

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 East of England.

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Equality Act 2010

Health Education East of England (HEEoE) is committed to equality and diversity within the organisation and this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010. HEEoE 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 which may consist of a number of different placements across a wide geographical area and practitioners 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 2014** Health Education East of England (HEEoE) will administer and fund the relocation and associated expenses, such as excess travel costs, for all junior doctors on HEEoE 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. This covers the start of their Foundation Year 2 (FY2)/PRHO to Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) date regardless of any break between programmes. 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 the lesser of the agreed sum as detailed on the Approval of Eligibility to Claim Reimbursement of Removal or Rotational Travel Expenses form, or the total of authorised and receipted expenses.

4. Base place of work is defined as the first place of work in the training programme.

5. Reimbursement will only be approved by completing an Approval of Eligibility to Claim Reimbursement of Removal or Rotational Travel Expenses Form which can be downloaded from the https://www.eoedeanery.nhs.uk/medical/page.php?area_id=51.

6. Trainees in General Practice will need to comply with the Southend University Hospital Foundation Trust process.

Eligibility

Reasonable daily travelling distance is defined as no more than 40 miles or 1 hour commute.

7. Entrants to the Foundation Programme who have attended a medical school within the East of England are **not** eligible for relocation expenses during the first year of their Foundation programme.

8. To be eligible to claim for removal or rotational travel expenses trainees must be employed by NHS Trusts within the area covered by HEEoE and who hold an HEEoE training number and who are training posts approved by the relevant college and funded by the Postgraduate Dean.

9. The policy applies to Doctors in training grades holding a HEEoE training number, who are required:

- to relocate in the interests of the service, or
- to further their training to enable them to take up their appointment, (excluding Foundation Trainees who have attended medical school within the East of England).

10. 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 non-HEEoE funded Out of Programme Experience (OOPE) are excluded.

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

Trainees working in NHS Trusts within any other Local Education and Training Board (LETB) will fall under **that** LETBs Removal Expenses policy.

11. Trainees are expected to complete the HEEoE 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.

12. 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

13. Trainees (F2 onwards) 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 base place of work for a period of 3 months after appointment to the training programme, provided that the proposed interim travelling arrangements are reasonable and safe. Trainees (F2 onwards) must make every effort to relocate to the East of England, actively seeking suitable accommodation in the new area. HEEoE may seek confirmation from the employer that the proposed journey does not compromise patient safety due to fatigue.

Excess Travel

14. A trainee moving placement within a rotation may choose, under Paragraph 314/315¹ of Terms and Conditions of Service (TCS), not to move home but to travel the greater distance between their home and the next hospital on the rotation.

15. 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, as set out in TCS Paragraph 315. Reasonable daily travelling distance is defined as no more than 40 miles or 1 hour commute. HEEoE uses the shortest route option on the AA route planner 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.

16. Excess travel, under these provisions, will be paid at NHS public transport rate (33p per mile) and trainees will only receive reimbursement for standard class travel.

17. 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 to the satisfactory performance of the trainee's duties. In such circumstances, the appropriate authority will seek alternative arrangements, such as those outlined in paragraphs 33 and 34, addressing the needs of the trainee and the service.

18. 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' costs such as

¹http://www.nhsemployers.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/Terms_and_Conditions_of_Service_NHS_Medical_and_Dental_Staff_300813_bt.pdf

psychiatry placements, or undertaking home visits for example. If a trainee's place of work changes from an acute NHS Trust to General Practice, the trainee may be eligible to claim the difference between home to base and home to next place of work. Reasonable daily travelling distance is defined as no more than 40 miles or 1 hour commute.

19. 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.

Expenses on Relocation

20. In establishing eligibility, HEEoE will consider the consequences of any move on subsequent travel. The new residence should be within a reasonable daily travelling distance of base. Reasonable daily travelling distance is defined as no more than 40 miles or a 1 hour commute. The old residence should not be within a reasonable daily travelling distance of the new rotation or the rotation slots for the training programme, in order to be eligible for removal expenses.

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

22. The property for which reimbursement of removal and associated expenses is to be made should be of a broadly comparable standard (in terms of present housing arrangements, i.e. rented or owner occupied, number of rooms, semi-detached) to that occupied in the area of previous employment. Should that not be the case, reimbursement would normally be made as though the new property was similar to the old. There should be no improvement in the quality of the housing at a cost to the taxpayer.

23. Before a claim for storage and/or removal of furniture is made, three quotes should be obtained for approval. Reimbursement will usually be limited to the lowest quote. For small removals, quote for and reimbursement of a self-hire vehicle and fuel would be acceptable.

24. 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.

25. Due to the rotational nature of the training programme, approval may also be given to reimbursement of removal expenses for subsequent moves of house within the rotation. These moves will be subject to the eligibility criteria outlined earlier and the designated base place of work may change as a result.

26. Eligible trainees who are occupying rented accommodation immediately prior to beginning this employment may be reimbursed the cost of removal of furniture and effects and for expenses relating to a search for accommodation including rental agency

fees. No other expenses set out in the Appendix 1 will normally be reimbursed in these circumstances.

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

28. 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.

29. 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 HEEoE for reimbursement for 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.

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), subsistence² and travel at NHS public transport rate (33p per mile) or standard travel (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 quotes are provided and the cost is less than public transport.

Continuing Commitments

32. Whilst the old property remains unsold, reasonable accommodation costs may be reimbursed. Reimbursement should normally be for the lower of the monthly mortgage interest payments on the old property and the monthly mortgage interest payments/rent on the new property, normally for a maximum of twelve months.

33. Practitioners who have not found suitable accommodation in the new area and who are in accommodation separated from their family may be reimbursed the travel costs of weekly visits either by the practitioner to the family home or by immediate family to the

² See appendix 1

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practitioner, at NHS public transport rate (33p per mile) or standard travel, normally for a maximum of twelve months. The reimbursement of travel costs will only be available for travel within the UK.

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. 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.

Expenses on Removal

Funding Provision for Removal and Associated Expenses

36. 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 by HEEoE 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.

37. 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 public transport rate (33p per mile) or standard travel.

38. 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 public transport rate (33p per mile) or standard travel.

Administrative Arrangements

Reimbursement will **not** be made until the trainee takes up the appointment.

39. The process for Approval of Eligibility to Claim Reimbursement of Removal or Rotational Travel Expenses and the level of reimbursement available will be available from the HEEoE website https://www.eoedeanery.nhs.uk/medical/page.php?area_id=51.

40. 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>

41. The Approval of Eligibility Claim Form must be received either before or within 2 calendar months of incurring the cost. Once eligibility has been confirmed by HEEoE and both the current NHS Employer and the Trainee have been notified, reimbursement costs will be paid to the Trainee by the current NHS Employer.

42. Claims should be submitted by Trainees to the employing NHS Trust within 28 days of incurring the cost or receiving confirmation of eligibility and will only be payable against the provision of **original** receipts and rates for accommodation and transport will be in accordance with HEEoE policy (refer to Subsistence and Accommodation in Appendix 1).

43. Invoices from NHS Trusts will only be accepted by HEEoE in the following windows:

1-28 February, 1-30 June, 1-30 September or 1-31 December and must be made in the first available window after incurring the expenditure.

Form of Undertaking

44. 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 HEEoE.
2. To confirm the total amount of relocation expenses already refunded from NHS employers, covering the whole of their training from the start of their Foundation Year 2 (FY2)/PRHO to Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) date.

Appeals Procedure

45. If a trainee is unhappy regarding any decision reached on his/her claim, s/he may request a review by making a written submission to the Head of Education and Performance detailing the reason/s for his/her complaint and requesting the decision be reconsidered. Full evidence to substantiate the complaint either within an email or as an attachment, along with a day-time contact telephone number, **must** be provided. Any complaint must be made within 10 working days of being notified of the decision.

Two members of the senior management team will form an appeal panel and will review the decision made, taking in to account the evidence submitted and HEEoE's Policy for the Reimbursement of Removal and Rotational Travel Expenses for Doctors in Training. The decision of the senior management appeal panel is final. There is no further right of appeal.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

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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
Date for Review:	April 2015	

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 eg 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.
- 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.

Subsistence and Accommodation

All costs **must** be accompanied by receipts:

- Actual receipted cost of bed and breakfast up to a maximum of £55.00 in a 3* hotel or equivalent
- Meals allowance per 24 hour period = £20.00
- Lunch allowance (more than five hours away from home, including lunchtime between 12.00 – 14.00) = £5.00
- Evening meal allowance (more than ten hours away from home, after 19.00 hours) = £15.00

Examples of Trainees' Entitlement

The table below provides examples of how a trainee's entitlement may be distributed across the entire period of training subject to eligibility.

Examples	F2	ST1+	CT1-2	ST3+	Total Claimed
Doctor A	£2000	£6000			£8000
Doctor B	Nil		£4000		£4000
Doctor C	£1500		£4000	£2500	£8000
Doctor D	£4000		Nil	£4000	£8000
Doctor E	Nil	£3500			£3500
Doctor F	£300	£1900			£2200