



## Relocation Grants Policy

<b>Policy Owner</b>	<b>People Partner</b>
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## **1. PURPOSE**

This document sets out Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust's (Trust) standard approach to relocation grants policy and procedures. This should be read together with other relevant Trust policies, procedures and local guidance.

The Policy and Procedures may be reviewed at the request of Management or Staff Side by giving four weeks' written notice with reasons for the review.

## **2. TRUST'S APPROACH TO RELOCATION EXPENSES**

The Trust may consider relocation assistance as a means of facilitating the recruitment and retention of staff. The package provides relocating staff with a support structure to assist them in meeting the demands of domestic relocation, thereby optimising the prospect of a successful settlement into their new appointment.

This policy provides guidance on the reimbursement of relocation expenses for eligible employees to ease the process of moving to a new area and to clarify what financial assistance is available to all prospective eligible employees and in which circumstances.

The Trust regards assistance with removal expenses as a benefit rather than an entitlement; therefore no individual should incur expenses or commit to expenditure until they receive formal written authorisation.

The terms of this policy will apply equally to those with previous NHS service and those who are new to the NHS.

## **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **3.1 JOINT RESPONSIBILITY**

Good working relations are vital for the Trust to operate successfully and provide its essential services. Management, trade unions and employees accept the responsibility of working together on issues in good faith and with goodwill with the shared intention of facilitating good working relations.

### **3.2 MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY**

Management is required to manage and to act fairly and consistently. Management is responsible for ensuring that the policies and procedures are disseminated effectively and observed by all employees.

The Recruiting Manager should consider any request for a relocation grant at interview stage and inform the HR team prior to making an offer to the candidate making the request for a relocation grant.

The authority for approving relocation grants rests with the Executive Director of Operations and Directors of Workforce or approved deputies. All applications for relocation grants must be approved by the Executive Director of Operations and Directors of Workforce or approved deputies prior to any formal commitment being entered into on behalf of the Trust.

Once approval in principle has been obtained then the successful candidate should be provided with a copy of this document and asked to adhere to the procedures outlined in the following pages.

Where approval is given then the payments will be borne from the employing services' budget.

### **3.3 EMPLOYEES RESPONSIBILITY**

Employees have a duty to comply with the policies and procedures. If an employee has any questions or concerns about these they should raise these with their line manager **or the HR department.**

New employees who receive relocation expenses will be required to sign an undertaking that

- They will not leave the employment of the Trust within a two year period from their date of commencement
- Should they voluntarily leave the employment of the Trust and break this undertaking they accept the Trust will take action to obtain repayment of the expenses received
- Within one year, they will be required to refund 100% of all expenses and within two years, 50 - 75% of expenses, pro rata to service in the second year.
- This will be from outstanding salary payments and/or by invoice.

The reimbursement of relocation grant is conditional on employees being able to demonstrate that every effort is being made to obtain suitable accommodation in the new area and sell the property in the old area where one is owned.

**Any costs incurred beyond the Relocation Grant limit of up to £8000 will be the responsibility of the employee.**

Employees should sign invoices as being correct and submit it with an expense claim form (Appendix 2).

Practitioners travelling from overseas will only be reimbursed relocation expenses from the port of entry into the UK.

### **3.4 WORKFORCE RESPONSIBILITY**

Workforce will work in partnership with Managers and Employee Representatives to ensure employees are treated fairly and consistently within the framework of the policy.

#### **4. ELIGIBILITY**

This Relocation Policy applies to certain employees appointed to permanent positions in the Trust, where the employee resides more than 30 miles from the Trust base prior to taking up employment.

Employees covered are:

- Employees taking a substantive post at Agenda for Change band 8a or above and staff in equivalent salary levels
- Employees taking substantive posts at Agenda for Change bands 5, 6 and 7 who will be providing front line clinical care

Relocation expenses may be considered where:

- **For non medical and dental staff** - New employees locate within 30 miles of the base provided they move at least 10 miles nearer to base.
- **For medical and dental staff** - In addition to the requirements set out above, the private residence of practitioners employed in the Consultant grade shall not be more than ten miles by road from the base unless specific approval is given by the Chief Executive to them residing at a greater distance.

Approval to reside at a greater distance than ten miles, but no greater than twenty miles, shall only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the Consultant concerned is able to respond from home to emergencies within a maximum of thirty minutes travelling time under normal off-peak traffic conditions.

Practitioners should note that where they decide to live further than ten miles from the base the Trust will only reimburse their travelling expenses up to a maximum of twenty miles return in accordance with the terms and conditions of service for Medical and Dental Staffs.

- **For Doctors in Training** - A practitioner in the Senior House Officer or Career Registrar grade who is appointed to a rotational training programme will be treated as a special case by the Trust, provided they will be working at least half-time hours and, prior to appointment, normally resided more than 25 miles from the base.

Where a practitioner is taking up their first appointment on a rotational training programme, they will be eligible to receive assistance with their relocation to the Leeds area and will receive a Relocation Grant

Where a practitioner is taking up a second or subsequent post in a rotation training programme and their normal residence is more than 25 miles from the base, they will also be eligible to receive assistance with their relocation to the Leeds area and will receive a Relocation Grant

Where a practitioner is taking up a second or subsequent post in a rotation training programme and their normal residence is less than 25 miles from the base, then they will be reimbursed excess travelling expenses in accordance with the Medical and Dental Staffs Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook.

- In certain circumstances, some employees, e.g. on-call staff, may be required by the nature of their employment to move to within 20 miles of the base
- Relocation expenses will not be paid where an employee's partner is also receiving support from his/her own employer

## **5. FINANCIAL LIMITS**

Relocation Grants may be awarded up to a maximum of £8,000. The total relocation expenses reimbursed, however, will depend on the costs incurred by the individual.

In instances where accounts are paid in full by the Trust and the overall total exceeds the maximum Relocation Grant payable the balance will be recovered through the payroll or by account if this is more appropriate.

Where an employee does not choose the lowest quotation received by the Trust then the level of reimbursement will be limited to the level of the lowest quotation.

Where there has been an improvement in the new property compared to the old and notional valuation has been obtained and accepted by the Trust, then the level of reimbursement will be limited. In such cases, payments in respect of Stamp Duty, legal fees and Land Registry fees will be assessed on the basis of a notional price. The assessment will be carried out by an independent valuer, usually the district valuer, who will value the old property in relation to a similar type of property in the new area.

Any payments due or costs incurred above those assessed using the notional price in respect of Stamp Duty, legal fees and Land Registry fees will be the responsibility of the employee.

## **6. PROCEDURE**

The new employee should complete Part A of the Application for Relocation Grant form (Appendix 1) as soon as possible after they have been formally offered employment and submit this to the HR Team who will then liaise with the Executive Director of Operations and Directors of Workforce or approved

deputies. Once approval has been granted to award a Relocation Grant, copies of the completed form will be sent to the employee for confirmation and to the Payroll and Finance teams for information.

Employees must make claims for the reimbursement of actual relocation expenses using the Claim for Reimbursement of Expenses form (Appendix 2) on a regular basis e.g. monthly. Claims should be retrospective and submitted during the first 12 months of employment. Both of the above forms must be submitted to the HR Team who will then liaise with the Executive Director of Operations and Directors of Workforce or approved deputies. Once the expenses have been authorized, copies of the completed form will be sent to the employee for confirmation and to the Payroll team and Finance team who will ensure that that £8000 limit is not exceeded.

All claims should be accompanied by receipt. For removal expenses three quotes must be submitted, see paragraph on 'Removal Firm Charges'. Where expense claims are not accompanied by appropriate receipts then the reimbursement of expenses will not be made.

## **7. EXPENSES**

### **Travel**

**Prior to commencement** - The cost of one return visit from home to Leeds, for a maximum of two nights' duration, will be reimbursed. Travelling expenses and subsistence allowances for the employee, partner and dependants (as appropriate) will be paid as follows:

- Travel by car will be reimbursed at the current public transport rate or lease car rate.

Subsistence will be reimbursed at current rates as follows:

- for the employee - full rate
- for the partner and any children over 12 years - 2/3 rate each
- children aged 4 to 12 years - 1/2 rate each
- children under 4 - subsistence is not payable

**Following commencement** - the employee may choose between the options below, whichever is the most appropriate, to determine how expenses are reimbursed.

**Excess daily travelling expenses** - Where an employee has been unable to move house and continues to reside at home, then they will be reimbursed any extra daily travelling expenses incurred in travelling from home to their new work base.

Employees who travel by car will be reimbursed at the current public transport rate or lease car rate. At present, reimbursement is subject to income tax and National Insurance payments.

**Temporary Accommodation Expenses** - Where an employee has been unable to move home and the old property remains unsold and they decide to take temporary accommodation in the new area, their expenses will be reimbursed as follows:

Where private accommodation is used either the rent will be reimbursed or the current long term Night Allowance subsistence rate, whichever is the lower.

**Travelling Expenses for Visits Home** - Where an employee is living in temporary accommodation in the new area, the cost of one visit home per week will be reimbursed. Travel by car will be reimbursed at the current public transport rate or lease car rate. Subsistence will not be payable.

Reimbursement of the above allowances will be limited to six months in the first instance, although this period may be extended up to a further three

months with the approval of the **Executive Director of Operations and Directors of Workforce or approved deputies**.

**Return Visit to Supervise Removal** - Two days' paid **special leave** will be granted to supervise the removal from the old to the new home. Travelling expenses will be reimbursed and travel by car will be reimbursed at the current public transport rate or lease car rate. Subsistence will not be payable.

**Removal Journey** - The cost of the journey from the old home to the new home for the employee and their partner and dependants, will be reimbursed. Travelling expenses will be reimbursed and travel by car will be reimbursed at the current public transport rate or lease car rate and passenger rate.

**Removal of Furniture and Effects**- Removal costs and, if necessary, the storage of effects for a reasonable period (normally six months), will be reimbursed. Three competitive tenders must be obtained in writing and submitted to **the Executive Director of Operations and Directors of Workforce or approved deputies** for approval. The lowest of the three quotations will be reimbursed.

## **7.2 Property purchase / sale**

Fees which will normally be reimbursed (inclusive of any VAT payable) are as follows:

- Solicitors fees
- Estate Agent fees
- Stamp Duty
- Land Registry fee
- Expenses in connection with the mortgage or loan e.g. survey fees, mortgage redemption fee
- The cost of a private survey if required for a specific purpose
- Electrical wiring and/or drains tests

NB: For employees with no property to sell in the old area, the above fees will be limited to the minimum stamp duty threshold (currently £250,000 purchase price at 1 April 2023) and on a pro rata basis where this amount is exceeded. First time buyers will be treated in the same way as those employees whose new property is a demonstrable improvement on their old property. The notional price for first time buyers is £250,000, the current minimum level at which stamp duty applies (correct at 1 April 2023).

### **Abandoned Purchase**

Any legal costs, survey fees, etc., incurred in an unsuccessful attempt to purchase property may be reimbursed at the discretion of the Trust. **The Executive Director of Operations and Directors of Workforce or approved deputies** must be satisfied that the reason the purchase was abandoned is acceptable and that any costs in relation to the work done are reasonable. Where the abandonment relates to an adverse structural survey, a copy of the Surveyor's Report must be submitted with the expense claim form.

Any costs reimbursed will be deducted from the total Relocation Grant amount.

### **7.3 Miscellaneous**

Employees moving into unfurnished accommodation may be reimbursed additional expenses after the individual takes up their new appointment and has occupied their new permanent accommodation. This includes costs of replacing domestic goods such as carpets, curtains and cookers, less any amount received for the replaced goods.

This requires that the items used in the old property are the possessions of the individual but cannot be used in the new property because they are unsuitable for installation there.

The provisions of the policy will apply i.e.

- that appropriate receipts are submitted with the expenses claim form;
- that the maximum reimbursement of £1000 is subject to the relocation grant (i.e. £8000) not being exceeded

#### **7.4 Continuing expenses in old area**

Employees who unavoidably incur regular expenses in respect of accommodation previously occupied in the old area, which remains unsold, concurrently with accommodation expenses in the new area, will be given assistance with such expenses. The types of costs incurred would normally be mortgage, building insurance, council tax, water rates, etc.

An allowance will be paid from the date when the employee occupies permanent accommodation in the new area and is joined by their family provided this is within the first 12 months from appointment. The rate at which the allowance is payable would be at whichever is the less between:

- Either the current long term Night Allowance subsistence rate OR
- The actual continuing commitments payable.

Payment will be limited to three months in the first instance although, if approved by the **Executive Director of Operations and Directors of Workforce or approved deputies**, this period may be extended to six months, or up to a maximum period of 12 months in special circumstances.

## **8. DISCRIMINATION AWARENESS**

The Trust expects the same standards of conduct of all employees. Managers should bear in mind the possibility that some employees may need assistance to follow or understand rules or procedures because of language or disability

factors, for example. If such assistance is needed or requested, consideration should be given to providing it.

**Appendix 1**

**APPLICATION FOR RELOCATION GRANT**

**Part A (to be completed by the applicant)**

Title	
Surname	
First Name/s	
Address for Correspondence	
Is this temporary or permanent?	
Contact Details	
Post offered	
Directorate	
Grade	
Full/ Part time hours	
Starting Salary Pro rata	
Base	
Proposed commencement date	
Details of current property	
Address	

Owned / rented/ furnished/ unfurnished	
Selling / Asking Price	
Estate agent details	

**UNDERTAKING**

I confirm that I have received and read the Trusts Relocation Grant Policy and agree to adhere to the requirements of the said policy.

I understand that any payments of relocation or associated expenses made to me by Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust are subject to my remaining an employee of the Trust for a minimum period of 24 months from commencement. I acknowledge that in the event of my leaving the Trusts employment before the expiry of 24 months from commencement, the Trust has the right to reclaim all or part of any payments of removal or associated expenses previously paid to me on the following basis: Within one year, they will be required to refund 100% of all expenses and within two years, 50 - 75% of expenses, pro rata to service in the second year.

I declare that my partner is not eligible or has not received, or will not receive financial assistance from any other source in respect of this move. I understand that all expenses must be claimed within 12 months of commencement.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief the above information is accurate and complete.

**Signed**..... **Date**.....

**This form must be sent to the relevant director for approval prior to commencement of employment.**

**Part B (to be completed by the Executive Director of Operations and Directors of Workforce.)**

Title	
Surname	
First Name/s	
Contact Details	
Approved amount	
Reason for non approval	

**I agree that the above relocation grant has been approved**

**Signed..... Date.....**

Title	
Surname	
First Name/s	
Contact Details	
Approved amount	
Reason for non approval	

**I agree that the above relocation grant has been approved**

**Signed..... Date.....**

## Appendix 2

### TRUST CLAIM FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF REMOVAL EXPENSES

Title	
Surname	
First Name/s	
Marital Status	
Number of children and ages	
Previous address	
Owned / rented/ furnished/ unfurnished	
New Address	
Owned / rented/ furnished/ unfurnished	
Contact Details	
Post appointed to	
Directorate	
Grade	
Full/ Part time hours	
Starting Salary Pro rata	
Base	
Commencement date	

	<b>Amount Claimed</b>	<b>Treasurers approval to be completed by S&amp;W</b>
<b>Travelling and Subsistence prior to commencement</b>		
Date of Journey		
Person Making Journey		
Mileage home to Leeds return		
Public transport fares from .....to		
Total mileage		
Subsistence from .....to		
<b>Excess Daily travelling expenses following commencement (only a or b can be claimed)</b>		
Daily return mileage from home to base		
Daily return mileage from home to base in previous employment		
Excess daily mileage		
Number of days		
Total excess mileage(a)		
Temporary Accommodation Expense / Rent(b)		
<b>Home Visits</b>		
Date of visits		
Public transport fare		
<b>Cost of Removal</b>		
Date of moving		
Storage charges From ....To (3 quotations and the receipted contractors account must be enclosed)		
Public transport fare		
Mileage from ..... to		
Persons making journey		
Date of journey		
<b>House Purchase / Sale</b>		
Purchase Price		
Solicitors fee		
Stamp Duty		
Mortgage expense		
Survey		
Other		

Sale price		
Solicitors fees		
Estate agent fees		
Other		
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Details		

**I declare that the expenses and allowance claimed have been either actually and necessarily incurred or are otherwise and certify that my husband/wife/partner has not or will not receive any financial assistance from any other source relating to the above removal expenses claimed for re-imburement from the NHS.**

Signature of Claimant

\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(When completed, this claim should be forwarded to the relevant director for approval)

**Undertaking to remain in the service of the authority**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand that, as a condition of receiving payment of Removal Expense from Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust, I must undertake that I will not leave the employment of the Authority within a period of:  
24 months and that, should I do so, I acknowledge that the Authority retain the right to obtain repayment of the whole or part of the expenses paid to me.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**I certify that the claimant is eligible to claim the above expenses and has signed the two year agreement**

Director

Director

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Original Receipted Accounts must be enclosed**

**For use by payroll**

Percentage Paid

Date