

Excess Travel

Questions and Answers

1. What are the rules about excess travel costs?

Agenda for Change (AfC) Terms and Conditions allow employers to reimburse additional travel costs incurred because of a forced change of base. This might be because of a merger of employers, as an alternative to redundancy or because the department you work in is moving to another location. This is covered in AfC Terms and Conditions Section 17 in paragraph 17.3; 17.17 and 17.25.

2. How long will NHSBT pay these additional costs for?

NHSBT currently reimburses for up to 4 years, which is the maximum allowed under AfC. If you have a subsequent change of base or move home (as described in question 6) within this time, then your payments will cease.

3. How do I identify the additional cost I will incur?

During the consultation, your manager will discuss this with you. You will have to detail how you get to work currently and how you plan to travel after the move. This is documented to show if your costs will increase or not.

4. My new base is further away but I already have a season ticket, will NHSBT reimburse a proportion of this cost?

If the season ticket you already have covers your journey there is no extra cost to you as a result of the change to your base, and none of this cost will be met by NHSBT.

If the season ticket you already have doesn't cover the full journey, then the extra cost will be calculated and confirmed as described in question 3.

5. What happens if I change the way I get to work, for example if I use public transport at the moment and will have to use a car in future?

This is detailed during the consultation and used to determine if your costs are increasing or not.

6. If I move house after the change to my base has happened will I still be able to claim the same additional costs as before?

If you move home during your excess travel entitlement period you will cease to receive your excess travel costs unless you can provide evidence that your total travel costs will remain the same as, or greater than, they were at the point you became entitled to excess travel.

This means that if your costs reduce when you move then your entitlement to excess travel will cease, if they increase then you will be entitled to continue to claim excess travel at the rate previously agreed.

7. What happens if some costs increase and others reduce, are they off-set?

Yes. NHSBT will meet extra costs over and above the total cost. Your existing and future costs will be assessed and compared and the total extra you can claim will be confirmed.

8. If I change my job role, but stay at the same base will I still be able to claim the same additional costs as before?

Yes

9. If I change my base again, after this move, will I still be able to claim the same additional costs?

If the move is voluntary, then you will cease to be eligible to claim the excess costs

If the move is compulsory, then your excess travel costs will be recalculated based on the move to the new base

10. When will I know if NHSBT will meet any of my travel costs?

Once your excess travel costs have been identified they will be approved, which will be towards the end of the consultation, but may vary for each specific move.

11. How will NHSBT reimburse these costs?

Once approved your excess travel costs are verified and confirmed to you. Pay Support will confirm, via your manager that Easy/Expenses 'Excess Travel' has been set up in the system. You should claim your daily rate on the days that you work and submit at the end of each month choosing Excess Travel from the drop down choice.

The claim and submission timetable is published within the Expenses section on People First at; -

<http://nhsbandt.nhs.sitekit.net/People%20First%20-%20Document%20Library/Pay/Payroll%20and%20Expenses%20Submission%20Timetable.pdf>

12. Will someone show me how to use the Easy/Expenses system if I haven't used it before?

Pay Support will confirm your access. Comprehensive guidance (which includes a Quick start guide, a Quick start guide – mileage, a Quick start Guide – using expenses and FAQs) is available on People First on the expenses pages at;-

<http://nhsbandt.nhs.sitekit.net/expenses.htm>

13. Are there any other implications I should be aware of?

Where an employer meets all or part of the cost of an employee getting to their base work location then the costs reimbursed are taxable.

14. Does this mean that I will be taxed on the excess travel costs that are reimbursed to me?

Yes, where an employer meets all or part of the cost of an employee getting to their base work location then the costs reimbursed are taxable, this is explained in question 25. Lease car drivers should also refer to question 19.

15. Which costs will NHSBT reimburse?

NHSBT will meet the extra costs of travel which you actually incur, these might include;

- Additional mileage in your own private vehicle (car, motorcycle, bicycle)
- Fares (e.g. bus, train, tram, ferry, tube etc.)
- Tolls

16. How much will NHSBT reimburse?

NHSBT will meet the extra cost you actually incur. Mileage in your own car or motorcycle will be calculated at the Reserve Rate. Fares or tolls will be calculated on the actual costs at the time of the move to the new base. Mileage on a bicycle will be based on the bicycle rate. Reserve and bicycle mileage rates are calculated in line with AfC Terms and Conditions Section 17.

17. If parking costs increase during the period of protection for additional parking costs, will the additional costs be met by NHSBT?

No. Additional costs at the level agreed at the time of the move are met, but these do not increase during the period of excess travel.

18. If fares for public transport or tolls etc. increase during the period of protection for additional parking costs, will the additional costs be met by NHSBT?

No. Additional costs at the level agreed at the time of the move are met, but these do not increase during the period of excess travel.

19. What will happen if I use my lease car to get into my base?

You are entitled to claim excess miles in a lease car and these will be reimbursed by NHSBT in line with AfC at the relevant lease car fuel rate.

However, if you do decide to make a claim for reimbursement of fuel costs/mileage relating to home to base mileage you should be aware that such mileage reimbursement is classified by HMRC as 'private mileage'. This will incur a fuel scale benefit charge. Drivers are strongly advised to seek advice directly from HMRC as to how this might affect them as there could be a significant tax charge resulting.

20. What about additional parking costs?

Additional parking costs will be reimbursed if;

- Using your vehicle to travel to your new base is agreed to be the most effective means of travel, and
- They are identified at the time of the change of base, and
- They are supported by an official schedule of charges and tickets or receipts

Parking costs will **not** be met if;

- They are not related to an imposed change of base, or
- They are offset by reduced travel costs relating to your current journey, or
- If they relate to a change which is not a change of base, or
- If parking charges are imposed at a site in general

21. Will NHSBT cover any additional childcare or other costs?

These are not covered under the arrangements for excess travel. Consult the 'Child Care Costs as a result of NHSBT relocation due to Organisational Change' Policy for details of other costs which are met. This can be found on People First

22. Can I change the method of transport I use on different days or weeks, depending on my personal needs, for example if I need to drop my child off some days and not others?

Yes, if this is agreed, documented and approved at the time of the move to the new base.

23. Can I change the method of transport I use if my personal needs change? (for example - when my child starts school I may need to drop him/her off and will need to use my car instead of public transport)

Yes, if this is agreed, documented and approved at the time. The excess cost will be recalculated and will be restricted to the amount originally approved. Your claim must reflect the actual transport cost incurred. The overall period of excess travel payments is limited to 4 years' maximum in total.

24. If I travel with a colleague in his/her car can we both claim?

No. Each of you can claim but only on the days when you actually incur the extra cost.

25. Are there any tax implications?

Yes, for lease car drivers these are covered by question 19, for all other home to base costs HMRC takes the following view; -

"Where someone other than the employee pays, or provides for their ordinary commuting (by reimbursing the costs, by paying directly for the travel or by providing travel facilities) and this arises from or by reason of the employment, the payment or provision is taxable. Reimbursements must be included as gross pay for PAYE purposes."

This means that any payments made will be taxed when paid.

26. Will these payments show up on my payslip?

Yes, they will be paid according to the published timetable and itemised on your payslip.