

# POLICY FOR THE REIMBURSEMENT OF REMOVAL OR ROTATIONAL TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR DOCTORS IN TRAINING

*This document sets out guidance for relocation and associated expenses for Specialty trainees within Health Education England, East of England.*

**Authors: Susan Knight & Kate Read**

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## Equality Act 2010

Health Education England, East of England (HEE, EoE) is committed to equality and diversity within the organisation and this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010. HEE, EoE will ensure that the application of any part of this policy does not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, against anyone on the grounds of race, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership.

## Introduction

1. The aim of this policy is to provide assistance to junior doctors in training who are required to move home in order to take up a post on a training programme and to ensure junior doctors on rotational appointments are not seriously disadvantaged financially. It is not intended to cover fully the costs of moving home to complete a training programme or a trainees commute to and from work which may consist of a number of different placements across a wide geographical area. Trainees are not expected to profit materially from reimbursements in respect of removals. Each application will be considered with due regard both for the interests of the individual and the service as a whole.

The 'Approval of Eligibility to Claim Reimbursement of Removal or Rotational Travel Expenses Form' will subsequently be referred to as 'Approval of Eligibility Claim Form'.

2. From **August 2017**, the employing NHS Trust will administer and fund the relocation and associated expenses, such as excess travel costs, for all junior doctors on HEE, EoE training programmes.

3. The maximum payable under this policy to any *trainee household* is **£8000.00** over the whole of the period employed on a recognised training programme across all Health Education England regions. This covers the start of their Foundation Year 1 (FY1) to Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT). The maximum sum covers all categories of expenses outlined in this policy, inclusive of all removal and associated expenses or excess travel. The sum reimbursed will usually be limited to those expenses listed in Appendix 1 and will be less or equal to the agreed sum detailed in the Approval of Eligibility Letter.

4. In most cases the base place of work will be the first place of work in the current training programme. However a trainee may wish to change their base hospital should they have a home that is more convenient to the place of work in which the second or subsequent post in the training programme is to be held.

In order to request a change in the base place of work the trainee must submit a base change request to [relocation.eoe@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:relocation.eoe@hee.nhs.uk) full terms and guidance can be found here [https://heeoee.hee.nhs.uk/base\\_change\\_request](https://heeoee.hee.nhs.uk/base_change_request)

5. Reimbursement will only be approved by completing an Approval of Eligibility to Claim Form which can be downloaded from <https://heeoee.hee.nhs.uk/Relocation>

6. Trainees in General Practice and Public Health will need to apply via their lead employer and comply with the St Helen and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust process. All documents can be downloaded from HR direct, for any queries please contact [leademployereoe@sthk.nhs.uk](mailto:leademployereoe@sthk.nhs.uk)

7. Business mileage, 'in travel' costs and travel relating to on-call commitments are not reimbursed by this policy.

### Eligibility

8. Trainees on a Foundation Programme may claim up to £2000.00 of the overall £8000.00 maximum sum during their foundation training years (FY1 and FY2). The amount claimed during foundation training will be deducted from the overall £8000.00 available.

9. To be eligible to claim for removal or rotational travel expenses trainees must be employed by NHS Trusts within the area covered by HEE, EoE and who hold a Training Number and who are in training posts approved by the relevant college and funded by the Postgraduate Dean. The employer reserves the right to decline any eligibility applications from trainees who have not successfully registered with the Postgraduate Dean for their training programme and obtained their National Training Number (NTN).

10. The policy applies to Doctors in training grades holding a Training Number, who are required:

- to relocate in the interests of the service, or
- to incur travelling distances in excess of that to their base place of work, or
- to further their training to enable them to take up their appointment.

11. To be eligible for removal expenses, the practitioner will normally have changed their main residence as a result of:

- starting a new employment, or
- a change of duties of employment, or
- a change of location of employment

Please note that trainees on Out of Programme Experience (OOPE) are excluded. Trainees on OOPT and OOPR may be considered for relocation expenses, only when the time counts towards their training.

Those appointed via an inter deanery transfer will **not** be entitled to relocation expenses or excess mileage in lieu of relocation.

12. East of England Trainees working in NHS Trusts within any other Health Education England region will be reimbursed in accordance with **that** regions Removal Expenses policy. London trainees who are placed in NHS Trusts in the East of England will be reimbursed in accordance with the East of England Policy for the Reimbursement of Removal or Rotational Travel Expenses for Doctors in Training.

13. Trainees are expected to complete the HEE, EoE training programme to which they have been appointed to be eligible for reimbursement of relocation costs, unless any subsequent move is as a result of unforeseen circumstances, or due to rotational placement, or at the behest of the employer, or because of the end of the rotation/post.

14. For trainees moving into a post from outside the UK, travel and removal expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with the policy from UK port of entry only.

### Travel in Lieu of Relocation

15. Trainees who would be eligible for reimbursement of removal expenses, but are for good reason not able to move house immediately, may be paid excess travel from their home to their place of work for a period of up to 3 months after appointment to the training programme, provided that the proposed interim travelling arrangements are reasonable and safe. Trainees must make every effort to relocate to the East of England, actively seeking suitable accommodation in the new area. The employer may request assurance that the proposed journey does not compromise patient safety due to fatigue.

### Excess Travel

16. A trainee moving placement within a rotation may choose, under Paragraph 314/315<sup>1</sup> of Terms and Conditions of Service (TCS), not to move home but to travel the greater distance to their next hospital on the rotation.

17. The mileage that may be paid under these circumstances is the difference between the mileage from home to the base place of work and the mileage from home to the new place of work. The home to base journey is calculated using the home address of the trainee whilst at their first place of work on the training programme (base place of work). The shortest route option on the AA route planner is used to calculate all mileage. Please note that when a trainee is claiming for excess fares all **original** receipts/tickets for fares must be submitted with the claim to the employing trust. This paragraph is contingent on the trainee meeting the criteria set out in paragraphs 8-14 above.

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<sup>1</sup>[http://www.nhsemployers.org/~media/Employers/Documents/Pay%20and%20reward/Terms\\_and\\_Conditions\\_of\\_Service\\_NHS\\_Medical\\_and\\_Dental\\_Staff\\_300813\\_bt.pdf](http://www.nhsemployers.org/~media/Employers/Documents/Pay%20and%20reward/Terms_and_Conditions_of_Service_NHS_Medical_and_Dental_Staff_300813_bt.pdf)

18. Excess travel, under these provisions, will be paid at NHS public transport rate (24p per mile/28p per mile on 2016 contract) and can be claimed towards the cost of fuel or standard class travel. This will be calculated for travelling distances to the new place of work that exceed the home to base (paragraph 4) travelling distance.

19. Payment of excess travel costs should not be agreed where, in the judgement of the appropriate authority (usually the employing trust), the journey time and/or the distance involved is likely to be detrimental to the safety of the trainee, and/or the satisfactory performance of the trainee's duties. In such circumstances, the appropriate authority will seek alternative arrangements, such as those outlined in paragraphs 32 - 37, addressing the needs of the trainee and the service.

20. If a trainee changes location for their FY2 year they may be eligible to claim relocation or associated expenses. This does not include 'in training' travel costs such as psychiatry placements, general practice placements or undertaking home visits for example.

### **Expenses on Relocation**

21. In establishing eligibility, the consequences of any move on subsequent travel will be considered. The new residence should be within a reasonable daily travelling distance of the new place of work. The old residence should not be within a reasonable daily travelling distance of the new place of work in order to be eligible for removal expenses.

22. Trainees who are relocating are expected to sell their old property and purchase their new one within 12 months of starting their Training Programme.

23. The property for which reimbursement of removal and associated expenses is to be made should be of a broadly comparable standard to that occupied in the area of previous employment. There should be no improvement in the quality of the housing at a cost to the taxpayer.

24. Before a claim for storage and/or removal of furniture is made, three written quotes must be obtained and reimbursement will usually be limited to the lowest quote. Or for small removals, reimbursement of a self-hire vehicle and fuel would be acceptable. It is the trainee's responsibility to ensure the most cost effective and efficient method of removals is selected, multiple removals costs will not usually be reimbursed.

25. Stamp duty will normally be reimbursed to the order of the lower value of either the old permanent residence sold, or the new permanent residence purchased. Stamp duty is only reimbursable when the trainee has incurred this cost on the previous purchase of a property and is required to relocate due to the rotational nature of their training programme. First time buyers stamp duty is not reimbursed under the policy.

26. Due to the rotational nature of the training programme, approval may also be given for reimbursement of removal expenses relating to subsequent moves of house during the training programme. These moves will be subject to the eligibility criteria outlined earlier.

27. Eligible trainees who are occupying rented accommodation prior to property purchase may be reimbursed the cost of removal of furniture and effects, for expenses relating to a search for accommodation and agency/solicitors fees. No other expenses set out in Appendix 1 will normally be reimbursed in these circumstances.

28. Practitioners living in hospital accommodation may have to relocate each time they change rotation. They are eligible for reimbursement of removal expenses on the same basis as practitioners living in rented accommodation. Consideration may also be given to reimbursement of expenses for a visit to inspect the new accommodation, prior to relocating.

29. Original receipts or invoices will be required as proof of outlay against authorised expenditure. Reimbursement will not be made to third parties. Typical examples of expenses for reimbursement and excluded expenses are given in Appendix 1.

### **Expenses during Search for Accommodation**

30. When relocating, practitioners are entitled to make preliminary visits to the area of their new employment in search of accommodation.

31. Expenses for preliminary visits may cover accommodation (for a maximum of four nights) subsistence<sup>2</sup> and travel at NHS rate (24p per mile/28p per mile on 2016 contract) for a maximum of 4 return journeys, for the practitioner and their immediate family. Self-drive car hire may be an acceptable alternative where 3 written quotes are provided and the cost is less than public transport.

### **Continuing Commitments**

32. A trainee that is paying for two monthly rent/mortgage outgoings may be eligible for assistance with the lower of the two expenses in line with paragraphs 32 – 37 of this policy. The trainee is expected to be living in the residence in the area of their new place of work in order to be eligible for these expenses.

33. When a property in the area of the new place of work is purchased, and whilst the old property remains unsold, reasonable accommodation costs may be reimbursed. Reimbursement should normally be for the lower of the monthly mortgage payments on the old property and the monthly mortgage payments/rent on the new property, normally for a maximum of twelve months.

34. To be eligible for reimbursement under these provisions, practitioners should expect to be required to demonstrate that they are actively marketing their former property at a realistic price and that they are actively seeking suitable accommodation in the new area, or that they have a good reason not to relocate immediately. Such reasons might include partner's employment, childcare, schooling, or elderly dependents.

35. Practitioners who have not found suitable accommodation in the new area and who are in accommodation separated from their immediate family (spouse/carer/dependants) may be reimbursed the travel costs of weekly visits either by the practitioner to the family home or by immediate family to the practitioner, at NHS rate (24p per mile/28p per mile on 2016 contract) normally for a maximum of twelve months. The reimbursement of travel costs will only be available for travel within the UK.

36. Practitioners who live in the East of England or have relocated to the East of England and for good reason do not move house when eligible for reimbursement of removal expenses and are not able to travel on a daily basis to the next place of work on the rotation, may apply to HEE, EoE for reimbursement of accommodation costs. In particular, consideration will be given to the needs of trainees with families, who may not be able to move house for a distant rotational placement lasting a year or less, but who may wish to be accompanied by their families in these circumstances. The decision whether to pay accommodation costs will normally include an assessment of the projected cost of travel, both financial and in terms of time spent, versus the cost of accommodation, either private or provided by the employer.

37. Trainees may be eligible to claim for overnight stays in hospital accommodation when working long days/night shifts and travelling a significant distance to/from their place of work. In particular consideration will be given to trainees that may not be eligible for excess travel expenses, and all applications will be considered on an individual basis. The journey time and/or the distance involved will be taken into consideration when applying for reimbursement of these costs, and be agreed where, in the judgement of the appropriate authority (usually the employing trust), the journey is likely to be detrimental to the safety of the trainee, and/or to the satisfactory performance of the trainee's duties.

### **Tax and National Insurance**

38. Please be aware that all claims for excess travel and continuing commitments will be liable to tax and national insurance. Most claims for relocation or removal costs would not be liable to tax. Trainees who do not move their family home in entirety but rather relocate on a temporary basis will be liable to tax deduction on their removals claim.

39. Practitioners are strongly advised to seek a professional view of their tax liabilities as a consequence of assistance received. Information is available on the HM Revenue and Customs website at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/guidance/relocation.htm>

40. Please note that in some cases, placements on rotation are classed as temporary workplaces and expenses paid in these circumstances are not subject to tax. Trainees should be aware that this does not often apply.

### Funding Provision for Removal and Associated Expenses

41. Expenses incurred as a result of an abortive sale/purchase may be reimbursed where the practitioner is not responsible for the abandonment of the transaction, or the practitioner's withdrawal is considered to be entirely reasonable. Trainees are advised to act cautiously when making/receiving an offer on a property and incurring solicitor's/surveyor's fees as this will count against the overall maximum amount of **£8000.00** payable under this policy and reduce the amount available for an eventual successful purchase and sale.

42. Practitioners and their dependants may be reimbursed for travelling expenses incurred on the day of removal from the old accommodation to the new property accommodation at NHS rate (24p per mile/28p per mile on 2016 contract).

43. Practitioners may be reimbursed for one return visit to their old property to supervise the removal. Entitlements would normally include accommodation for a maximum of three days and one return journey at NHS rate (24p per mile/28p per mile on 2016 contract).

### Administrative Arrangements

44. Reimbursement will not be made until the trainee takes up the appointment. Trainees voluntarily leaving the Training Programme before the Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) date will be required to repay their expenses, details included in Appendix 1.

45. The process for Approval of Eligibility to Claim Reimbursement of Removal or Rotational Travel Expenses is available from the HEE, East of England website <https://heeoee.hee.nhs.uk/Relocation>

46. The trainee is responsible for checking they meet the eligibility criteria prior to submitting any claim. All previous relocation and/or excess mileage claims must be declared on the Approval of Eligibility Claim Form.

47. It is the trainee's responsibility to ensure the eligibility application is completed fully and correctly with no missing information. Medical Staffing reserve the right to decline any eligibility applications which are incomplete or missing any supporting evidence/documentation.

48. The Approval of Eligibility Claim Form must be submitted whilst you are employed at the trust to which they relate and before or within 2 months of incurring the cost. It is the trainee's responsibility to ensure their application form is submitted to their employing NHS Trust within this timeframe.

49. Approved claims should then be submitted by trainees to the employing NHS Trust within 28 of receiving confirmation of eligibility.

**Trust Information Only**

Trusts are required to keep a complete and concise record of all payments made to trainees using the Relocation Funding Return (RFR) provided by HEE, and this is to be returned to the relocation inbox by 31<sup>st</sup> January annually. [relocation.eoe@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:relocation.eoe@hee.nhs.uk)

The fully completed Eligibility Form **must** be verified by a medical staffing officer at the employing NHS Trust prior to any reimbursement being made.

**Form of Undertaking**

50. Any suspected false claim will be referred to the Local Counter Fraud Specialist. Trainees will be required to give a signed undertaking:

1. That, they are unable to recover any expenses (in part or in full) from another source, for example partner’s employer, excepting legitimately incurred expenses that are not reimbursed by the employer.
2. To confirm the total amount of relocation expenses already reimbursed from NHS employers, covering the whole of their training from the start of their Foundation Year 1 (FY1) to Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) date.

**Appeals Procedure**

51. If a trainee has reason to believe that their relocation claim was processed unfairly or incorrectly, they are able to request a review of the process by which their application was considered by making a written submission to Health Education England, East of England. This should include the reason/s for his/her complaint and evidence to substantiate that the process for administering applications has not been followed, resulting in the incorrect outcome. All written submissions must be sent via email or as an attachment, with the original application form and outcome received from the employing NHS Trust, along with a day-time contact telephone number. This should then be emailed to [relocation.eoe@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:relocation.eoe@hee.nhs.uk) Any complaint must be made within 10 working days of being notified of the decision.

One member of the senior management team at HEE, EoE and one Trust based panel member will form an appeals panel and review the decision made, taking in to account the evidence submitted and HEE EoE’s Policy for the Reimbursement of Removal and Rotational Travel Expenses for Doctors in Training. The decision of the appeals panel is final. There is no further right of appeal.

## Appendix 1

### Examples of Expenses for Reimbursement

The following are offered as examples only and are neither inclusive nor exclusive.

#### House Purchase

- Solicitors' fees
- Estate agents' or auctioneer's fees
- Finder's fees
- Stamp duty
- Land registration fees
- Survey fees
- Incidental legal expenses

#### House Sale

- Solicitors' fees
- Estate agents' or auctioneer's fees
- Incidental legal expenses

#### Removals

- Furniture removal (not including specialist removals e.g. livestock/pets, grand piano etc.) and storage expenses including insurance of goods in transit
- Travelling expenses in connection with the move
- Subsistence expenses in connection with the move

#### Property Rental

- Agency administration fees

#### Continuing Commitments

- Cost of monthly rent or mortgage interest payments
- Weekly visits to and from family home and VAT where applicable on any of the above.

#### Excluded Expenses

The following categories of expenses will be **excluded**:

- Interest on bridging loans
- Increase in insurance premiums
- Redirection of post
- Agency fees such as check in fees etc.
- Mortgage application fee
- Deposits of any kind
- Parking or congestion charges
- Costs relating to letting out a property e.g. agency fees, cleaning services etc.
- Furniture costs and phone/TV/broadband installation.
- Travel relating to clinical governance days/meetings/on-call commitments/training days

## Subsistence and Accommodation

Subsistence is only applicable as identified in paragraph 30 of the Policy for the Reimbursement of Removal or Rotational Travel Expenses for Doctors in Training. All costs **must** be accompanied by dated receipts when submitting a claim to your employing trust.

- Meals allowance per 24 hour period = £20.00
- Lunch allowance = £5.00
- Evening meal allowance = £15.00
- Actual receipted cost of bed and breakfast up to a maximum of £55.00 in a 3\* hotel or equivalent.

## Repayment of Expenses

Trainees that voluntarily leave their Training Programme before the Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) date will be required to repay a proportion of their relocation expenses.

This is calculated using the following sliding scale:

<u>If Trainee Leaves</u>	<u>Percentage of Costs reimbursed by HEE EoE to be Reclaimed</u>
Within 6 months	75%
Within 6 – 24 months	50%
24+ months	25%

## DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Remarks
1.0	12.03.2010	SS and KR written
1.1	05.10.2010	Comments received from MPS
1.2	15.07.2010	KR and SS revision following comments from the BMA
1.3	01.12.2010	KR revision following consultation with MPS meeting
1.4	02.02.2012	Inclusion of Equality and Diversity Act 2010 statement
1.5	April 2013	Revised by AB, KR
1.6	September 2013	Updated by KR, AB, SB
1.7	July 2014	Updated by KR & SK
1.8	August 2014	Updated by SK
1.9	November 2014	Updated by SK, RK & KR
2.0	April 2015	Updated by SK & RK following comments from MPS meeting
2.1	June 2016	Policy review and update by SK SC SH
2.2	August 2016	Updated by SC – Foundation Year ones included in policy.
2.3	September 2016	Updated by SC SK & SH, Base place of work change request added – available from 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2016.
2.4	February 2017	New lead employer details added by SC (GP and Public Health) - St Helen and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.
2.5	May 2017	Adjustment to mileage rate following 2016 Junior Doctor's contract.
2.6	July 2017	Updated by SC, SK and KR