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As South Africa's millionaire ministers are granted free electricity and water, the *Ministerial Handbook*, which is seen as disgraceful by hard-pressed consumers, contains several other perks and benefits for members of the Cabinet.

Approved by President Cyril Ramaphosa, the guide for ministers, deputy ministers, premiers and members of the executive council has caused an outcry.

While the government continues to defend paying utility bills for ministers and their dep-

uties, claiming the perk is one of several for "being a member of the executive" – despite a backlash from civil society – it has also been established members are allowed one official residence per seat in office.

"The minister responsible for public works is responsible for the allocation of state-owned residences to members for use as an official residence," the guide states.

"Members may decide to designate a privately owned residence for use as an official residence.

"Members may, for official purposes, occupy a state-owned residence in each seat of office

and members could occupy one state-owned residence free of charge."

In terms of the ministers' official motor vehicles, the handbook stipulates national members shall be provided with one vehicle for official use in each seat of office.

"The price for the purchase of official vehicles shall not exceed R700 000, inclusive of VAT, security upgrades and maintenance plans.

"The limitation on the cost of the vehicle must be adjusted annually by the minister responsible for finance, in consultation with the ministers responsible for police, transport and

state security."

With regards to air travel, members and their spouses – or an adult family member accompanying the member in an official capacity – are entitled to travel for official purposes at the expense of the relevant department "on no more than six official domestic trips per year and if the member is required to attend official duties accompanied by a spouse or adult family member".

"Members and their spouses, if accompanying the member, may use VIP facilities at the relevant airports on domestic travel at the cost of the relevant department," the guide states.

Ministers are also guaranteed subsistence and travel allowances and reimbursable expenses include a daily allowance of 110% of the maximum daily allowance payable in terms of the financial manual, as issued by the minister responsible for public service and administration.

The equipment category comprises installation and maintenance of fax, internet/Wi-Fi facilities, computer equipment and relevant television subscription services for official use by the member at the official residence, where the relevant department would be responsible for any expenses.

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