, the spouse or nominee may travel by COMCAR between the airport and their accommodation, and between their accommodation and Parliament House.

Dependent children who are not accompanied by the parliamentarian, their spouse or nominee **cannot** use COMCAR but may use a taxi or rideshare to travel to and from the airport. This cost will be reimbursed by IPEA.

There are additional family travel expenses available for family of senior office holders or where a spouse or nominee is invited to a prescribed event or function. For details please contact IPEA.

COMCAR relevant legislation:

Parliamentary Business Resources (*Commonwealth Transport*) Determination 2017

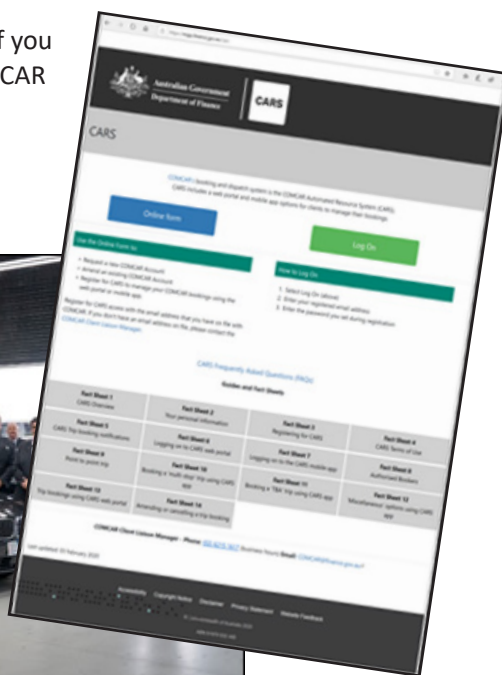
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2018N00001>

COMCAR Automated Resource System (CARS)

If you haven't already registered for CARS, or if you would like further information, then give COMCAR Client Liaison a call on:

(02) 6215 1617 or send them a message at:

COMCAR@finance.gov.au





Learning Activity 3.

OTHER TRAVEL COSTS

Q1. Place a tick ✓ in the corresponding Family members' box when they are permitted to use COMCAR given the examples below:

Examples of COMCAR use:	Family members:		
	Parliamentarian	Spouse or nominee	Dependent children
Travel to and from the airport with the parliamentarian by COMCAR.			
If travelling independently, travel by COMCAR to commence or complete a family reunion journey.			
In Canberra, travel by COMCAR between the airport and their accommodation, and between their accommodation and Parliament House.			
Families who are not accompanied by the parliamentarian, their spouse or nominee cannot use COMCAR but may use a taxi or rideshare to travel to and from the airport. This cost will be reimbursed by IPEA.			



Note: There are additional family travel expenses available for family of senior office holders or where a spouse or nominee is invited to a prescribed event or function. For details please contact IPEA



Section 4



FAQ's:

How do I nominate family members or advise of changes to family members' situations?

To change previous nominations or nominate new family members, a parliamentarian must nominate their family members in written/email form to IPEA at: enquiries@ipea.gov.au

The email must include:

- The family member's full name,
- Address,
- Relationship to the parliamentarian,
- Closest airport,
- Date of birth (for dependent children only), and;
- Effective date of nomination.

What is the definition of a dependent child?

A parliamentarian's dependent child means:

- a. The person is less than 16, and the parliamentarian is legally responsible (whether alone or jointly) for the day-to-day care, welfare and development of the person
or;
- b. The person is at least 16 years of age and less than 18 years of age, and financially dependent on the parliamentarian
or;
- c. The person is 18 years of age or older, is financially dependent on the parliamentarian, and is undertaking, and has been undertaking continuously, secondary (high school) education.

What is the difference between the ‘Canberra and Local Area’ and the ‘Australia wide’ family reunion travel limits?

The family reunion budget has 2 components for nominated family members:

- a. Canberra and Local Area—when a parliamentarian is travelling for the dominant purpose of parliamentary business, their nominated travellers may travel to Canberra or within the parliamentarian’s electorate to be with the parliamentarian to facilitate their family life. This is a limited monetary budget calculated by IPEA and can only be used for family reunion travel at the parliamentarian’s discretion.
- b. Australia Wide—when a parliamentarian is travelling for the dominant purpose of parliamentary business, their nominated travellers may travel anywhere in Australia to be with the parliamentarian to facilitate their family life. Travel is limited to 3 return trips in total (not per family member) per financial year for nominated family members.

Can family members travel at business class?

Yes, subject to the respective family reunion budget, family members may travel at business class.

Can family members access COMCAR independently when travelling for family reunion purposes?

Only a spouse/nominee may travel independently in a COMCAR. Other nominated family members **cannot** access COMCAR without the parliamentarian’s or the spouse/nominee’s presence.



Answers to Learning Activities:

Learning Activity 1.

FAMILY REUNION TRAVEL: 1 BUDGET WITH 2 COMPONENTS

Q1. Name the 2 components available to parliamentarians and their family under the family reunion travel budget?

1. **Travel to Canberra and within the local area (cost based limit)**

2. **Australia-wide travel (trip based limit)**

Q2. Marry the Travel component (1 and/or 2 from above) with the relevant Travel component details:

Travel component details:	Travel component 1	Travel component 2
9 business class return airfares to Canberra for the parliamentarian’s spouse or nominee	Canberra	
This may be used for family members to travel anywhere in Australia to accompany or join the parliamentarian when they are on parliamentary business		Australia
Travel is from their respective home base	Canberra	
3 economy class return airfares to Canberra for each dependent child	Canberra	
The annual trip based limit is a total of 3 return business class airfares in total—not each family member—on scheduled commercial transport		Australia
This allows family members to travel between the family members or the parliamentarian’s home base and Canberra or places in the State or Territory for which the parliamentarian is a senator, or in which their electorate is located	Canberra	
Budget overspends will be invoiced to the parliamentarian by IPEA		Australia



Learning Activity 2.

FAMILY DEFINED

Q1. Insert the missing word.

'A parliamentarian's family may travel at Commonwealth expense to accompany or join the parliamentarian when the parliamentarian is travelling within Australia away from their home base to conduct **parliamentary** business.'

Q2. Select the most appropriate word to fill in the blank space.

Family includes the parliamentarian's spouse or **nominee**, dependent children and other eligible family member/s nominated by the parliamentarian.

nominee	office secretary	defacto
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NOMINATING

Q3. Before accessing family reunion travel, a parliamentarian must nominate their family members in written/email form to IPEA at: enquiries@ipea.gov.au

What information must be included in the email to IPEA about family members?

The family member's:

1. Full name
2. Address
3. Relationship to the parliamentarian
4. Closest airport
5. Date of birth (for dependent children only)
6. And effective date of nomination



Learning Activity 3.

OTHER TRAVEL COSTS

Q1. Place a tick ✓ in the corresponding Family members' box when they are permitted to use COMCAR given the examples below:

Examples of COMCAR use:	Family members:		
	Parliamentarian	Spouse or nominee	Dependent children
Travel to and from the airport with the parliamentarian by COMCAR.	✓	✓	✓
If travelling independently, travel by COMCAR to commence or complete a family reunion journey.		✓	✓
In Canberra, travel by COMCAR between the airport and their accommodation, and between their accommodation and Parliament House.		✓	
Family who are not accompanied by the parliamentarian, their spouse or nominee cannot use COMCAR but may use a taxi or rideshare to travel to and from the airport. This cost will be reimbursed by IPEA.			



Note: There are additional family travel expenses available for family of senior office holders or where a spouse or nominee is invited to a prescribed event or function. For details please contact IPEA



Resources:

Resources available include:

- The IPEA ED website <https://www.ipea.gov.au/ed>
- The IPEA: A Quick reference guide to Travel related expenses for parliamentarians and their staff (handbook)
- IPEA Training Resources: Publications, Factsheets, FAQ's and Power-point presentations i.e. 'What are the Obligations'—Factsheet: https://www.ipea.gov.au/sites/default/files/fact_sheet_-_what_are_the_obligations.pdf
- IPEA Training Sessions, Education Sessions, Face-to-face, One-on-one, Drop-in sessions, Electorate Office Visits, and/or Webinars
- *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* (PBR Act)
- *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations* (PBR Regulations)
- Determinations made under the PBR Act
- Parliamentary Business Resources (Commonwealth Transport) Determination 2017 <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2018N00001>

How to contact IPEA for further assistance?

Email: enquiries@ipea.gov.au

Phone: +61 (02) 6215 3000