

9.01 General Guidance for Travel and Subsistence

This policy provides general information about what claiming for travel and subsistence allowances and provides a glossary of terms pertinent to claims.

- Section 4 Claims sets out what you need to be aware of when making a claim for travel and subsistence
- Section 5 Late Claims explains what happens should your claim be submitted late.
- Section 9 Glossary of Terms provides definitions of the commonly used terms in the travel and subsistence policies

The following terms within this policy are defined in the glossary:

Imprest, detached duty

You may also be interested in the following policies:

3.08 Special Leave, 8.13 Travelling Time , 9.02 Official Travel, 9.03 Concessionary Travel, 9.13 Subsistence Allowances.

This policy is version 5.0

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This homepage is only a guide to the policy, not the policy itself. In the event of any discrepancy between the content of this homepage and the associated policy, the wording of the policy shall apply.

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9.01 GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE

1 Introduction

1.1 This provides general guidance on matters relevant to the policies 9.02 Official Travel, 9.03 Concessionary Travel and 9.13 Subsistence Allowances. For details of the rules that apply to the calculation of and payment for time spent on official travel outside conditioned hours, in other words “travelling time” see policy 8.13 Travelling Time in the HR Handbook.

2 Scope

2.1 Subsistence Allowances - deals with night and day subsistence allowances and with lodging and other allowances payable when you are on detached duty away from your normal place of work.

Travelling on Official Business - deals with the various forms of travelling undertaken by you on official duty.

Concessionary Travel - deals with the circumstances in which Departments may assist you with the cost of travelling between home and office.

2.2 The three policies referred to above apply to movements within the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

2.3 Guidance on allowances available to you if you are posted Overseas or have to relocate your home and family on permanent transfer within the United Kingdom can be found in the relevant policies on overseas postings and removals in the HR Handbook.

3 General Principles

3.1 The common feature of the rules set out in these policies is that they provide for the reimbursement of additional expenses necessarily incurred in carrying out official duty and in certain other specified circumstances. The overriding principle is that reimbursement is not appropriate when no additional expense is incurred. Should the application of the normal rules leave officers seriously out of pocket, or produce an inequitable result, the Claims Processing Centre has the authority to make special adjustments, in other words, reimburse actual vouched expenditure. However, ultimate responsibility for such any decisions rests with the Department.

Any payments made under these policies, do not reckon as emoluments for the purpose of calculating pension benefits as per the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) [PCSPS(NI)] Rules to be found at <http://www.civilservicepensions-ni.gov.uk/>.

3.2 Entitlements also cease for the duration of any period of unauthorised absence, absence which results from being suspended without pay and absence on unpaid leave. Such absences do not count in determining break periods for subsistence allowance, but they will reckon for the purposes of calculating the period of entitlement to Additional Housing Costs Allowance (AHCA). Part day absences should be ignored.

4 Claims

4.1 In making claims for reimbursement under these provisions, you should note the following points:

- a.** all claims, with the exception of those designated as flat rate allowances for example, Excess Fares Allowance, mileage and subsistence, should refer to actual expenses incurred and should be supported by receipts where indicated and where these are available; an explanation must accompany the claim if the required receipt cannot be submitted;
- b.** prior approval is required from the Authorising Officer where practicable, before any unusual but necessary item of expenditure is made; such claims must also be supported by an explanatory note from the officer and endorsed by the Authorising Officer;
- c.** unnecessary queries will be avoided if your claims are supported by full details of expenses incurred and relevant information, including receipts, where these are available; you should also bear in mind the importance of ensuring that the minimum expense is incurred; and
- d.** all claims should be authorised by a more senior manager of at least Staff Officer level, or equivalent. Authorising Officers should certify that to the best of their knowledge the claim is correct, that an entitlement exists, that the travelling has been done and that the official duty in question has been arranged so that the minimum of expense is incurred.

5 Late Claims

5.1 Claims submitted late may be difficult to check by both the Authorising Officer and the Claims Processing Centre and may only be accepted where a written explanation for the delay is provided. You should therefore submit claims promptly and note that claims submitted later than the following time limits may, without valid reason, be disallowed.

5.2 Claims should be submitted:

- a.** at monthly intervals if you travel frequently (in other words at least one journey a week),
- b.** at three monthly intervals if you travel occasionally on official business; and
- c.** within three months of the date on which you could have claimed in the case of lump sum payments associated with permanent transfer and recurring claims for long-term allowances.

5.3 Ultimate responsibility on decisions on late claims will rest with Departments.

6 Temporary Imprests

6.1 If you travel regularly you may exceptionally be granted a temporary imprest. Repayment must be made within three months and will be required as soon as there is a change from travelling duties.

6.2 In other necessary cases you may be granted a temporary imprest to meet significant one-off anticipated expenditure.

7 Changes in Rates of Allowances

7.1 Any changes in rates of allowances, together with the respective dates from which such changes are effective, will be announced and introduced through the publication of updated Annexes to the travel and subsistence policies.

8 Payments from Outside Sources

8.1 If you attend courts or other outside bodies as part of your official duty, either as a witness or in another capacity, you may be paid travelling and subsistence allowances in accordance with the normal rules.

8.2 Any payments made from outside sources should be surrendered to the Department. It should be noted that this procedure is applicable only where you are on duty: it does not apply to private attendances such as for jury service (See also policy 3.08 Special Leave in the HR Handbook).

9 Glossary of Terms

9.1 AUTHORISING OFFICER: is defined, for the purpose of authorising claims, as a more senior manager of at least Staff Officer level or equivalent. Where the claimant is of Staff Officer level or equivalent, claims must be authorised by an officer in the next senior grade.

9.2 DEPENDANTS:

a. Partner:

- i. the person who is both legally married to and resides with you; or
- ii. the person whose established relationship and residence with you ,
- iii. is expected to continue in the same way at the new station:

b. Child/Children: Children are defined as your or your partner's natural children who:

- i. are unmarried; and
- ii. are under the age of 19; and
- iii. are not gainfully employed; and
- iv. normally reside with you; or
- v. are your or your partner's children who are adopted, fostered or from a previous relationship and meet the conditions set out at i to iv above; or
- vi. are your or your partner's children who are wholly dependent upon you because of a mental or physical infirmity

c. Parents/Others: a person who reasonably relies on you to make arrangements for the provision of their care.

9.3 DETACHED DUTY: is defined as any period of duty at another work place other than your permanent station and other than on permanent transfer. A detached duty posting can last for as little as one day and is likely to last for less than three years.

9.4 DUTY STATION: is defined as a location at which official duties are performed.

9.5 CLAIMS PROCESSING CENTRE: is defined as the Unit processing payment on behalf of the paying authority. The Claims Processing Centre has the authority to refuse payment of a claim where the required supporting documentation or information has not been provided; or when the claim is submitted late. The ultimate responsibility rests with Departments.

9.6 COMPULSORY TRANSFER: is defined as a transfer of a member of staff at the initiation of the Department to a new permanent station.

9.7 FLAT RATE ALLOWANCE: is an allowance in certain circumstances paid to you without the requirement to produce receipts.

9.8 GROSSING UP: is compensation, not necessarily total, of any tax liability arising on the payment of allowances.

9.9 HOME: is defined as:

- a. the permanent place of residence at the time of your initial posting or
- b. your normal place of residence at the permanent station:
 - i. from which you are posted elsewhere, either on detached duty or permanently; and
 - ii. at which your family remain after such a posting.
- c. For the calculation of mileage allowances, 'Home' is defined as: the place where you normally live when working at your permanent station or the place where you normally garage or park your vehicle overnight when working at your permanent station;
- d. If you are living away from your normal place of residence because you are on detached duty, your actual place of residence during detached duty should be regarded as your "home" and the place where you normally work during the period of detached duty should be regarded as your "permanent station" for the purpose of calculating mileage allowances, but not for any other purposes.

9.10 PERMANENT STATION: is defined as your headquarters or a place where you spend the majority of your time in the performance of the duties of your employment and which is not a temporary station. A depot or similar base that is the main or only place where you perform your duties, or at which you are routinely allocated tasks, will be regarded as a permanent station.

9.11 PERMANENT TRANSFER: is defined as a posting to a new permanent station.

9.12 PUBLIC TRANSPORT FARES RATE, (PTFR): is based on the cost of the cheapest public transport fare using weekly, monthly or multiple journey tickets.

9.13 ROADWORTHINESS: in order to comply with statutory requirements, when using your private motor vehicle you must ensure to the best of your knowledge that your vehicle is in and maintained in a roadworthy condition.