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NHSCT Vision To deliver excellent integrated services in partnership with our community.			

Removal and Associated Expenses Procedure

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Removal and Associated Expenses Procedure

1 Background

This policy details when relocation and associated expenses may be paid by the Trust to an employee and outlines the principles that must be followed when processing requests. This policy does not replace the terms and conditions of service and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions Handbook
- Hospital Medical and Dental Staff Terms and Conditions – Paragraph 314-315
- Consultant Terms and Conditions Schedule 21
- HSS GEN 1/2010 – Regional Guidance in Relocation, Removal and Excess Travel Expenses for Doctors in Training (see appendix 3)
- Associate Specialist Terms and Conditions of Service (Northern Ireland) 2008, Schedule 20
- Speciality Doctor Terms and Conditions of Service (Northern Ireland) 2008, Schedule 20

2 Purpose of this Procedure

In certain circumstances, being appointed to the Trust may necessitate an employee moving house in order to take up the new post. Such circumstances will include for example: in the interest of the service; to satisfy the requirements of the applicant's professional training; or recruitment to posts which have proven to be very difficult to fill. It is expected that employees should submit the initial request to claim, by completing the 'Application for Removal Expenses' form and submitting the form to the HR Department at the earliest opportunity following confirmation of employment within the Trust. The Trust will take into account the length of the employee/applicant's contract of employment and that the relocation is necessary in order to satisfactorily discharge the duties of the post and that the arrangements proposed by the employee concerned are reasonable and acceptable to the Trust.

3 This procedure applies to all staff in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust

The appropriate Divisional Director and the Assistant Director of Finance, taking advice from the Assistant Director of Human Resources as necessary, will have the discretion to decide whether an employee should be granted removal and associated expenses, taking into consideration the requirements of the post and whether, as a consequence, it is in the interests of the organisation that the employee moves house and that in fact not to do so would mean that the particular service provided would be at risk. In addition, once a decision is made, in principle, that removal is required, it must be agreed that the

employee's new house is located within a reasonable distance from their base. A reasonable distance is defined as within 10 miles. See paragraph 4 for Junior Doctors on rotational appointments

Where the appropriate Divisional Director and the Assistant Director of Human Resources/Director of Finance agree that payment of the expenses is reasonable in the circumstances, an amount up to £8,000 will be paid to the employee for expenses associated with the re-location. No further expenses will be payable in addition to this sum.

Payment will be made when the employee provides proof of house sale and house purchase and on production of all relevant receipts. For example, Solicitors and Estate Agents Fees; removal expenses etc. The Assistant Director of Finance will approve the level of reimbursement based on his assessment of essential expenses being claimed.

Where there is no house ownership, the appropriate Divisional Director and Assistant Director of HR/Finance will have discretion to reimburse an amount up to £1,000 in respect of relocation expenses, again, on production of essential unavoidable expense incurred. There is no entitlement to claim for this amount in connection with a house purchase. The employee will have up to one year from the date of appointment to acquire new accommodation as after one year their eligibility for this subsidy lapses.

- a. Exceptional circumstances will be considered for a possible extension to this period taking into consideration the housing market. The decision to grant an extension will be taken by the appropriate Divisional Director and the Assistant Director of Finance providing they are satisfied that the employee has made all possible attempts to claim this subsidy within the year.
- b. Before receiving any payment, the employee will be required to sign an Undertaking to the Trust that they agree to remain in employment with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust for a period of two years and that should the employee choose to leave their employment with the Trust within the two year period, **they will pay back the expenses received.** Any exception to release an employee from this commitment will be the decision of the Director of Finance. Please see attached application for removal expenses and removal expense claim forms.

Applicants must disclose any other source of relocation assistance, including that paid to any other member of their household. The receipt of any other relocation assistance will affect the amount granted by the Trust. The position being that there is only one set of costs associated with the sale or purchase of a property. Appendix 1 should be completed when applying for Removal Expenses.

4 Doctors in Training on rotational appointments

Doctors in training are subject to the provisions of section 26 of the General Council Conditions of service, Hospital Medical and Dental Staff Terms and Conditions – Paragraph 314-315 and the Regional Guidance on Relocation, Removal and Excess Travel Expenses for Doctors in Training.

As doctors in training are allocated to their posts and do not have a choice about where they are placed they can be required to relocate temporarily or travel longer distances than would be acceptable in the interests of health and safety.

In order to be eligible for relocation, removal or excess mileage the doctor must be:

- a. Required to move house/accommodation; and
- b. Be on a rotational training programme (defined as a series of two or more planned placements)

Where doctors are eligible for relocation, removal or excess mileage they may be considered for free hospital accommodation, where this exists and is available, and reimbursement of the cost of one journey per week, paid at standard business rate, to their permanent home in NI. Alternatively, if the employee chooses to travel from hospital to their home they can be paid traveling expenses up to the financial limit of the cost of the hospital accommodation plus one return journey per week. Appendix 2 should be completed for Doctor in training on rotational appointments.

A doctor who declines free hospital accommodation and chooses to make a private arrangement will be reimbursed on the lesser of the following alternatives:

The cost of the private arrangement plus one return journey per week to their permanent home in NI.

The actual cost of hospital accommodation plus one return journey per week to their permanent home in NI.

Designation of base for rotational doctors is usually, but not always, the first hospital on the rotation. Doctors may elect to have one of the other hospitals on their rotation as their designated base of work if this is closer to their home address.

5 Monitoring

A record of all approved removal expenses will be retained in Terms & Conditions teams in HR. Internal Audits may occur from time to time.

6 Personal & Public Involvement (PPI)/Consultation Process

Discussed and agreed at HR Policy Group and Local Negotiation Committee.

7 Equality, Human Rights & DDA

This policy has been drawn up and reviewed in the light of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) which requires the Trust to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity. It has been screened to identify any adverse impact on the 9 equality categories.

8 Alternative Formats

This document can be made available on request on disc, larger font, Braille, audio-cassette and in other minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English.

9 Sources of advice in relation to this document.

The Policy Author, responsible Assistant Director or Director as detailed on the policy title page should be contacted with regard to any queries on the content of this policy.

10 Policy Sign Off

Maryna Chambers, Assistant Director Human Resources
Geraldine McAleer, Senior Human Resources Manager

Lead Policy Authors

Date: 19 January 2017

Elizabeth Brownlees

Director

Date: 19 January 2017

Application for Removal Expenses

Name:	
Grade and Base:	
Date appointed to post:	
Address of OLD Home:	
Address of NEW Home	
Distance Old Home to Old Base:	
Distance New Home to New Base:	

I certify that I have every intention to move house and that I am actively seeking a new post nearer to my new base.

I also undertake that in the event of my choosing to leave employment within a period of 2 years from the date of my appointment to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust I will repay any expenses paid to me under the Northern Health and Social Care Trust Terms and Conditions for Removal Expenses.

I also confirm that I am not in receipt of any other expenses from any other source in respect of this claim.

Signature:	
Date:	
Band/Grade & Base:	
Authorised by (Asst Director)	Date:

(On completion of this form forward to the AD HR Services)

Removal Expenses Claim Form

Name:	
Band/Grade and Base:	
Address:	
Staff Number:	
Working Base Address:	
Working Base Telephone Number:	
Analysis of Expenses (please attach evidence that expenses have been paid)	

I declare that:

- (a) it is my intention to move house as a requirement of the post and in the interest of NHSCT
- (b) the expenses claimed herein are in accordance with the regulations
- (c) in the event of my choosing to leave employment within a period of 2 years from date of my first Northern HSC Trust appointment I will repay any allowances paid to me under the Northern HSC Trust Terms and Conditions for removal expenses. I hereby give my consent to the Trust deducting such an amount from any monies due to me.

Signature:..... **Date:**.....

NOTE: In the event of fraudulent claims being detected, the claimant may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Trust's Theft, Fraud and Corruption Response Plan.

TO BE COMPLETED BY HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

I hereby certify that the above expenses were necessarily incurred by the above named officer in order to commence employment with Northern HSC Trust. The claim is in order for payment.

Signature: **Band/Grade:** **Date:**

Junior Doctors on Rotation please complete the information below

Job Title of post offered		
Location of post		
Date of commencement		
Length of rotation		
Does the post have on call		
Nominated base hospital (this should remain the same throughout the rotation)		
Address of old home		
Distance in miles from your home to old base hospital		
Distance in miles from your home to new location		
Was your home rented/owned/furnished/unfurnished (please delete as appropriate)		
Please provide details of your rotation from commencement along with supporting evidence form NIMDTA		
Post	Location	Dates

**HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTORATE
PAY AND EMPLOYMENT UNIT**



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
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Ref No: HSS GEN 1/2010

Date: 22 January 2010

Dear Colleagues

Regional guidance on relocation, removal and excess travel expenses for doctors in training.

Please find attached a regional guidance document on relocation, removal and excess travel expenses for doctors in training. This guidance document applies to staff covered by the 'Hospital, Medical and Dental Staff and Doctors in Public Health Medicine and the Community Health Service (NI)' Terms and Conditions of Service.

This guidance was developed through consultation with the British Medical Association (BMA). The aim of the guidance is to provide clarification and to improve consistency for employers in the interpretation of the terms and conditions of service relating to relocation, removal and excess travel for doctors in training. It will be subject to review in January 2011.

The guidance does not replace the Terms and Conditions of Service and should be read in conjunction with paragraphs 314 and 315 of the Terms and Conditions of Service and with Section 26 of the General Conditions of Service.

The new guidance should help ensure that the process is effectively managed across all Trusts.

Copies of this circular can be obtained from the Department's website at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

Yours sincerely



David Best
Assistant Director of HR

Regional Guidance on Relocation, Removal and Excess Travel Expenses for Doctors in Training

Regional Guidance on Relocation, Removal and Excess Travel Expenses for Doctors in Training

Introduction

1. This guidance document applies to staff covered by the “Hospital Medical and Dental Staff and Doctors in Public Health Medicine and the Community Health Service (NI)” Terms and Conditions of Service.
2. The aim of the guidance is to provide clarification and to improve consistency for employers in the interpretation of the terms and conditions of service relating to relocation, removal and excess travel for doctors in training.

Key Principles

3. This guidance does not replace the terms and conditions of service. The guidance should be read in conjunction with paragraphs 314 and 315 of the Terms and Conditions of Service and with section 26 of the General Conditions of Service.
4. While this document provides guidance for Trusts, each case should always be considered on its own merits.
5. A guiding principle is that doctors should not be financially disadvantaged by reasonable costs incurred through a move either in the interests of the service or to further their professional training. However, they are also not expected to profit materially from reimbursements in respect of removals, relocation and excess mileage.
6. The scope and level of financial assistance should normally be determined and agreed prior to the doctor taking up post.

Eligibility

7. Doctors may be eligible to claim assistance for relocation expenses (removal of personal belongings and effects), removal expenses (sale and purchase of a house), or excess mileage expenses (practitioners on rotational training programmes who are eligible to claim removal/relocation expenses but who choose to travel the greater distance).
8. The relevant terms and conditions of service should be taken into account in determining eligibility for relocation, removal and excess mileage expenses. For ease of reference these are set out at Annex A.

9. In order to be eligible for relocation, removal or excess mileage the doctor must be:
 - (i) required to move house/accommodation; and
 - (ii) be on a rotational training programme (defined as a series of two or more planned placements).
10. The new residence should be within a reasonable daily travelling distance of the new place of work, and 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/relocation expenses. A reasonable daily travelling distance within Northern Ireland **may be** up to 40 miles (one way) measured using standard mileage charts. This is not prescriptive and in determining what is reasonable the employer should take into account all the circumstances of each case including the specific route, current status of infrastructure, overall journey time, mode of transport, and overall additional cost to the doctor. It may therefore be the case that a doctor travelling a distance of less than 40 miles is provided with assistance, depending on the circumstances.
11. The required to move house test may be satisfied if the daily travelling distance from home to the new place of work is **normally** greater than 40 miles (one way). 40 miles should not be used in a prescriptive manner, and in determining what is reasonable the employer should take into account the circumstances of each case including the specific route, current status of infrastructure, overall journey times, mode of transport, and overall additional cost to the doctor. It may therefore be the case that a doctor travelling a distance of less than 40 miles is provided with assistance, depending on the circumstances.
12. Employers may take into account the length of the contract when considering eligibility for the payment of relocation, removal or excess mileage.
13. Employers may set a reasonable ceiling on the maximum amount payable during the period of the training programme. Eligible doctors may be required to formally declare all previous reimbursements claimed for excess travel, relocation and removal expenses whilst with other Trusts in Northern Ireland. Normally only one claim for removal/relocation expenses would be paid during the course of the doctor's training programme.
14. Doctors who as a result of taking up employment either need to relocate to a new area which results in them having to move home or incur extra daily travelling expenses should be considered under paragraph 4 of the General Conditions of Service. Support under paragraph 4 is at the discretion of the employer.
15. FTSTAs will not normally be deemed eligible for excess travel under paragraph 315 of the Terms and Conditions of Service unless they can provide evidence that they are part of a rotational training programme (defined in paragraph 9 (ii) above). Employers should consider whether FTSTAs would be eligible for the reimbursement of removal/relocation expenses under paragraph 4 of the General Conditions of Service.

Relocation/Removal Expenses

16. Removal/relocation expenses are payable where the doctor meets the criteria outlined in paragraphs 9, 10 and 11 above. Applications for removal expenses should be considered from eligible practitioners where the doctor is a homeowner. Practitioners should be required to provide evidence that they are home-owners at the time of accepting the appointment. Applications for relocation expenses should be considered from eligible practitioners where the doctor is not a householder.
17. Reimbursements should not be made until the doctor takes up appointment, and only upon receipt of original receipts and documentation. Doctors should normally obtain written confirmation of their eligibility for the reimbursement of relocation/removal expenses from the employer before making any firm arrangements.
18. If a doctor's partner/spouse is eligible to claim relocation or removal expenses, only one will be eligible to receive expenses.
19. Practitioners may be required to sign an undertaking that they may be required to repay a proportion of any removal expenses received if they leave their post prior to the end of the contracted period. The proportion will be in accordance with the worked element of the contract of employment against the total length of that contract of employment/training programme.
20. Entitlement to removal expenses for house sale and purchase will normally be dependant upon the move being completed within 12 months of taking up the post.
21. Doctors who are occupying rented accommodation immediately prior to beginning their employment with the Trust, and who meet the eligibility criteria outlined in paragraphs 9, 10 and 11 above should be considered for the reimbursement of the cost of removal of furniture (where appropriate) and personal effects based upon receipt of 3 quotations, with the lower amount being paid up. Employers may set a limit on the maximum amount payable.
22. Doctors living in hospital accommodation may have to relocate each time they change posts during a rotation. These practitioners should be treated in the same way as those occupying rented accommodation (see paragraph 21 above).
23. Eligible doctors who are purchasing their first house are not entitled to claim removal expenses, but should be treated in the same way as those occupying rented accommodation (see paragraph 21 above).
24. Expenses should only be reimbursed from a UK point of entry.

Excess Mileage in lieu of removal

25. Doctors who meet the eligibility criteria outlined in paragraphs 9, 10 and 11 above (as defined under paragraph 315 of the Terms and Conditions of service) may choose not to move home but to travel daily the greater distance between their home and the hospital. The doctor must be employed within a rotational training programme, and must meet the 'required to move' house test. Doctors would normally be expected to have obtained the approval of the Trust prior to taking up the post.
26. The mileage that may be paid under these circumstances is the difference between the mileage from home to their designated base of work and the mileage from home to the new place of work (as set out in para. 315 of the Terms & Conditions of Service).
27. Designated base of work – this is usually but not always the first hospital on the rotation. Doctors may elect to have one of the other hospitals on their rotation as their designated base of work (if this is closer to their home address).
28. Payment of excess travel costs should not be agreed where, in the judgement of the Trust, the journey time and/or distance involved is likely to be detrimental to the safety of the practitioner, and/or to the satisfactory performance of the practitioner's duties. In such circumstances, the Trust may wish to seek alternative arrangements which will address the needs of both the doctor and the service.
29. Employers should take into account the circumstances of each case when deciding whether to pay public transport or standard mileage rates. HSS (TC8) 12/2001 sets out the criteria to be used when deciding which rate is appropriate.

Administrative process

30. Employers should draw up their own procedures which will facilitate doctors in training in applying for the appropriate level of expenses. They should also clearly indicate the level of reimbursement available. This should normally be made available to the doctor before any contract of employment is entered into. Claim forms and procedures should be included in the documents provided to the doctor.

Appeals

31. Employers should have a clearly set out appeals procedure to cover cases of disagreement.

Para 314 of the Terms and Conditions of Service

'The provisions of Section 26 of the General Council Conditions of Service shall apply.'

Para 315 of the Terms and Conditions of Service

"Practitioners who are required to move house during a rotational training programme may receive reimbursement of removal expenses in accordance with Section 26 of the General Council Conditions of Service.

Practitioners who might be reimbursed for moving house in such circumstances may, however, choose not to move home on taking up the second or subsequent posts in a rotation but to travel daily the greater distance between their home and the hospital. Similarly if the practitioner has a home convenient to the hospital in which the second or subsequent post in the rotational appointment is to be held the practitioner may elect to travel the extra distance to the hospital in which the previous post(s) are held.

In such cases, the practitioner may be paid excess travelling expenses at the appropriate rate according to the circumstances in which the practitioner's vehicle is used".

Section 26 of the General Conditions of Service

REMOVAL AND ASSOCIATED EXPENSES PROVISIONS

- 1. The application of this Section to hospital medical and dental staff, or doctors in community medicine and the community health service, or dentists working in the Community Dental Service and Dental Public Health is subject to modifications set out in their respective Terms and Conditions of Service.*

CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH REMOVAL EXPENSES ARE PAYABLE AND GENERAL CONDITIONS

- 2. Assistance with removal and other expenses shall be granted to employees who needs to move their home or incur extra daily travelling expenses as a result of being required by their employing authority to transfer to a new headquarters or on taking up a post which is regarded as suitable employment as an alternative to redundancy.*
- 3. Assistance shall also be granted to employees who are required to change employing authority, or who otherwise have to move home or incur extra daily travelling expenses, in order to satisfy the requirements of their normal professional training.*
- 4. Assistance may also be granted, at the discretion of the employing authority, to employees who as a result of taking up employment with the employing authority either need to move their home or incur extra daily travelling expenses. In exercising their discretion, employing authorities shall apply the principles of the General Terms and Conditions Equal Opportunities statement (Section 7).*

5. *The scope and level of financial assistance to be provided should be determined by the employing authority, in agreement with the prospective employee, prior to the post being accepted. In providing assistance, employing authorities should ensure equity between one category of staff and another, while balancing their own interests with the needs of prospective employees.*
6. *In agreeing the assistance to be provided, the employing authority shall have regard to all the individual employee's circumstances, including the need to re-house dependents and the comparability of new and previous accommodation.*
7. *Employing authorities may require employees to repay all or part of the reimbursements and grants paid if they leave the employing authority within 2 years of the appointment which gave rise to the expenses.*

ASSISTANCE WHICH MAY BE MADE AVAILABLE

8. *The employing authority may meet any reasonable cost incurred in relation, including: reasonable expenses incurred in the search for accommodation in the new area; reasonable vouched expenditure incurred in the purchase and sale of property; the removal of furniture and effects and continuing commitments in the old area; grants to cover general and miscellaneous removal costs; assistance with additional housing costs in the new area, etc.*
9. *The employing authority shall clearly indicate to the employee the level of assistance that will be provided, the aspects of removal costs that will be reimbursed and, where applicable, the upper limit of payment in all usual circumstances.*
10. *The employing authority shall stipulate in the agreement reached with the employee the procedure to be followed and the costs that will be reimbursed in circumstances where an employing authority has entered into an agreement with solicitors or others to provide house purchase/conveyancing services, private structural surveys, estate agency services and/or a removal service at preferential cost.*