

Policy for Relocation Assistance

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Additionally refer to:

HR29 Time off for Special Circumstances Policy
HR58 Fraud and Corruption Policy

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Version Control Sheet

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V 3.1	January 2024	Chris Goulding	Draft	Eligibility is restricted to substantive employees able to access either relocation or a tenancy agreement.
V 3.2	January 2024	Chris Goulding	Draft	Repayment policy unchanged for Substantive employees.
V3.3	January 2024	Chris Goulding	Draft	Appendix B: Updated Schedule of Relocation expenses: to ensure employees understand that the different elements that can be claimed. Deleted reference to hospital accommodation rates as this was confusing to staff.

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Policy on a Page

The purpose of this policy is to support new employees with financial assistance when relocating to take up a position with the Trust. The policy outlines the conditions to claim expenses and specifies the financial relocation package that is available to new Trust employees that are required to relocate or because the Trust is finding it difficult to recruit to the post or as a result of an Organisational Change that has led to a change of location and work base.

The policy is part of the Trust's strategy to attract and retain employees particularly those posts that are hard to fill and fundamental to delivering the Trust's strategic and operational priorities which would have remained unfilled without offering financial support to relocate to the Trust.

The policy also helps with retention to facilitate a new employee's early achievement of effective performance by enabling them to resolve personal accommodation difficulties and excess travel, quickly and easily.

This policy applies to new substantive/permanent employees.

First time buyers can be provided with help with removal expenses and excess travel, but this does not apply to the process of buying a property in such circumstances.

The Trust maximum for reimbursing Relocation expenses is £8,000 for an owner occupied home in line with HMRC guidance and £4,000 for temporary accommodation tenancy agreement.

Where an individual has been recruited from overseas and does not meet the criteria for relocation expenses, i.e., selling and buying a property, but is in a recognised hard to recruit position, the Division can give an allowance up to £750 subject to PAYE and NI.

Reimbursement of expenses under this policy will be allowed for a maximum period of 12 months from the date of appointment. Any amounts not claimed within the 12 months cannot be claimed unless exceptional circumstances apply and would need to be approved by the HMRC.

With the exception of Junior Medical and Dental trainees, substantive employees leaving the Trust within a period of two years will be required to repay their expenses. Employees will be required to repay 1/24th of the total relocation assistance provided for each month short of 24 months to be deducted from any monies due on the termination of their employment.

1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy sets out the Trust's approach to the payment of relocation and related expenses for substantive employees, who request to relocate and move house within a 30-mile radius of their work base as part of the Trust's recruitment policy to attract candidates to vacant hard to fill posts and retain staff, or as part of an organisational change.
- 1.2 All payments made under this policy are discretionary; there is no automatic entitlement to relocation assistance from the Trust.
- 1.3 In implementing this policy, managers must ensure that all employees who meet the criteria and are eligible for relocation assistance are treated fairly and within the provisions and spirit of W30 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy'.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to
 - New substantive employees on permanent contracts living outside a 30-mile radius of their work base.
 - Existing employees who request payment of relocation and related expenses to move home as part of a Trust initiated organisational change.
- 2.2 The payment of relocation assistance to Board Directors and Senior managers appointed on Very Senior Manager (VSM) salaries will be determined by the Remuneration Committee at the time of appointment.
- 2.3 This policy does not apply to:
 - Doctors and dentists in training posts (there is a separate national HEE relocation and travel policy for doctors in training). As set out by the HEE policy on relocation. Doctors in training will be eligible to claim to the HEE provided they meet the criteria to relocate to take up an appointment of a training post which lasts a minimum of 2 years or who have to rotate to different geographical areas as part of their training programme. Trainees who are out of programme will not be able to claim.
 - Staff from the Temporary staff bank or agency workers.
 - Staff who move home for personal reasons.
 - First time buyers can be provided with help with removal expenses and excess travel, but this does not apply to the process of buying a property in such circumstances.

3 Definitions

Old accommodation	The employee's principal residence prior to their relocation, with the exception of temporary accommodation when utilised during a search for new accommodation. The principal residence is that defined as such for Inland Revenue purposes.
New accommodation	The employee's residence to be used after relocation when employed in the new job.
Broadly comparable accommodation	The aim of this policy is to provide assistance with expenses incurred in a move to a broadly comparable property where there is no betterment in the move of principal residence. Examples include: from unfurnished rented accommodation to unfurnished rented accommodation homeowner in 3 bedroom semi-detached home to homeowner in 3 bedroom semi-detached home homeowner moves to a smaller property.
Public Transport rates	Rates as defined by the Trust's Reimbursement of Travel, Accommodation and Subsistence Expenses policy (W20.3).
Dependants	Partner, children in full time education and other unemployed dependants who resided permanently with the employee at the old accommodation.
Work base	The place where the majority of time at work is spent.
Excess daily travelling expenses	Mileage at public transport rate based on the excess mileage between the return mileage from the current main residence to the previous work base and the return mileage from that residence to the new work base.
Reasonable daily travelling time	Within 45 minutes typical travel time using the normal method of transport to work.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Trust Board

The Trust Board has the responsibility to oversee this policy and ensure that appropriate processes and actions are in place in order that employees are treated in a fair and consistent manner.

4.2 Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee will determine the payment of relocation assistance to Directors and Senior managers appointed on Very Senior Manager (VSM) salaries, in line with this policy.

4.3 **Managers**

- Managers should ensure that they are familiar with the content of this policy.
- Where organisational change is the reason for changing the location of the work base, then relocation assistance should be included in the staff consultation documentation.
- Relocation Assistance that forms part of an advert requires authorisation by the line manager and verified by the finance manager. For Medical and Dental Staff Relocation Assistance will also be authorised by the Centre/Department Manager and Finance Manager at the point of advert.
- Managers must ensure that where agreement for the Relocation Assistance has been granted, this is documented clearly on the individual's personal file with the appropriate limits stated.

4.4 **Employees**

It is the individual's responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with the content of this policy to prevent any misunderstandings of what they are entitled to, if it has been deemed applicable to the post they have applied for or is as a result of an organisational change.

5 **Eligibility Criteria**

- 5.1 The recruiting manager will confirm with new employees at the point when the job offer is made whether they are eligible for relocation assistance (and any requirement to relocate) setting out the maximum financial contribution the Trust will make and the process for claiming expenses.
- 5.2 Relocation assistance is payable to:
- New employees who commence employment with the Trust on a substantive permanent contract. They will be eligible for claiming relocation expenses or claiming expenses for rented accommodation via a tenancy agreement and excess travel expenses. Relocation assistance will not be available unless the old accommodation before taking up the new post was greater than a radius of 30 miles from their new work base.
 - Existing employees who request payment of relocation and related expenses to move home as part of a Trust initiated organisational change. Where an individual's work base is changed by the Trust during employment (e.g., through organisational change) and results in an unreasonable daily travel time.
 - Overseas recruits who do not meet the criteria for relocation expenses, i.e., selling and buying a property, but are in a recognised hard to recruit position, the Division can give an allowance up to £750 subject to PAYE and NI.
 - First time buyers can be provided with help with removal expenses and excess travel, but this does not apply to the process of buying a property in such circumstances.

6 General Conditions

6.1 Authority to pay removal expenses rests with the line manager with approval by the relevant Executive Director. The departmental Finance Manager needs to verify the application to make financial provision before the post is advertised or re-advertised.

6.2 Where relocation assistance is authorised, expenses may be claimed where:

- the expenses are incurred by the employee in relation to their relocation and
- the expenses are not recoverable from any other source and
- the expenses are eligible under this policy and fall into the categories listed on the Schedule of Reimbursable Expenses (Appendix A) and
- the expenses are limited to the costs of broadly comparable accommodation and involve no betterment on the part of the employee.

6.3 Where relocation assistance is authorised, the Trust will reimburse the employee in accordance with this policy for costs incurred when moving home. The Trust will not pay invoices directly but will reimburse expenses against evidence of the payment (original documents and receipts will be required).

6.4 Employees who are moving to the UK from abroad to work at the Trust, Relocation Assistance is payable from the point of entry to the UK only.

6.5 The Trust will not reimburse the cost of bridging loans.

6.6 The Trust is required to inform the Inland Revenue of all relocation expenses paid to employees, who are responsible for any personal taxation liability arising from the assistance received. At present, the current maximum amount payable tax-free is £8000 providing:

- (for homeowners) there is a sale of the individual's principal residence and
- (for all claimants) there is no betterment involved and the removal occurs as soon as is practically possible.

All queries regarding betterment will be initially raised with HR and subsequently discussed with the relevant Executive Director responsible for the department and a resolution based on fairness agreed.

6.7 Where relocation is aborted, either for good reason on the part of the employee or through no fault of the employee, the Trust may consider providing financial assistance where costs have been incurred and cannot be recovered (up to the maximum allowed as set out in this policy). In such circumstances, the employee must discuss these issues with their line manager who will need to discuss with HR for policy guidance and with the Executive Director responsible for the department where the individual employee will be working. The Executive Director will make the final decision on this matter. If the decision is to provide financial assistance, the employee can make a fresh application, but the costs of an aborted relocation will need to be factored in and included alongside the costs of the new relocation request, so that the maximum threshold allowed in this policy is not exceeded.

6.8 The cost of approved removal expenses will be charged to the employing department's budget.

7 Time Limits

- 7.1 All claims for relocation assistance under this Policy must be made within 12 months of the effective date i.e., the date the employee started work for the Trust. Reimbursement of expenses under this policy will be allowed for a maximum period of 12 months from the date of appointment. Any amounts not claimed within the 12 months cannot be claimed unless exceptional circumstances apply and would need to be approved by HMRC.
- 7.2 No claim for relocation assistance will be accepted or paid after the date of termination of an employee's employment with the Trust.

8 Relocation Assistance: Condition of employment

- 8.1 Relocation assistance should be agreed by the line manager. Also, the finance manager needs to verify there is sufficient budget for relocation assistance to be offered as part of the vacancy approval process, and made clear in the job information to candidates prior to application.
- 8.2 For posts where it is applicable that employees live within a 30 mile radius of their work base conditional offers of employment must contain the following paragraph:
- It is a condition of this offer that you relocate to a residence within reasonable daily travelling time of your work base (within a 30 mile radius). You will be eligible to receive assistance with relocation expenses where expenses are claimed in accordance with this policy.
- 8.3 The maximum Trust contribution will not increase if the move affects more than one employee currently resident in that home. Where more than one employee is eligible, the individuals should agree with the recruiting manager how the expenses will be dealt with.

9. Relocation Assistance due to Organisational Change

- 9.1 Where relocation assistance is offered as part of an Organisational Change process affecting the change of location and work base, the policy will apply to those affected employees once staff consultation has been concluded and affected staff are informed of their new work base.

10 Travel in-lieu of Relocation

- 10.1 Employees may request to delay an application for relocation in those circumstances (e.g. the needs of dependants and, the location of their current residence) and instead request that they be allowed to travel daily and claim for excess daily travelling expenses. Any such request should be made to their line manager who will decide whether the proposed daily travelling arrangements meet the needs of the service and are reasonable. It will be for the line manager to stipulate any time limits on this and to monitor the impact on performance.
- 10.2 Any reimbursement for excess daily travelling expenses made will be in accordance with the time and the financial limits set out in the conditional offer letter of employment.
- 10.3 Once an agreement has been reached to pay excess daily travelling expenses, either the Trust or the employee may review this at any time particularly if the journey time or distance is becoming detrimental to the health of the employee or to the performance of the employee's duties.

11 Maximum Trust contribution to Relocation expenses

- 11.1 The maximum contribution that the Trust will reimburse employees who are on a substantive/permanent contract, in scope and eligible under this policy is £8,000. This applies to relocating to a new home and moving house.
- 11.2 If permanent employees choose not to apply for relocation but prefer to live in rented accommodation, the maximum that can be claimed through a tenancy arrangement via rented accommodation is £4,000. If the employee then decides within 2 years of commencing employment to apply for relocation, the costs that the Trust has already paid for rented accommodation will be factored in and therefore the total costs payable will be to a maximum of £8,000.
- 11.3 The breakdown on what can be claimed is set out in Appendix A. According to HM Revenue & Customs "if your employer helps you to move home because of your job, any payments you receive, or any goods or services provided for you, are treated as part of your earnings for tax and national insurance contribution [NICs] purposes.

However, the first £8,000 of any help you get from your employer is exempt from tax and NICs as long as certain conditions are met". Employees are strongly advised to view the HMRC Relocation Guidance.

12 Claims Procedure

- 12.1 No relocation expenses will be payable until a Relocation Expenses Agreement (Appendix B) is completed signed, approved and a copy sent to Pay Services.
- 12.2 Claims are made through the Trust e-expenses system and the expenses agreement should be attached electronically including a note to the approving budget holders who are required to approve claims made by staff on the merit of the evidence attached and against the specifications of this policy
- 12.3 In exceptional circumstances when new employees relocate to their new accommodation before they start work with the Trust, the Executive Director responsible for the department where the new employee will be based, may authorise early payment of expenses, but must obtain a written agreement that the expenses will be repaid in full should the individual fail to join the Trust. In the case of Very Senior Managers/Directors and other Senior managers, this responsibility rests with the Director of People Services and Organisational Development.

13 Repayment Policy

- 13.1 Reimbursement of expenses under this policy will be allowed for a maximum period of 12 months from the date of appointment. Any amounts not claimed within the 12 months cannot be claimed unless exceptional circumstances apply and would need to be approved by HMRC.
- 13.2 With the exception of Junior Medical and Dental trainees, substantive employees leaving the Trust within a period of two years will be required to repay their Expenses. Employees will be required to repay 1/24th of the total relocation assistance provided for each month short of 24 months to be deducted from any monies due on the termination of their employment.

14 Records

It is the responsibility of the line manager authorising the relocation expenses to maintain a record of the payments made, to ensure that the authorised expenses limit is not exceeded and all expenses authorised are in line with this policy.

15 Review process

In order that this policy remains current, any of the appendices to the policy can be amended and approved during the lifetime of the document without the document strategy having to return to the ratifying committee.

16 Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy and it does not have any significant impact on any of the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010

17 Process for monitoring compliance

Aspect of compliance or effectiveness being monitored	Monitoring method	Responsibility for monitoring (job title)	Frequency of monitoring	Group or Committee that will review the findings and monitor completion of any resulting action plan
<i>Expense Claims</i>	<i>Retrospective review of claims made in rolling 12 month period</i>	<i>HR Department Internal Audit</i>	<i>Annually</i>	<i>Audit Committee</i>

18 References

18.1 Doctors in training can claim against the Health Education England relocation and travel policy ([Relocation and Travel Expenses Arrangements for Doctors & Dentists in Training & Public Health Trainees](#)) November 2020.

Appendix A: Schedule of Relocation expenses which are reimbursable.

For substantive/permanent employees the maximum contribution that the Trust will reimburse employees eligible under this policy is £8,000 for owner occupied or £4,000 for a tenancy agreement and related expenses as set out below.

The breakdown on what can be claimed under this policy is set out in the table below, but claims cannot exceed the maximum.

	Nature of Expense (Original receipts will be required for all amounts claimed)		Eligibility	
			Owner occupier	Tenant
1.	Preliminary visits to new area and on relocation	Travel expenses at public transport rate and up to 5 nights accommodation costs at standard subsistence rates will be reimbursable in relation to the employee and their dependants whilst searching for new accommodation and supervising relocation, including travel from the old to the new accommodation.	Yes	Yes
2.	Legal & related expenses connected with house sale or purchase	The following costs are reimbursable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • solicitor's fees • incidental legal expenses e.g. search fees • lender's charges for mortgage redemption or application • estate agents or auctioneer's fees on sale, • Energy Certificates • stamp duty on the new property • Land Registry fees • survey and associated test (e.g. drains) fees 	Yes	No
3.	Tenancy fees	Expenses associated with a tenancy agreement, excluding any non-refundable payments and any agency fees incurred.	No	Yes
4.	Removal of furniture & effects (excluding animals)	The lowest of 3 written quotations will be reimbursable in relation to the actual removal of furniture and effects, although it will be for the employee to decide which firm to use.	Yes	Yes
5.	Storage of furniture &	Where it is necessary to store furniture and effects during relocation, charges are reimbursable until the completion of purchase/signature of tenancy	Yes	Yes

	effects (excluding animals)	agreement.		
6.	Temporary Accommodation Expenses	Employees on permanent contracts commence employment before they are able to relocate to their new home and require temporary accommodation. This will be reviewed by the line manager after 3 months in order to ensure that a clear timeline is agreed when the employee will move to their new home and therefore end the need for temporary accommodation.	Yes	Yes
7.	Excess Daily Travelling Expenses	This applies to all eligible employees.	Yes	Yes
8.	Miscellaneous Expenses	Connection of services (gas, electricity, telephone), taking down and fitting of fixtures and carpets where professional services are required.	Yes	Yes

Appendix B: RELOCATION EXPENSES AGREEMENT

To be completed by employee

Name:
Address of old accommodation:
In relation to my current residence, I am the: <i>Owner occupier/Tenant</i>
If owner occupier, please state whether you intend to relocate your principal residence <i>Yes/No</i>

To be completed by Line Manager

Post to which employee is being appointed:	
Department:	
Commencement Date:	Budget code of relocation assistance:
Reason for assistance:	
Relocation assistance to a maximum of £	is authorised in accordance with the Relocation Assistance policy (HR42).
Name of Line Manager (in capitals)	
Signature of Line Manager	Date:

Employee Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understand The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust's Relocation Assistance Policy (W44). I confirm that the above information is accurate and that none of the expenses claimed are recoverable from any other source. I agree that if I leave the Trust before I have completed two years' service from the date of relocating to my new home I will be required to

repay 1/24th of the total relocation assistance provided for each month short of 24 months to be deducted from any monies due to me on the termination of my employment, or upon any mutually acceptable basis.

Signature of Employee:

Date:.....