

TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE POLICY (EMPLOYEES)

1.0 Background

This policy sets out the Authority's arrangements for claiming travel expenses and subsistence allowances when employees incur expenditure in the course of their employment. Where these differ in any way from National Conditions, the Local Conditions will apply.

The basic principle of this document is that no employee should lose financially in performing their duties for the Authority but should be properly recompensed for any expenditure incurred.

This document must be read in conjunction with section 11 of the Authority's Financial Procedure Rules covering Travelling and Subsistence expenses (Appendix A) and Safety Briefing Note (Appendix B) regarding the use of a private vehicle for authorised business mileage. Employees are also reminded that falsification of claims for Travelling or Subsistence will be regarded as Gross Misconduct and may put their employment in jeopardy. Rates for allowances will be published on a regular basis by the Head of Financial Services).

2.0 Eligibility

Directors and Heads of Services shall decide what the level of travel requirements is, for a given post or particular journey, and what is the most cost effective and efficient form of travel to authorise. The aim in determining appropriate travel arrangements is to seek the optimum match between the efficient use of time, a fair reimbursement of costs to the employee and the economical use of public resources, in accordance with the terms of this agreement.

Consideration may be given to the particular travel needs of employees with disabilities.

3.0 Review of Travel Arrangements

Managers are required actively to manage both the designation of authorised users, the authorisation of specific journeys and the appropriate means of travel for those journeys in the best interest of the Service, in accordance with the terms of this agreement. The monitoring of journeys undertaken is a part of the authorisation process.

When authorising car journeys the following will be considered:

- Could a telephone call or a letter suffice?
- Share vehicles with colleagues when at all possible
- Effective planning of journeys to save time and money; employees should group together visits within localities to avoid repeating journeys.

- Is the journey within reasonable walking distance/ Can the visit be made on foot or by using alternatives to the car.
- If a car has to be used, use the most economical route.

- 3.1 This Allowance agreement applies to all employees of the Council, except staff on the complement of locally managed schools.
- 3.2 The overriding principle is that employees should arrange travel and overnight stay via the most economic means.
- 3.3 It is accepted that employees will incur “reasonable” costs when travelling and / or staying overnight on Council business. The Council will reimburse these costs on production of receipts in accordance with paragraphs 5 & 6.
- 3.4 If in doubt about the “reasonableness” of the costs of a journey, subsistence or overnight stay, an employee should check with his / her line manager prior to booking or making arrangements.
- 3.5 If the Chief Executive or Director of a service does not believe the costs to be reasonable s/he has the right to apply an upper limit or to refuse the claim.
- 3.6 Departments or divisions shall identify an officer(s) who will be responsible for arranging travel, booking accommodation or advising on travel arrangements, for the employees within that Department/Division. This will ensure consistency and helps to maximise savings to the Authority.

4.0 Use of Corporate Credit Card

The Authority operates a corporate credit card for the booking / payment of staff conference / accommodation and travelling arrangements. Use of the corporate credit card is to be encouraged, as it ensures that the Authority recovers VAT and therefore does allow for a better standard of accommodation to be booked within authorised expenditure limits.

5.0 Travel Allowances

5.1 Rail Travel

- 5.1.1 Travel by rail will normally be by the most economic ticket available on the day of travel via pre-booking or standard second class ticket. Pre-booking should be used wherever possible as this will usually provide the most economic ticket. Pre-bookings can be paid for via the corporate credit card. Rail warrants should only be used in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.1.2 Heads of Service and above may be permitted to travel by first class rail where work requirements justify such expenditure (i.e. working on the train)

prior to attending a meeting on the same day) or travelling on official business with an elected member who holds a first class ticket.

5.1.3 Officers may be able to travel first class rail if travelling on official business with an elected member or Senior Officer(s) who holds a first class ticket.

5.1.4 Officers who accompany elected members on official business should where possible make their travel arrangements via Democratic Services in order to maximise financial savings.

5.2 Travel by Private Car

5.2.1 Travel claims by private car must be for the shortest route, and for mileage actually travelled.

5.2.2 When travelling out of county, Officers must travel by the most effective means to the Council, taking into account the cost of travel and time involved in a journey. This is usually by rail and where rail facilities exist, the rate for travel by an Officers own car is Standard Day Return rail fare in lieu.

5.2.3 If the Chief Executive, Director or nominated senior officer agrees prior to a journey being made, that travel by rail is inappropriate because of meeting start time or inappropriate rail services, the officer will be authorised to travel using one of the Council's leased cars, by hired car or by private car at the relevant allowance rate.

5.2.4 Where more than one officer is travelling to the same meeting conference outside the County and travel by private car has been authorised, arrangements should be made to car share where possible. Passengers supplements will be applicable at the relevant travel allowance rate

5.2.5 Ferries, parking fees and tolls will be paid on production of receipts.

5.2.6 Current travelling allowances are paid for travel in County.

5.2.7 Officers should consider car hire through the Authority's contracted Car Hire Company if the total of the hire charge and the petrol used will be less than the Standard Class rail fare. If a car is hired, the hire charge is paid direct by the Authority and a claim form has to be submitted for the petrol used and other costs such as car parking, tolls, etc supported by receipts. Advice should be sought from the nominated departmental officer.

5.2.8 Prior to using a hired car an officer must familiarise themselves with the vehicle and seek advice if required via the nominated Departmental Officer / Transport Manager of the Technical Services Department.

6.0 Overnight Accommodation and Subsistence Allowances (Out of County)

6.1 Officers will be eligible to claim reasonable expenses, subject to the subsistence rate set out in **Appendix C**, supported by receipts.

- 6.2 Wherever possible, booking of accommodation should be made through the nominated departmental officer referred to in paragraph 3.6, but, if attending official business with elected members; accommodation should normally be arranged via Democratic Services.
- 6.2.1 If accommodation includes subsistence, no additional subsistence allowance will be paid.
- 6.2.2 If accommodation does not include meals then any costs incurred for meals will be paid on production of receipts and subject to the current meal allowance rate.
- 6.2.3 Flexibility may be exercised in exceptional cases, which have been approved by the relevant Service Director.

EXTRACT FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULES

11. TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES

11.1 Introduction

Staff are eligible to claim travel and subsistence expenses in accordance with their Conditions of Service.

11.2 Promptness of Claims

Claims should be made during the month following the incurring of the expenditure on forms approved for the purpose by the Director of Resources. Where claims are not submitted promptly a separate form will be required for each month. Forms containing more than one month will be returned unpaid. Authorising officers may be asked to confirm how they have satisfied themselves of the reasonableness of late claims. The need for claims to be submitted promptly is crucial at the end of the financial year to ensure that claims are charged to budgets and tax in respect of the correct year.

11.3 Value for Money

All staff are expected to travel in the most economical manner appropriate to the discharge of their duties.

11.4 Basis of Claim

The normal starting and finishing place for Official Journeys will be the location where the individual is based.

Where an Officer starts a journey from a location other than his/her base or ends a journey at a location other than his/her base, the mileage claimed should be limited to the "Additional Mileage" incurred as a result of their official duties.

The Additional Mileage Principle recognises the saving to the Officer in not travelling to or from the base and reduces the amount that can be claimed accordingly whilst ensuring that the Officer is fully compensated for any additional mileage undertaken in connection with their official duties.

All Examples are calculated using Home to Base as a journey of 10 miles

Example 1 - Officer Attends an Appointment Travelling from Home then subsequently Travel to Base

Actual Mileage:

Home to Appointment	5 miles
Appointment to Base	10 miles
Total Mileage	15 miles

Basis of Claim: Total Mileage - Home to Base = Additional Mileage

Additional Mileage to be Claimed 15 miles - 10 miles = 5 miles

Example 2 - Officer Attends an Appointment Travelling from Base then subsequently Travel to Home

Actual Mileage:

Base to Appointment	10 miles
Appointment to Home	5 miles
Total Mileage	15 miles

Basis of Claim: Total Mileage - Base to Home = Additional Mileage

Additional Mileage to be Claimed 15 miles - 10 miles = 5 miles

Example 3 - Officer Attends an Appointment Travelling from Home and subsequently returns Home

Actual Mileage:

Home to Appointment	20 miles
Appointment to Home	20 miles

Basis of Claim: Total Mileage - Home to Base and Return = Additional Mileage

Total Mileage 40 miles

Basis of Claim: Total Mileage - Home to Base and Return = Additional Mileage

Additional Mileage to be Claimed 40 miles - 20 miles = 20 miles

All staff are reminded of their obligation to comply with the requirements of the Travel & Subsistence Policy

For official journeys undertaken outside normal working hours (i.e. weekends or evenings) the actual journey may be claimed e.g. Officer's home to destination and return journey home.

Staff working overtime during evenings and weekends, and who are paid for such duty, are not entitled to claim travelling expenses to or from their place of work.

Where an Officer opts to travel in his/her own vehicle in circumstances where a cheaper suitable mode of transport should have been used, the claim should not exceed that which would have been paid if the alternative transport had been used e.g. it is normally cheaper to travel by train from the Carmarthenshire area to London but where a member of staff prefers to drive in his/her own car he/she may claim the equivalent of the train fare (provided that this is lower than the mileage claim would be).

Cases where this applies should be clearly explained on the claim form. It remains the responsibility of each employee to ensure that they have the appropriate level of insurance cover for undertaking official (business) journeys.

Should there be need for any further clarification as regards the application of the above please contact your departmental HR Officer

11.5 Certification

Completed claims must be approved by a signatory approved by the Chief Officer for that purpose. Following approval, claims must not be returned to the claimant but should be despatched promptly to the Payments Section. No officer should certify their own expenses claims

For Display and General Distribution



Safety Briefing Note

Private Vehicle Use on Authority Business

Many of the business miles undertaken each year by employees of the Authority are done so in their own private vehicles. This type of travel is known as 'Grey Fleet'.

Here, an established motor mileage allowance is paid to the employee for using their own vehicle. The payment is made on the basis that:

- The journey is necessary
- A suitable Authority provided vehicle was not available
- The journey is authorised by the driver's Line Manager
- The vehicle has the appropriate level of business insurance
- The car is taxed, has a valid MOT and is serviceable.
- The driver has a valid licence to drive the vehicle



Line Managers responsible for employees who use their vehicles for work purposes (whether they claim for motor mileage or not), must satisfy themselves that the criteria for using grey fleet is being met. For drivers whose vehicles do not meet the legal requirements, driving them may give cause to a single, or multiple offences in relation to the Road Traffic Act 1988 and for this they could face a range of penalties including points, fines, disqualification or a combination of all.

However, for the Employer, permitting an employee to use their vehicle on Authority business where it falls short of the legal requirements may also be deemed an offence not just under the Road Traffic Act, but should a incident occur where injuries or loss of life factor, we could face prosecution under two separate pieces of legislation, namely the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007.

Whilst it must be remembered that the primary **responsibility** for the roadworthiness of a motor vehicle **rests with the driver**, in the eyes of the law, the employer must also take

necessary precautions to ensure its workforce are afforded the same duty of care in their own vehicles as they would be entitled to in an Authority vehicle. So what does this mean? In essence, where an employee uses their own vehicle, management must be satisfied that the vehicle meets the requirements previously stated.

To support management, at the Fleet webpage, a Certificate of Compliance document can be downloaded in Welsh or English and when completed will provide evidence to demonstrate that management of grey fleet travel is undertaken.

All records and data recorded should be archived for a period of twelve months or until the next renewal/review period. Importantly, all data must be managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Any questions regarding the content of this briefing note should be directed to the undersigned in the first instance.

Fleet Manager

SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

Out of County

As from 1st April 2010 a daily allowance of up to £28 per day will be reimbursed on the following basis:

Where an overnight stay is not involved subsistence allowance is payable as follows:

- **Breakfast** – more than 4 hours before 11.00am **£4.00**
(when not included as part of an overnight stay)
- **Lunch** – more than 4 hours including 12 noon to 2.00pm **£8.00**
- **Tea** – more than 4 hours including 3.00pm to 6.00pm **£3.00**
- **Dinner** – more than 4 hours ending after 7.00pm **£13.00**

Where an overnight stay is involved and includes breakfast as part of the overnight accommodation a day subsistence rate of £24 will be made available.

Claims will be made on the basis of actual expenditure supported by receipts. The maximum allowance in each case will be paid only if actual expenditure equals or exceeds it.

An overnight stay is set at a maximum of £150 for London, £120 for Cardiff and £95 elsewhere, with effect from 1st April 2010. (The above sums will be exclusive of VAT where recoverable), and that in particular circumstances, such as bookings into hotels for conferences, the Chief Executive or officer nominated by him/her be granted reasonable discretion to authorise an officer to exceed the maximum. (See paragraph 6.5)

A maximum allowance of £25 is available for an overnight stay with friends or relatives whilst on approved duty, with effect from 1st April 2010.

The above allowances will be automatically amended to reflect any changes to the Members allowance scheme.