

Melton Borough Council

Reimbursement of expenditure policy

Introduction

This policy is in line with National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services terms and conditions of service. It sets out the Council's rules on how employees can claim for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties for the Council.

The policy covers travel, meals and accommodation. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees are properly reimbursed for legitimate business expenses and to ensure that these expenses are treated appropriately for tax purposes. Please note there is a separate policy on overseas expenses.

Policy

1. Employees will be reimbursed for actual approved expenditure that is incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively in connection with authorised duties subject to appropriate evidence of expenditure being produced. This will normally mean the production of receipts. VAT receipts are required where appropriate to enable the Council to reclaim the VAT element.
2. Employees should submit their claims to Payroll on the appropriate claim form, via their appropriate Manager to be authorised.
3. Expenses will be paid at the value of the receipted expenditure within the recommended allowances as set by the NJC.
4. Expenses will not be paid unless supporting evidence is provided, together with a completed claim form. This should include scanned or original receipts or invoices with the date and time of the transaction (unless claiming for mileage). When claiming for travel expenses on public transport, the ticket showing the departure point and destination of the journey should be included, where possible.
5. Expenses claims must be submitted within 3 month of the expense being incurred. In exceptional cases Management Team may approve an extension to this. Melton Borough Council reserves the right to withhold any payment where written approval has not been sought.
6. Expenses claim forms may be returned to employees without payment if it is completed incorrectly or lacks supporting evidence.
7. Claims for authorised expenses will normally be paid by BACS transfer into the same bank account into which the employee's salary is paid.

8. In exceptional circumstances where the allowance does not cover expenditure, the Head of Service in consultation with Management Team, may approve receipted expenditure above the level set out below.

Travel

Employees and line managers should consider whether or not travel is necessary to meet business objectives or if there are more appropriate means (for example, teleconferencing or videoconferencing).

Rail

Claim can be made of standard class rail fares only. Where possible, rail journeys should be booked well in advance to benefit from any discounts for early booking.

Taxis

Claims for taxi fares will be approved only in limited circumstances. These are:

- where taking a taxi would result in a significantly shorter travel time than using public transport;
- where there are several employees travelling together; or
- where personal security and safety of employees is an issue.

A receipt must be obtained with details of the date, place of departure and destination of the journey.

Use of own car

It may be appropriate and cost-effective for employees to use their own car when travelling on business, for example if travelling with several employees, making multiple visits or there is limited public transport to a destination. Use of an employee's own car on business is subject to :

- holding a full UK driving licence;
- ensuring the car is roadworthy and fully registered; and
- holding comprehensive motor insurance that provides for business use.

Prior authorisation should be sought from line managers before using a personal car on business.

The Council accepts no liability for any accident, loss, damage or claim arising out of any journey that is made on business. The Council will not pay for the cost of any insurance policy on your own car. See Driving at work policy

To claim for fuel expenditure, employees are required to set out the distance of the journey undertaken on the expenses claim form. Mileage will be paid at the following rate :

	under 1000cc	1000- 1199cc	1200cc+
Essential Users			
Lump sum (pa)	£846.00	£963.00	£1,239.00
Lump sum (p.mth)	£70.50	£80.25	£103.25
Rate per mile: first 8,500 miles pa	36.9p	40.9p	50.5p
Rate per mile: after 8,500 miles pa	13.7p	14.4p	16.4p
Casual Users			
Rate per mile: first 8,500 miles pa	46.9p	52.2p	65.0p
Rate per mile: after 8,500 miles pa	13.7p	14.4p	16.4p

Reimbursement will also be made for tolls and parking costs incurred, where applicable.

Meals/accommodation

It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that any hotel reservations are cancelled within the required cancellation period if they are no longer required.

If an employee is required to be away from home on business, he/she may claim up to:

- £4.48 for breakfast (if absent from normal place of work before 7am;
- £6.17 for lunch (if absent from normal place of work between 12 – 2 pm
- £2.43 for tea if absent from normal place of work after 5.30 pm
- £7.64 for dinner if absent from normal place of work after 8.30pm or £15.00 for dinner if making an over night stay
- £3.51 for out of pocket expenses per night on a residential course

The maximum amounts above are inclusive of drinks.

Receipts and invoices for all hotel and meal expenses will be required.

Relocation expenses

See Relocation policy

Expenses that will not be reimbursed

Employees will not be reimbursed for:

- the cost of any travel between home and usual place of work.
- the cost of any travel undertaken for personal reasons;

- the cost of any travel for your partner or spouse (unless pre approved by a Head of Service as a reasonable adjustment);
- any fines or penalties incurred while on business for whatever reason, including penalties for not paying for a rail ticket in advance of boarding the train and penalties or fines associated with motoring offences, including speeding or parking fines, clamping or vehicle recovery charges;
- any expenses incurred for personal benefit or to improperly influence or reward a business contact; or
- cash advances or withdrawals from an ATM machine.

False claims

If the Council considers that any expenditure claimed was not legitimately incurred on behalf of the Council, it may request further details from the employee. The Council will thoroughly investigate and check any expenses claim as it sees fit. It may withhold payment where insufficient supporting documents have been provided. Where payment has been made prior to the discovery that the claim was not legitimate or correct, it may deduct the value of that claim from salary.

Any abuse of the Council's expenses policy will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to:

- false expenses claims;
- claims for expenses that were not legitimately incurred;
- claims for personal gain;
- claims for hospitality and/or gifts to induce a client or other business contact to take improper action; and
- receipt of hospitality and/or gifts from business contacts that may be perceived to influence judgment.

The Council will take disciplinary action where appropriate and, in certain circumstances, may treat a breach of this policy as gross misconduct. In addition, the Council may report the matter to the police for investigation and criminal prosecution.