



# **EMERGENCY STAFFING SCHEME**

**GUIDELINES 2026**

**for ESS Principals**

## Information and requirements for ESS Principals

Principals are contracted to be available at short notice to provide emergency staffing in schools approved for ESS use by the GovHub's ESS National Coordinator.

GovHub is not the employer of any ESS Principal. Any board utilising the emergency staffing scheme becomes the employer of the ESS Principal for the period the ESS Principal is employed by that board.

ESS Principals enter into a Retainer Contract with GovHub. This is not an employment contract but an agreement for the ESS Principal to be available for employment.

Engagement as an ESS Principal does not imply or guarantee that the principal concerned will receive employment with a school board. The coordinator of the ESS scheme is the sole judge of whether ESS staffing is warranted, and which ESS Principal is to be provided.

The engagement on retainer of ESS Principals is:

- normally for no more than twelve months
- subject to the signing of an Emergency Staffing Scheme Retainer Contract
- dependent upon the ESS Principal being available at short notice to fill a vacancy for any period of time up to 10 weeks for any one engagement
- recognised through the payment of a retainer which is paid in quarterly instalments

The continued payment of the quarterly retainer is dependent on confirmation that the ESS Principal remains available for emergency staffing and meets the terms and conditions of their retainer contract. Should the ESS Principals circumstances change, and this has not been notified to the national coordinator, an overpayment of the quarterly retainer could arise. ESS Principals should note that in these circumstances GovHub may seek to recover the overpayment.

The ESS national coordinator is the ESS Principals first point of contact should there be any difficulties or queries.

ESS Principals:

- must be registered, hold a current practising certificate and have a quality teaching and principal background
- enter into an employment relationship with a school board engaging the ESS Principal under the ESS scheme for the period agreed
- normally undertake a period of engagement of up to ten weeks

The school board, as the employer, is required to ensure contractual provisions are met including managing any performance concerns that may arise. ESS Principals need to be aware that if the board considers the ESS Principals performance to be unsatisfactory, the board is required to immediately report these concerns to the ESS national coordinator at GovHub.

GovHub or the ESS national coordinator will investigate any negative report furnished by the board to GovHub, and after listening to and fairly considering the ESS Principals response, make a decision as to whether or not the ESS Principal will be retained on the scheme. This may occur during a period of employment between the ESS Principal and a board or at the conclusion of the period of employment.

GovHub has the right to decide whether or not the ESS Principal is in default of the contract of retainer to be available for employment and to cancel the contract in accordance with its provisions.

If the contract to be available as an ESS Principal is cancelled, the payment of quarterly retainers will cease.

## Salary and Expenses

### Payment of ESS Principals Salary

In most instances, positions to be covered by the ESS Principal will be vacant and their salary will be paid as per teachers' salaries.

The following table outlines how the ESS Principals salary is to be paid:

If the position to be covered by the ESS Principal is...	then the ESS Principals salary is...
currently vacant	paid from Teachers' Salaries.  The board becomes the ESS Principals employer with the provisions of the relevant Collective Agreement applying, including the school roll-based salary component.  ESS Principals are paid at the rate applicable to their qualifications and experience as approved by Ed Pay.
to cover a principal on long-term leave with pay (and sick leave)	met by the board from its operational funding.  You can apply for additional relief teacher funding in the usual way if your situation meets the conditions outlined in the additional relief teacher funding scheme.  <a href="#">Additional relief teacher funding</a>

The board becomes the ESS Principals employer with the provisions of the relevant CA applying. ESS Principals are paid at the rate applicable to their qualifications and experience as approved by Ed Pay. ESS Principals are not employed by GovHub.

## Professional Development

A fund of \$500 is available for each principal per annum as a contribution towards their professional development. To access this, principals need to submit a professional development plan to the GovHub National Coordinator prior to the release of this funding. The plan should identify the specific professional development needs of the principal and the activities to be undertaken to help meet these needs.

## Expenses claimed by ESS Principal and reimbursed by the MoE

Expense	Entitlement
Principal <b>living at normal place</b> of residence and travelling between 20 to 100 kilometres each way to placement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reimbursement of return travel (1 trip per day) between normal place of residence and the school.</li> <li>2. Mileage is reimbursed at the travel rate as per the collective agreement per kilometre</li> <li>3. Additional costs may be considered with prior approval by the Ministry</li> <li>4. For health and safety, daily travel should not exceed more than 100kms each way</li> </ol>
Principal <b>living away</b> from their normal place of residence (placement must be at least 50 kilometres away)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Travel from normal place of residence to accommodation at the start of placement and trip home at end of placement. Mileage will be paid at the travel rate as per collective agreement per kilometre</li> <li>2. If the school is more than 20km from accommodation (each way), one return trip from accommodation to school per day at the travel rate as per collective agreement per kilometre</li> <li>3. Actual and reasonable accommodation expenses including rental and power. Receipts will be required.</li> <li>4. Daily meals and incidentals allowance of \$22 per day. No receipts are required. Note: the daily allowance will not be paid for trips home during term time.</li> <li>5. Trips home during term time: Return travel between the school and normal place of residence every four weeks per placement (or maximum of 2 return home trips per 10-week placement, including trips home for public holidays). Travel rate as per collective agreement per kilometre. Accommodation costs will continue to be paid if required. The daily meals and incidental allowance of \$22 per day will not be paid for trips home during term time.</li> <li>6. Additional costs such as flights and rental cars may be considered with prior approval by the Ministry.</li> </ol>

For up-to-date allowances, please check the Ministry of Education website [HERE](#)

## Additional information

- If the placement has been approved for extension beyond 10 weeks, accommodation may be paid over the holiday period (depending on circumstances) but no daily meals / incidentals will be covered.
- Any other travel home during term time (in addition to point 5 above) will be at the expense of the ESS Principal.

## Prior Approvals

Any additional costs or extensions to initial ESS placements need prior approval from the Ministry. Requests for these must be submitted via the GovHub ESS national coordinator.

## Administration of Accommodation and Travel Claims

The board employing the ESS Principal is initially responsible for the payment of travel expenses and the daily meals and incidentals allowance. The Ministry of Education (MoE) will reimburse these expenses to the employing board.

To be reimbursed for these expenses, the school board will need to provide the Ministry with documentation / evidence that these costs were either paid by the ESS Principal and then reimbursed by the School Board to the principal or paid directly by the Board on the principals behalf (for example, accommodation costs). Evidence can be provided by invoices and receipts. The Ministry is only able to reimburse costs that have been directly paid out of board funds.

### *How to claim reimbursement for qualifying ESS expenses*

Stage	Description
1	The ESS Principal submits their claim to the board for any of the above expenses they have incurred. They must submit the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Receipts for travel and accommodation expenses (where applicable)</li><li>• The Emergency Staffing Scheme Claim form</li></ul>
2	The board initially pays the qualifying expenses from its operational funding.
3	The board seeks reimbursement from the Resourcing division of the Ministry for the actual costs paid. The Ministry will only reimburse expenses listed above.

Boards should send each claim for reimbursement of expenses to the Resourcing Division, Ministry of Education, [resourcing@education.govt.nz](mailto:resourcing@education.govt.nz) and include:

- the completed Emergency Staffing Scheme Claim form.
- a copy of the letter from the ESS National Coordinator to the board confirming the ESS Principals appointment.
- evidence of payment of these expenses to the ESS Principal from Board funds, or evidence of expenses paid directly by the Board on the principals behalf.

### **Final date for claims – 31 March**

The final date for processing claims for any school year will be 31 March of the following year.

Claims received at the Resourcing Division after this date will not be actioned. Nor will claims received prior to the cut-off date where appropriate and full documentation didn't accompany the claim.



## Emergency Staffing Scheme Claim Form

Application information					
School name				School no.	
Contact email					
ESS principal's name				MOE no.	
Place of residence					
Appointment details					
Period of ESS appointment	From	to	Period of this claim	From	to
For principals living at normal place of residence:					
Daily travel between normal place of residence and school (no. days x km per day @ 83c per km)			km@83c per km	\$	
Additional costs (prior approval by the Ministry essential)			Pre-approved	\$	
For principals living away from normal place of residence:					
Return travel from normal place of residence to appointment at start and end of placement			km@83c per km	\$	
Return travel to normal place of residence during term time (if applicable)			km@83c per km	\$	
Accommodation costs (includes weekends/excludes school holidays, unless an extension has been approved)			Actual and reasonable	\$	
Daily meals and incidentals allowance (includes weekends/excludes school holidays/excludes trips home during term)			\$22 inc. GST per day	\$	
One return trip from accommodation to school if more than 20km one way (no. days x km per day @ 83c per km)			km@83c per km	\$	
Additional costs (prior approval by the Ministry essential)			Pre-approved	\$	
			Total claim	\$	

**Application must include:**

- A copy of the letter from the ESS national co-ordinator confirming the ESS principal's appointment
- Evidence of payment of these expenses to the ESS Principal from Board funds or evidence of expenses paid directly by the Board on the principal's behalf

**Certification**

I certify that I have checked the information on this form, to the best of my knowledge, is true and correct in every particular

<b>School Board Presiding Member signature:</b>		Date:	
<b>ESS principal signature:</b>		Date:	

Send to: [resourcing@education.govt.nz](mailto:resourcing@education.govt.nz)

# Appendix One

## ESS - Example Duties and Standards

### **Principals**

The ESS Principal will be required to undertake the principal's role ensuring the continuation of high quality education to the students of the school.

The principal:

- will report and be accountable to the school board through the presiding member
- has the dual role of being a board member in his/her own right whilst undertaking the role of the chief executive of the school as per the principal's professional standards
- will be responsible for ensuring ongoing management and leadership of the school by taking direction from the school charter, the board, and the board's policies
- manage the day to day running of the school
- undertake teaching duties where required.

## Appendix Two

### GovHub Contacts and Resources

If you require assistance, please contact:

Lucienne Shelley  
ESS National Coordinator  
Phone: 021 190 7273  
Email: [lshelley@govhub.org.nz](mailto:lshelley@govhub.org.nz)

### GovHub Advisory Support Services

Call **0800 782 435** for assistance and you will be given the following options:

- Option 1** – Governance advice
- Option 2** – Employment advice
- Option 3** – Elections
- Option 4** – Other enquiries

### Employment Issues

GovHub maintains a free specialist employment advisory service which can be accessed by school boards. This advisory service is available to assist school boards with issues which may arise in the board's role as the employer. Boards are encouraged to utilise this service at the first sign of any employment related problem arising.

The work undertaken by the advisors ranges from answering quite simple helpdesk queries to assisting member boards through complex disciplinary or competency situations, as examples.

You can also contact us by sending an email to [eradvice@govhub.org.nz](mailto:eradvice@govhub.org.nz)