

9.03 Concessionary Travel

This policy offers guidance on costs you may be able to recover from NICS for travel between your home and your normal place of work.

- You may be entitled to payments under this policy – Section 2 Eligibility and Entitlements
- If you are on detached duty or a permanent transfer you may be entitled to reimbursement of the costs associated with travelling to your home at your old location – Section 5 Periodic Visits to Home at Old Station
- If you are compulsorily transferred and do not qualify for removal expenses, or qualify for removal expenses but opt not to move home then you may receive a payment in respect of the additional travel costs you incur – Section 6 Excess Fares Allowance

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

Imprests, travel warrant system

You may also be interested in the following policies:

9.01 General Guidance for Travel and Subsistence

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9.03 CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL

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9.03 CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL

1 Definitions

Concessionary Travel

1.1 “Concessionary Travel” means travel between your home and place of work, part or all of the cost of which is borne by the employing Department.

Home

1.2 ‘Home’ in this context means either the permanent place of residence at the time of the initial posting (for new entrants) or the normal place of residence at the permanent station from which you are posted elsewhere, either on detached duty or permanently and at which your family remains after such a posting.

2 Eligibility and Entitlements

2.1 Concessionary travel is allowed:

- a. to relieve financial hardships to young Civil Servants on first appointment and, on general welfare considerations, to enable them to keep in touch with home. Young Civil Servants are those under 21 years of age. Travel concessions are based on the cheapest rail or bus fares available and visits home subsequent to initial appointment are limited to 3 a year;
- b. to enable you if you are on detached duty or on permanent transfer to travel to your previous station on private business (including visits to the previous station on annual leave). As such you are allowed ‘free travel’ based on the cheapest rail or bus fares available (or public transport mileage rate) to enable you to visit your home at weekends. The period during which you enjoy this privilege is governed by your entitlement to night subsistence and lodging allowance, in the case of officers with dependants and night subsistence allowance plus an additional period which may be as much as 12 months for officers without dependants;
- c. to assist you if you are on permanent transfer to travel from the home you have established at your old station to your work at your new station if the move does not qualify for payment of removal expenses or you choose not to move home. (For details of reimbursement of removal expenses, see Handbook section 9.14 Removal Expenses.) The amount of excess fares paid by Departments is based on the cheapest rail or bus fare available (quarterly rates or bus contract rates) or public transport mileage rate in defined circumstances;

- d. to meet the cost of an additional journey to the office outside normal working hours or additional costs incurred through an exceptional late attendance. In these instances reimbursement is related to actual cost incurred or the appropriate mileage rate if your own vehicle is used.

2.2 The circumstances in which the payments listed in section 2.1 may be made, the amount of payment, your contribution, if any, overall financial limitations on the amount of payment and the period during which the privilege may be enjoyed are summarised in the following sections. You should normally purchase your own tickets and reclaim the cost but imprests may be granted at Departmental discretion. For details see policy 9.01 General Guidance for Travel and Subsistence. If Departments operate a travel warrant system, warrants should be issued on receipt of any prescribed contribution from you, otherwise you should purchase the tickets and reclaim the cost in excess of the contribution.

3 Young Civil Servants on First Appointment

Description of Concession

3.1 You may be paid the cost of the journey to take up an initial appointment.

Officers Qualifying

3.2 The concession may be given to you if you are under 21 and your first place of work is beyond reasonable travelling distance.

Travel Cost Limits

3.3 Payment is limited to the cheapest rail or bus fare available. Air travel is permitted within the cost of appropriate surface travel.

Other Payments Permissible Concurrently

3.4 For each night necessarily spent away from home you may be reimbursed reasonable actual expenses on an evening meal, bed or sleeping berth and breakfast. Day subsistence should not be paid and refunds should not be made for accommodation or meals taken at the place of appointment.

4 Young Civil Servants' Visits Home

Description of Concession

4.1 The payment of cheap fares to the parental home. Home is defined as follows:

- a. the place of residence of the parents in the UK or, if the parents reside overseas and you lived with relatives in the UK before appointment, the place of residence of the relatives;
- b. the place of residence of relatives in the UK if the parents subsequently moved overseas while you were under 21;
- c. the port of embarkation in the UK if you resided overseas before appointment or if the parents moved overseas before you were 21.

Officers Qualifying

4.2 If you are single and under 21 living in lodgings or in a hostel because your place of work is beyond reasonable travelling distance:

- a. after an initial posting; or
- b. after transfer from a permanent station where you were living at the parental home.

Frequency and/or Duration of Concession

4.3 If you qualify you are entitled to:

- a. 3 journeys a year from the date of taking up duty until age 21; or
- b. 3 journeys a year from a date 12 months after the date of transfer (in other words, after entitlement under section 5.6 has been exhausted) until age 21.

Travel Cost Limits

4.4 Payment is limited to the cheapest rail or bus fare available. Air travel is permitted within the cost of each allowed journey by surface travel. Air fares cannot be aggregated to defray the larger proportion of the cost of fewer journeys. The concession is taxable.

5 Periodic Visits to Home at Old Station

Description of Concession

5.1 If you are on detached duty or permanent transfer you may be reimbursed the full cost of travel between your homes at the new and old stations (in other words not just between terminal stations or airports):

- a. at the weekend; or
- b. on annual leave other than at the weekend if the period of absence includes the weekend.

5.2 Free travel may be permitted at Departmental discretion for visits to a third location within the cost of travel between the new station and the old.

Officers Qualifying/Frequency and/or Duration of Concession

5.3 Officers qualifying for free travel are as follows:

- a. If you have dependants and are on detached duty or permanent transfer you are entitled to weekly free travel while on night subsistence or lodging allowance. Free travel may be granted to your partner instead of you if the Department is satisfied that hardship would be suffered if free travel were withheld from your partner, for example you are ill and unable to leave the detached duty/permanent station.
- b. If you are without dependants and are on detached duty due to return to the permanent station you are entitled to weekly free travel while on night subsistence or lodging allowance.
- c. If you are without dependants on permanent transfer or detached duty not due to return to the permanent station and not living with parents at the time of transfer, you are entitled to weekly free travel while on night subsistence and thereafter at monthly intervals during the first 6 months following transfer. Not more than 6 free journeys should be permitted to you after the end of the night subsistence period.
- d. If you are without dependants on permanent transfer or detached duty not due to return to the permanent station and living with parents at the time of transfer, you are entitled to weekly free travel while on night subsistence and thereafter 6 free journeys over a period of 12 months following the date of transfer with intervals of at least one month.
- e. If you are on detached duty and provided with food and accommodation, not in receipt of subsistence or lodging allowance (for example on a training course) and not joined by your dependants, you are entitled to weekly free travel.

Travel Cost Limits

5.4 Payment is restricted to the cheapest return rail or bus fare between your homes at the new and old duty stations. With regard to sea travel, normal rules apply (see section 2.8). Return journeys by air are permissible at Departmental discretion if the length of the journey and/or timing merit it. Coach travel must be within limits of 2nd class rail fare for the same journey.

Private Motor Vehicle

5.5 Actual mileage is payable, at public transport motor mileage rate, (see 9.02 Official Travel Annex 2 Part i) between your home at the detached duty station and the permanent station as follows:

- a. without restriction for a journey which could not have been made by public transport or where the use of the car on official business at the detached duty station was agreed to be essential;
- b. restricted to the equivalent of the cost of travel by public transport (based on the cheapest rail or bus fare for any part of the journey which would have been made by that means) for a journey which could have been so made;
- c. passenger supplement as set out in the policy 9.02 Official Travel Annex 2 Part ii for each entitled officer travelling as a passenger; this counts as a free journey in respect of the passenger.

Other Payments Permissible Concurrently

5.6 Night (or day) subsistence or lodging allowances is not payable during the period of absence. But day subsistence allowance may be paid where applicable for the balance of time from the end of the 24-hour cycle for night subsistence allowance to the time of leaving the detached duty station or new permanent station. No day subsistence allowance is payable for the journey to or from the detached duty or new permanent station during a weekend visit home. But nightly retention of rooms allowance set out in section 8.1 of policy 9.13 Subsistence Allowances will be payable in lieu of lodging allowance where that is being paid.

6 Excess Fares Allowance (EFA)

Description of Concession

6.1 You may be reimbursed the total of the excess fares on permanent transfer. If Departments find it burdensome to have to deal with numerous claims for insignificant amounts they may reimburse commuted sums at monthly intervals. Departments have discretion to make special arrangements for weekly paid staff if they wish. EFA is taxable and liable to National Insurance Contributions (NIC). Tax and NIC should be deducted under PAYE and there should be no grossing up to reflect these liabilities.

Officers Qualifying

6.2 If you are compulsorily transferred, you:

- a. do not qualify for removal expenses; or
- b. qualify for removal expenses but opt not to move home (but see section 6.3).

6.3 Situations may arise where you do not wish to move home for family reasons but the Department needs you to be within a short distance from the new station. In such circumstances, the Department may consider there is merit in you lodging at the new station during the week and travelling home at weekends. In order to help with the cost of lodging, the Department can pay you the equivalent of the EFA which would have been payable had you travelled daily, in other words 'notional' excess fares. Such payments would last for 3 years from the date of transfer. Payment of notional excess fares is not an alternative to moving house or daily travelling. It must only be used in exceptional circumstances.

6.4 In some cases if you have opted to receive EFA rather than move home, you may choose to spend a few nights a week in accommodation at the new permanent station rather than travel daily. Usually if this is the case, you are eligible for EFA only in respect of journeys actually made. Departments have discretion to contribute towards the costs of such accommodation within the limit of the EFA which would otherwise be payable.

6.5 Departments have discretion to make some payment towards additional commuting costs where the individual faces a substantial increase in outgoings on moving home and has to cope with an increase in commuting costs. Any such payment would be within the limits of the EFA scheme. It is envisaged that this discretion would only be used in exceptional cases where you would otherwise suffer actual financial hardship or where there might be some management or financial benefit to the Department. For example, help with excess fares might encourage someone to live in a cheaper area some distance from the place of work with a consequent saving in Additional Housing Costs Allowance, and so on.

6.6 If you elect to receive EFA and not removal expenses, you are entitled, within three months of the date of transfer, to a change of mind but the total excess fares paid will be recovered from salary at the same time as the transfer grant is paid.

6.7 Conversely, Departments have discretion to allow you if you have decided to move home, to switch to EFA provided the costs of the removal allowances are recovered.

6.8 If you qualify for reimbursement of removal expenses, see the Handbook section 9.14 General Removal Expenses.

Frequency and/or Duration of Concession

6.9 EFA is normally payable for three years from the date of transfer. Reimbursement may exceptionally continue for absences of three weeks or less only in those cases where you are in receipt of a season ticket of 3, 6 or 12 months duration. Otherwise reimbursement may only be made on days where the expense is actually incurred. Departments have authority to pay EFA for up to 5 years for transfers where a move of home would otherwise take place. It is envisaged that this discretion would normally be used only exceptionally and when there is a consequent saving on removal expenses, and so on.

Travel Cost Limits

6.10 EFA should be calculated on the basis of the cost of the actual method of travelling at the old station (in other words private vehicle or public transport) and the most cost effective and reasonable means of travel at the new station. For example if the journey at the old station was by public transport and the journey at the new station is by car, Departments can base their calculations on these costs if they are satisfied that the new journey is based on the most cost effective means of travel. Departments have discretion to pay the public transport rate of motor mileage allowance where they are satisfied that you are required to have the car at the new station for official business.

6.11 The amount of EFA will not be re-assessed following any changes in fares at either the old or the new station except:

- a. as part of a general revision authorised by the Department of Finance and Personnel; or
- b. if you move home otherwise than as a result of a further compulsory transfer. Re-assessment for the balance of the 3-year period will be based on the fares current at the time of the original transfer but the allowance may not be increased.

6.12 If you are in receipt of EFA and are re-transferred you may qualify for a complete new cycle of EFA under the normal rules. No account should be taken of the allowance payable on the original transfer. For recalculation on transfer within the 3-year cycle see section 6.14.

Payment of Excess Fares to Car Passengers

6.13 Car passengers, who are otherwise eligible to receive excess fares allowance should be allowed payment of their excess fares claims in full, within the limit of the cheapest bus or rail fare available or the cost at public transport rate of mileage allowance, whichever is applicable.

Re-calculation on Transfer within 3-year Cycle

6.14 On permanent transfer you are entitled to EFA for 3 years from the date of that transfer. In the event of a further transfer within that period your EFA should be re-calculated in terms of the original fares and the original cycle. On expiry of the original cycle you enter a period of further eligibility due to end 3 years from the date of the second transfer. Excess fares for this period should be based on current fares over fares to the intermediate station.

6.15 In the case of someone who is transferred more than once within a period of 3 years from the date of the first transfer the calculations are slightly more complex but the same principles apply. On the occasion of each transfer within the original 3-year cycle your EFA should be re-calculated in terms of the original fares and the original cycle. On expiry of the original cycle you enter a further period of eligibility due to end 3 years from the date of their most recent transfer. Excess fares for this period should be based on current fares less fares to the immediately preceding permanent station. Annex 1 gives some illustrative examples.

Lump Sum Payments

6.16 Departments have discretion to pay Excess Fares Allowance on transfer as a lump sum. It is envisaged that this discretion will normally only be used in cases where there is a clear need for such payment, for example where you need to buy a car to make the journey to the new place of work.

6.17 The following sections give general guidance regarding the granting, calculation and recovery of such payments. They also advise Departments of guidance from the Inland Revenue on how lump sum payments should be treated for tax and National Insurance purposes.

6.18 When calculating the lump sum, some adjustment should be made for annual leave, sick absence and public and privilege holidays. Once paid the amount should not normally be reassessed following any changes in fares or PTR and will not be subject to any general revision of EFA payments authorised by the Department of Finance and Personnel. However, Departments have discretion to revise payments as a result of such changes if they think it appropriate to do so. Some reassessment may also be necessary in the event of a subsequent move of home.

6.19 A lump sum of EFA is in effect payment in advance and as such may be subject to recovery for example in the event of your ceasing to be a Civil Servant before the end of the period to which the payment relates. When Departments decide to pay EFA as a lump sum it will be necessary for you to sign an undertaking that the appropriate proportion of the allowance will be repaid net of tax (see below) if you leave the service before the end of the period used for calculation of the lump sum. Departments should clear such undertakings with their own legal advisers and should base their approach on the arrangements which govern the recovery of advances of salary (see Handbook policy 9.16 Assistance with the Cost of Setting up a New Home section 1 et seq).

6.20 Lump sum payments will be subject to PAYE at the time of issue. Their liability for National Insurance Contributions will be assessed at the time payment is made on the basis of the normal pay period of the individual involved.

6.21 Departments should advise potential beneficiaries that the lump sum payment of EFA could have implications for pay related payments or benefits. No compensation will be payable.

7 Additional Expenses incurred on Additional Attendance or Late Working

Description of Concession

7.1 These are arrangements for the reimbursement of additional travelling expenses for the following:

- a. the cost of travel from home to office to make an additional attendance outside your normal working hours; or
- b. additional cost of travel between home and office for staff exceptionally required to stay late; or
- c. travel other than to the permanent station. This is provided for under the normal detached duty rules - see the policy 9.02 Official Travel. However, any private car mileage between home and a detached duty station on an additional attendance which is not reimbursed under section 6.7 as a result of the limitations in that section, may be reimbursed on a non-taxable basis under this section.

Qualifying Officers

7.2 Anyone (including those in receipt of on-call allowance or qualified by such attendance for overtime payment, overtime credit or payment for travelling time) who is not attending as part of a regular rostered commitment or not in receipt of shift allowance or other allowance taking account of irregular attendance or hours, or who is making an extra attendance to work a shift additional to those for which he/she is rostered.

Travel Cost Limits

7.3 If the journey could reasonably be made by using public transport, you may be paid:

- a. actual public transport fares incurred unless a season ticket is used; or
- b. if a private motor vehicle is used, the public transport rate of mileage allowance.

7.4 If the outward or return journey is not practicable by public transport, you may be paid:

- a. taxi fares necessarily incurred which should not substantially exceed two-thirds of the normal day subsistence rate; or
- b. if a private motor vehicle is used the standard rate of mileage allowance for the distance necessarily travelled. If late attendance is foreseen and for this reason you travel to the office by private motor vehicle instead of public transport, public transport rate of mileage is payable for the outward and the return journey.

EFA – Recalculation on Transfer within 3-Year Cycle

The following examples serve as an illustration:

EXAMPLE 1	
FARES FROM HOME	
£	
Permanent Station (PS) 'A'	£3.00 per week
Transferred to PS 'B' for 2½ years	£12.00 per week
Transferred to PS 'C'	£9.00 per week

EFA	£9 per week for 2½ years (12-3)
	£6 per week for 6 months (9-3)
	NIL for 2½ years (9-12) provided no further moves occur

EXAMPLE 2	
FARES FROM HOME	
£	
PS 'A' £4.00 per week	
Transferred to PS 'B' for 1 year	£6.00 per week
Transferred to PS 'C'	£10.00 per week

EFA	£2 per week for 1 year (6-4)
	£6 per week for 2 years (10-4)
	£4 per week for 1 year (10-6)

EXAMPLE 3	
FARES FROM HOME	
£	
PS 'A'	£1.00 per week
Transferred to PS 'B' for 1 year	£7.00 per week
Transferred to PS 'C' for 1½ years	£8.00 per week
Transferred to PS 'D'	£6.00 per week

EFA	£6 per week for 1 year (7-1)
	£7 per week for 1½ years (8-1)
	£5 per week for 6 months (6-1)
	NIL for 2½ years (6-8)