

Increases in public service 'Domestic Subsistence Allowances' sanctioned

Brian Sheehan

Increases in standard public service subsistence allowances came into effect this week, in foot of a new government circular.

The rates were recently reviewed in accordance with an agreed recommendation made by the 'General Council under the Scheme of Conciliation and Arbitration for the Civil Service'.

The regulations apply to all civil servants, including departmental grades.

The changes came into effect on Wednesday, January 29. From that date, the overnight rate increased from €195 to €205.53.

Also, in accordance with agreed procedures and in line with changes to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the daily subsistence '5-Hour rate' of €17.92 rises to €19.25, and the '10 Hour rate' of €42.99 rises to €46.17.

Future arrangements covering all travel and subsistence payments "will include a mechanism for reductions in rates to reflect any future downturn of the relevant CPI Element".

A Vouched Accommodation Rate for Dublin continues to apply where officers encounter difficulties in sourcing suitable accommodation in Dublin within the standard rate.

In such cases, a Vouched Accommodation Rate will remain the vouched costs of accommodation up to a limit of the standard overnight rate (€205.53) plus €46.17 (2 meal – 10 Hour Rate).

STANDARD RATE

The Department of Public Expenditure circular (4/2025) says that in accordance with existing policy, "where an officer sources accommodation that exceeds the cost of the standard overnight rate or vouched accommodation rate as appropriate, they will be solely responsible for meeting the additional accommodation expense".

Attention is drawn to Paragraph 3 of Circular 11/1982 which concerns 'Travelling and Subsistence Regulations', which states that the 'subsistence allowance payable is not intended to meet the whole cost of subsistence'.

The standard overnight rate will continue to apply where officers source accommodation and meals in Dublin "within the rate".

Where officers cannot source accommodation within this rate, they may claim the VA rate. "Accommodation costs while claiming the VA rate must be vouched", the circular says.