



**Western Cape  
Government**

Western Cape Education Department  
Directorate: Institutional Management and Governance

***Directions for the application of hostel subsidies  
and the allocation of hostel subsidies for public  
schools with hostels***

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 These directions are issued, in terms of section 37(1) of the South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996 (Act 84 of 1996), to all public schools with hostels in the Western Cape in order to successfully manage the applications for hostel subsidies and the allocation of hostel subsidies to public schools with hostels.
- 1.2 On 01 January 1999, all public school hostels under the auspices of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) migrated to a uniform system known as the Economic Management System. Under the Economic Management System, the day-to-day operations of hostels became the responsibility of the governing bodies (SGB) and they must finance their working expenditure from boarding fees and fundraising.
- 1.3 Mindful of the fact that the WCED is guided by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, whereby every learner has the right to education, learners whose only means of attending school is to reside in a hostel are afforded the opportunity to apply for a hostel subsidy.

## **2. Objectives**

- 2.1 To give effect to the legislative requirements of Regulation 16(4) of the Regulations Relating to the Management and Control of Hostels at Public Schools and the Control over the Immovable Property and Equipment of Hostels under the Western Cape Education Department published in Provincial Gazette 7066 of 28 November 2012 (Regulations).
- 2.2 To provide directions to the SGB on how to process applications for hostel subsidies.

## **3. Legislative prescripts and regulatory framework**

- 3.1 Regulation 16 of the Regulations Relating to the Management and Control of Hostels at Public Schools and the Control over the Immovable Property and Equipment of Hostels under the Western Cape Education Department.
- 3.2 Section 63(1)(a) of the Western Cape Provincial School Education Act, 1997 (Act 12 of 1997).
- 3.3 South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996 (Act 84 of 1996).
- 3.4 National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF).

## **4. Application process for hostel subsidies (learners)**

### **4.1 Procedures to be followed when applying for a hostel subsidy**

- 4.1.1 In terms of Regulation 16(4) of the Regulations, parents of learners may apply annually to the Head of Department (HoD) or delegated official, in accordance with procedures determined by him or her, for a hostel subsidy.
- 4.1.2 No learner may receive a hostel subsidy if he/she is already the recipient of a transport bursary or before he/she has been admitted to a hostel.
- 4.1.3 The hostel subsidy per learner amount is determined annually in terms of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999), the South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996 (Act 84 of 1996), and the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF). Although parents/guardians may qualify for a full subsidy they will always be held accountable for a compulsory parent contribution, as determined by the HoD from time to time.
- 4.1.4 When considering applications for a hostel subsidy it is essential that the SGB is aware of the definition of a parent and the following will assist in this regard:
- (a) Paragraph (c) of the definition of "parent" in section 1 of the SASA encompasses far more than simply taking over financial responsibilities for a learner. A person who complies with paragraph (c) should be interpreted as someone who has stepped into the shoes of a parent by taking over parental responsibilities – such as enrolling the learner at a school and hostel. Such a person is providing the learner with that which a biological or adoptive parent would provide to his/her child.
  - (b) Given the wording of paragraph (c), the person taking over the responsibilities for a learner has to state it under oath in an affidavit in order to ascertain the extent of the responsibilities taken over. In addition, an affidavit from the parent of the learner (or in whose care the child is placed in terms of the law), indicating the details of the person who has taken over parental responsibilities and what responsibilities have been taken over, must also be submitted to the school. Governing bodies must take the gross salary or wages of the person who complies with paragraph (c) of the definition of parent into account in order to calculate the percentage of hostel subsidy that they will qualify for.
  - (c) In cases where a school has sufficient grounds to question a person who claims to comply with paragraph (c) of the definition of a parent, the circuit manager should be requested to undertake an investigation, accompanied by a social worker from the Department of Social Development, which could be a home visit and/or interviews with the learner, parent and person who has taken over the parenting responsibilities.
  - (d) The WCED has been advised that the definitions of "parent" and "learner" provided in the SASA do not distinguish between citizens and non-citizens and should be purposively interpreted to include refugees and asylum seekers with section 22 permits (an asylum seeker permit issued in terms of section 22 of the Refugees Act, 1998 (Act 130 of 1998)). The obligation of a public school and hostel to admit a learner even if his/her parent is unable to afford the boarding fees, is integral to ensure the realisation of the child's right to receive basic education, as protected by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, where the interests of the child are paramount. Refugee and asylum

seeker parents also have an obligation, in terms of section 34 of the Refugees Act, 1998 (Act 130 of 1998), read with section 3(1) of the SASA, to ensure that their children attend school and, where necessary, board in a hostel. Where such a parent is unable to afford the boarding fees, he/she is entitled to apply for a hostel subsidy whether his/her dependent child, for whatever reason, has the requisite documentation or not.

- (e) The WCED delegated official will also verify the completeness and accuracy of the application information against the compliance requirements prior to the approval of the hostel subsidy application to ensure that subsidies are given to eligible learners.
- (f) Please note that the gross annual income of both parents, excluding that of a foster- or step-parent, will be taken into account. In cases of retirement benefits for example a once off payment or a pension payable, documentary proof must be submitted of the benefits received. If parents are divorced, proof of maintenance being paid should be produced. This includes state and foster care subsidies as well as cases where learners are placed in children's homes.
- (g) Applicants who earn their income by way of private undertakings, trading companies, farming or peddling (hawking) should have Addendum A of the application form completed by an auditor, accountant or bookkeeper. The name and signature of the person who completes the return must be recorded in the addendum.
- (h) If an applicant is unemployed, written proof of his/her dismissal must be attached to the application. Although the aforementioned proof which is signed by the former employer is preferred, the confirmation by the principal that the applicant, to the best of his/her knowledge, is unemployed (in paragraph 8 of the application form) would be acceptable. It should also be mentioned whether Unemployment Insurance Fund benefits are being received and for which period.

4.1.5 The following procedures must be followed when applying to the HoD or delegated official for a hostel subsidy:

- (a) Applications that comply with the following criteria will be considered for a hostel subsidy:
  - (i) The parents/guardian(s) of the learner must reside further than 5 km (along the shortest public route) from the school.
  - (ii) No public or learner transport scheme to the school or surrounding schools must be available.
  - (iii) Learners must attend their nearest suitable (in terms of language of learning and teaching and curriculum) school.
  - (iv) The parents/guardian(s) of the learner must live within the Western Cape Province.
  - (v) Conditions (i) to (iv) must be confirmed by the circuit manager.

- (b) Taking the social economic circumstances of learners into account, the following cases (duly motivated report by a social worker to be attached to the application) will also be considered but not necessarily approved:
- (i) Single parent as the breadwinner, where the learner is left unsupervised during the day or night due to the parent's work commitments.
  - (ii) Inadequate conditions at home that make effective study impossible.
  - (iii) Social problems at the parent/guardian's residence which may have a negative impact on the learner's studies.
  - (iv) The learner has behavioural problems of such a nature that residence in a hostel will be to his/her advantage.
  - (v) Any circumstances which, in the opinion of the HoD or delegated official, will make it advisable for the learner to attend school while boarding at a hostel.
- (c) The application and claims processes has been automated and must be completed on CEMIS by the principal and on EduInfoSearch by the circuit manager as prescribed below. However, if any school experiences challenges with internet connectivity for extended periods the principal must complete the applications and claims manually and submit it to the circuit manager. The circuit manager must complete his/her recommendation on the application and or claim and submit it to the Directorate Financial Accounting (DFA).

## 4.2 Duties of the Principal

4.2.1 The principal must review the application by comparing the following information to criticality determine the reliability and integrity of information before recommending the application:

Information source	Output
Google Maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the nearest school to the learner's home</li> <li>• Determine the distance to the nearest school from the learner's home</li> <li>• Determine the distance to the school enrolled</li> </ul>
CEMIS System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine whether no learner transport scheme is available</li> <li>• Check the quarterly learner absenteeism report</li> <li>• Verify learner details</li> </ul>

4.2.2 Where a learner is recommended for a hostel subsidy at a school that is not his/her nearest school, the principal must provide a detailed motivation to support his/her recommendation. The principal/delegated official must timeously update CEMIS in instances where there is a movement of learners to ensure accurate learner numbers on the system.

4.2.3 The principal must load all completed applications and relevant documents onto CEMIS from where the circuit manager will attend to it.



### **4.3 Duties of the Circuit Manager**

- 4.3.1 The circuit manager must access the applications on EduInfoSearch and ensure that all the relevant documents, as mentioned in paragraphs 4.1.4 and 4.2.1 are attached to the application prior to his/her recommendation.
- 4.3.2 Identified discrepancies in the subsidy application and instructions for corrective action should be formally communicated to the principal to ensure credible information is gathered before an application is approved.
- 4.3.3 The circuit manager must submit the completed applications to DFA via EduInfoSearch.

### **5. Application process for hostel subsidies (schools)**

- 5.1 Principals of schools with hostels are compelled to ensure that they have submitted the following documents to the District Director before they can apply for hostel subsidies:
- (a) Audited financial statement (annually by 30 June) on the financial affairs of the school, which includes the hostel income and expenses, to the HoD.
  - (b) Certificate of Sound Financial Management (Annexure A) annually at the beginning of the academic school year.
  - (c) Bi-annual report (WCED043) (Annexure B).
- 5.2 The applications will be dealt with as follow:
- (i) Existing applicants: Duly completed application forms (WCED 076), as uploaded to CEMIS by the principal and recommended by the circuit manager on EduInfoSearch must be finalised by no later than 30 June. By 30 September all hostels will be informed in writing by DFA of the names of the learners whose application for a hostel subsidy were approved. The first payment of subsidies for those learners will be paid by 31 January.
  - (ii) New applications: All new learner applications must be uploaded to CEMIS by the principal and recommended by the circuit manager on EduInfoSearch by no later than 31 January. Non-compliance of the above will lead to no subsidies paid to the school. By 28 February all hostels will be informed in writing by DFA of the names of the learners whose application for a hostel subsidy were approved. The first payment of subsidies for those learners will be paid by 15 March.

Non-compliance of the above will lead to no subsidies paid to a school.

- 5.3 Hostels will be supplied with an allocation list by DFA, with the authorisation numbers, as well as the subsidy amount that has been awarded to each learner. A claim form (WCED 077) should be submitted quarterly in accordance with the allocation list on CEMIS.
- 5.4 Please be advised that quarterly subsidy payments will only be processed if a quarterly attendance register of the learners being claimed for is submitted on CEMIS with the claim form and if the principal confirms, via the disclaimer on CEMIS, that the learners are residing at the hostel.

## 6 Submission of Claim form (WCED 077)

- 6.1 Claim forms must be completed by the principal and circuit manager on CEMIS and EduInfoSearch in the same manner as indicated at paragraphs 4 and 5 above. In the event of a new enrolment, the duly completed application form must accompany the claim form.
- 6.2 The principal must inform the SGB of the total claims submitted on CEMIS at a quorate meeting. The principal must also complete the disclaimer on CEMIS that the claims were presented to a quorate SGB meeting.
- 6.3 Claim forms must be accompanied by an attendance register of the learners being claimed for on CEMIS. The attendance register must contain the following information:

Name of Learner	Emis Number	Grade	Days in the quarter	Days present	Days absent
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- 6.4 In the event of a learner leaving a hostel, the portion of the subsidy to which the hostel is not entitled must be repaid to the WCED, in accordance with the attendance register as indicated at paragraph 6.3.

## 6 Procedures to be followed for non-payment of hostel fees

- 7.1 It is imperative that SGBs view the non-payment of hostel fees in the same light as the non-payment of school fees, as prescribed in section 41 (7) of the SASA, and ensure that these provisions are incorporated into the school's finance policy.
- 7.2 SGB members and staff dealing with school or hostel fees must follow due processes before taking action against a parent for the non-payment of hostel fees. It is emphasised that no learner may be deprived of his/her right to participate in all aspects of the programme of a public school, despite the non-payment of hostel fees by his/her parents, and no learner may be victimised in any manner.

Approved / Not approved.



**B WALTERS**  
**HEAD: EDUCATION**

**DATE:**

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