



CANCELLATION, WITHDRAWAL, CHANGE AND ABSENTEEISM POLICY

The following is an extract from the CPA Travel Policy and Manual alongside additional information and clarification. The CPA Travel Policy and Manual was approved by the CPA International Executive Committee in April 2023.

This Policy provides travellers with examples of acceptable and unacceptable mitigating circumstances for withdrawing, cancelling or changing booked travel and accommodation to attend a CPA activity or meeting which will incur a financial penalty to the CPA.

Given the high financial and environmental costs associated with the delivery of in-person programmes and activities, it is essential that travellers can commit to fully attend such activities. As such, any last-minute withdrawal or change to a traveller's attendance, which has resulted in the CPA incurring an unnecessary cost, these costs, in part or as a whole will be passed on to the traveller or Branch unless they are able to produce justifiable reasons. Furthermore, travellers or their Branches may be liable for costs associated with changes to bookings due to inaccurate or misleading information being provided. For example, incorrect passport details provided when booking flights or not informing the CPA if group booking accommodation is required.

For the purposes of this Policy, justifiable reasons or 'mitigating circumstances' are serious occurrences beyond the traveller or Branch's control, and which significantly disrupts the traveller's ability to participate fully in an activity, programme or meeting in-person. Mitigating circumstances refer only to the following situations:

- a) Experiences unforeseen/unexpected visa issues (having applied for visas in good time and having followed the application requirements).
- b) General elections are unexpectedly called
- c) Suffers significant illness, accident, or injury.
- d) Experiences sudden death or illness of immediate family member.
- e) Victim of a serious crime.
- f) Seriously impacted by an unexpected natural disaster.

Travellers will be expected to provide proof of the above in good time, in writing, with accompanying evidence to the CPA Headquarters Secretariat. The decision as to its validity will be determined by the CPA Secretary-General and all decisions are final.



The CPA Headquarters Secretariat recognises that exceptional circumstances may arise that do not fall within the predefined categories. In such cases, participants may submit a written request explaining their situation, along with any supporting evidence. The CPA Secretary-General will review these requests on a case-by-case basis, considering the specific circumstances.

Where such evidence is unable to be provided or an adequate justification given, the Branch in question will be invoiced for the costs incurred. The Branch is then at liberty to pass on such costs to the traveller(s) should they feel that is appropriate.

It is important to highlight that should such fees not be paid; this may count towards the Branch's financial standing with the Association. Consequently, the Branch may be restricted in being represented at future events and activities hosted by the CPA until such sums are recovered. In circumstances whereby a Branch or traveller is unable to reimburse the CPA due to serious financial constraints, they must inform the CPA's Finance Team at finance@cpahq.org immediately.

The following definitions are also provided for clarity:

- **'Last-minute'** is defined as anytime following the approval of a participant's nomination to attend a CPA activity and where a cost for that participant has been incurred by the CPA.
- **'Having applied for visas in good time'** means having submitted visa applications and associated permissions via internal/external Ministries immediately following the approval of nominations and receipt of visa support letters/note verbale.
- **'Proof'** can mean police reports, death certificates, medical records, visa application forms, etc.

Absenteeism

The following is an additional policy associated with the level of attendance of travellers (parliamentary participants, mentees and resource persons) involved in CPA funded or part-funded in-person activities.

The CPA is keen to ensure that the value of its activities is of maximum benefit to its participants, and by extension their Parliament and wider jurisdiction. In-person activities funded and delivered by the CPA are costly and so it is important to strive towards value for money for the organisation and its Branches. CPA's funding is primarily derived from Branch membership subscriptions which the CPA Headquarters Secretariat must ensure is used appropriately. Furthermore, the CPA and its Branches can be exposed to reputational risks if partner organisations offer their time and support for its programme on the understanding that there are people in attendance to gain



insight from their contributions. Finally, other activity attendees can miss out on valuable networking and shared learning opportunities where participants fail to attend key programme elements.

Therefore, unless otherwise notified or directed, participants attending CPA in-person activities are expected to attend the full schedule of programme activities. Should a participant wish to excuse themselves briefly from the programme; to attend an important or unavoidable meeting or engagement, this should be agreed with the CPA in advance. Such absences should only be as long as is necessary to carry out the engagement and would not allow for a full day's absence. In the instance that a participant fails to attend the entire or majority of programme sessions and meetings, the CPA Headquarters Secretariat may communicate such absences to the CPA Branch Secretary and CPA Branch President(s) as appropriate. This policy will not apply to programme activities which are deemed as optional or voluntary. These instances will be clearly communicated to participants in advance.

Where costs have been incurred by the CPA Headquarters Secretariat for that participant's attendance (such as accommodation or flight costs), these costs may be transferred on to the CPA Branch or related participant to reimbursement to the CPA.

The mitigating policies stipulated above may also apply in the case of absenteeism. In which case, a CPA representative overseeing the activity must be notified at the earliest juncture should any of the following prevent a participant's involvement in the programme.

Where a CPA Branch's participant(s) repeatedly fail to fully attend CPA in-person activities, the CPA Headquarters Secretariat may take this record of poor attendance in to account when accepting nominations at future activities.