



# NBT Relocation Policy

## A Guide for Staff and Managers



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## **Claim for Relocation / Recruitment Expenses**

### **1 What is the purpose of the policy?**

This policy gives guidelines to managers and staff regarding the relocation policy that applies to North Bristol NHS Trust. It defines what the process is for making a claim and the conditions that apply to any payment or entitlements.

This policy applies to all our staff (except Medical & Dental staff), subject to the eligibility criteria detailed in Section 2. The aims of this policy are:

- To support the recruitment of hard to recruit staff groups to the organisation.
- To assist new employees from another part of the country to take up an offer of employment by minimising any loss that they may suffer by relocating
- To assist new employees to resolve personal accommodation problems quickly and easily, either by purchasing a new property or renting suitable accommodation.
- To support the organisation when recruiting to posts that have been identified as difficult to fill.

### **2 Who is eligible for relocation support?**

To qualify you must fulfil all of the following criteria:

- You will be appointed to a role that has been deemed eligible for relocation assistance through the Executive Vacancy Review Panel. (Please see Appendix 5)
- Your appointment will be to a substantive contract in order to be eligible for relocation assistance.
- Your existing main residence is currently not within a reasonable travelling distance (is more than 25 miles) from NBT
- Your new home must be within a reasonable distance from NBT (less than 25 miles from your new work base)
- Relocation expenses can only be claimed from one employer at any one time.
- You are not currently in substantive employment with North Bristol NHS Trust
- You have not received relocation expenses from the Trust within the two years prior to the start date of your new vacancy

- Neither you or your partner is in receipt of a relocation or recruitment package from another organisation (either NHS or non NHS)
- Your line manager will verify that you meet the defined criteria for eligibility for the relocation expenses scheme. They will gain documented confirmation using the local Vacancy Review Panel process, which they will send to Employment Services prior to you receiving your written job offer
- Any pre-authorized relocation package expenses claims must be made within two years of joining NBT (after which no further claims will be processed regardless of your accommodation situation), and within 3 months of the expense being incurred.
- At any time you must be able to demonstrate that you are making reasonable and genuine efforts to relocate to this area (within 25 miles of your new work base)
- You must notify NBT of your intention to accept the relocation package in writing when you accept your offer of employment from the Trust within three months of starting. Employment Services will notify payroll to enable subsequent expense claims to be processed.
- You must not commit to any expenditure until you have returned your signed employment contract and acceptance of your unconditional offer letter, including acceptance of the relocation package. Your relocation form (see Appendix 3), signed by you and your manager, must have been returned to Payroll in order for expenses to be paid.

### 3 How much money is available for relocation?

The maximum amount that can be claimed (for relocation / recruitment or a combination of the two) will be:

From rented accommodation to rented accommodation	Up to £4,000
From rented accommodation to owned property	Up to £8,000
From owned property to owned property	Up to £8,000

We will reclaim payments made to members of staff who fail to relocate within two years of their appointment date (please also see 4.6).

### 4 What expenses can I claim for?

#### Option A–Relocation Expenses

#### These can be applied to all categories listed in Section 3 above

These are non-taxable payments to cover **relocation expenses** through transferring your main residence to Bristol (except travel expenses which are taxable).

#### 4.1 House Sale/Purchase/Acquisition of tenancy

You can claim for all reasonable legal expenses such as solicitors' fees, stamp duty, standard surveys and estate agent's fees associated with the purchase and sale of a property. In

addition, the claim may include expenses legitimately incurred in an unsuccessful attempt to make a purchase provided you can demonstrate that you are in no way responsible for the abandonment of the transaction or that the reasons for the withdrawal were entirely reasonable having regard to the circumstances encountered.

Likewise if you are renting a property you are able to claim reasonable break clause charges and / or agency fees associated with giving up an existing tenancy and acquiring a new tenancy in this area.

#### **4.2 Removal and/or storage of furniture**

When purchasing or renting a property you can claim for insuring and transport of furniture and effects during a move, and temporary storage arrangements if necessary. Where you choose to move your own effects, actual receipted cost of van hire may be paid, subject to this not being more than a commercial move. Prior to re-imburement you will need to provide evidence that you have chosen the cheapest of at least three quotes for transport, removals and/or temporary storage.

#### **4.3 Daily Travel Expenses**

If you are unable to find suitable accommodation (rented or owned) you may be able to be reimbursed extra daily travelling expenses from home to work. In which case you would continue to travel from your existing home (rented or owned) and claim the mileage paid at the reserve rate (see Appendix 2 for rates)

These expenses are only payable for a maximum of 12 months from your start date. If you choose to relocate these expenses may be non-taxable.

#### **4.4 Continuing Commitments**

If new accommodation has not been found before taking up your appointment we may pay temporary rental costs in the new area or a subsistence allowance. Subsistence allowance will be relevant where you travel back home (and claim mileage) but stay in a B&B / hotel where this is not practical. (E.g. if you have consecutive shifts).

Subsistence allowance will be paid for a maximum of four nights in any week, and up to 12 months (from start date) of you selling / buying a new property (or until the old property is sold whichever is the lesser period). If you are moving from rented to rented accommodation it will be paid for a maximum of six months (from start date)

Travelling expenses for visits to the owned or rented property in the old area will be paid at the reserve rate (see Appendix 2). (Usually once per month)

Subsistence allowance will only continue to be paid after the appropriate period as above, if we believe that you are behaving reasonably in the circumstances. If you are selling/buying a new property this means that every effort should be made to sell the existing property including a price reduction if necessary. If you are moving from rented to rented accommodation this means making reasonable efforts to find 'permanent' rental accommodation within this area.

#### **4.5 Miscellaneous Expenses**

We will consider part or whole reimbursement of any other reasonable expense directly associated with house hunting, moving or renting. You must request this consideration on an individual basis **prior** to any costs being incurred. We will not accept any liability for costs incurred before agreement to claim back those costs in part / full as part of this relocation / recruitment package. Please contact Staff Expenses with any queries.

Please note that expenses paid under any of the above headings will count towards the maximum limit specified under Section 3 above.

#### **4.6 Failure to relocate within two years**

If you do not relocate within two years any expenses that you have been paid under this policy will be reclaimed by the Trust.

Please note that in exceptional circumstances where these expenses are not reclaimed by the Trust they may become taxable under HMRC rules and tax will deducted from your salary accordingly.

### **Option B – Living costs allowance**

#### **(This can only be claimed by individuals moving from rented to rented accommodation)**

Those moving from rented to rented accommodation can claim for a **taxable monthly** incentive towards rental costs.

This is payable in equal monthly installments of up to £400 (less tax and NI) for every month you continue to rent during your first 10 months of employment with the Trust. The equal payments made during this period will total up to the full £4000 allowance minus the cost of any other relocation expenses you have claimed.

They can only be claimed once the individual has found a new and 'permanent' rental property in the Bristol area and elect to claim help toward rental costs for the 10 month period. Prior to re-imburement you will need to provide a copy of your tenancy agreement and included as an attachment to your expenses claim.

During the 10 month period if you choose to move again into a new rental property this allowance can still be claimed (for up to the maximum 10 month period). Relocation expenses (not rental costs) are only available for the first property.

**It should be noted that if you are moving from rental to rental property expenses can be claimed under both A and B options up to the maximum overall limit shown in Section 3 above. (This may mean a part payment is made as final payment for living costs allowance)**

## **5 How do I claim my relocation support?**

### **5.1 Confirm type of relocation that will be claimed for**

Confirm type of relocation that will be claimed for should be done using Appendix 3, which needs to be countersigned by your line manager and then submitted to payroll. No relocations expenses claims can be processed until this has been completed.

### **5.2 Claiming specific relocation expenses**

You will need to sign up to the staff eExpenses system through which all claims must be

completed. All receipts should be uploaded and attached to your electronic claim. Your line manager has a responsibility to ensure all receipts are checked on the expenses system. The expenses system will record all payments so individuals and line managers can view the total of all claims at any time.

Receipts must be provided for all relocation claims (including rental claims) prior to any payment for expenses being made. Any relocation claims without receipts will not be paid. For the recruitment allowance we will require evidence of the old and new properties and for the new property the monthly rent being charged.

Payment of relocation expenses will be processed through the Payroll system, itemised separately and paid directly into the individual's bank account with their salary.

Under no circumstances will any invoices be paid directly by the Trust. You will need to make payment and then reclaim that payment through the expenses system.

If you are in any doubt as to whether you can reclaim a relocation expense please contact staff expenses.

## **6 What happens if I leave NBT after claiming expenses / assistance?**

Any money paid to you will be repayable according to the following schedule

<b>Period of service</b>	<b>Amount of Relocation Expenses to be repaid</b>
Less than 12 months	100%
12-18 months	75%
18-24 months	50%

You will be asked to sign a binding commitment to the above repayment schedule and part / all of any monies owed will be deducted from your final salary where possible. Otherwise you will be required to agree a repayment schedule once you have left NBT.

## **7 What income tax will I have to pay?**

Providing there is a change in your main residence, any eligible relocation expenses up to the HMRC limit (£8000), is not taxable. Expenses not directly related to relocation will attract tax and NI contributions in the normal way – including the Living Costs Allowance (see Section 4, Option B, above)

If you are unsure whether any claim under this policy would be taxable please check with Staff Expenses in the first instance.

## **8 False claims**

Any relocation or recruitment assistance claim that is not permissible / legitimate under this policy and / or is implicitly / explicitly fraudulent will be rejected by staff expenses and may result in action under our disciplinary policy and a counter fraud investigation.

You are advised to check with Staff Expenses if you are unsure as to whether you can claim any particular expense and if necessary before you commit to this expenditure.

## **9 Review**

This policy will be reviewed after 3 years or at the request of either management or staff side.

## **Appendix 1: Relocation / Recruitment Case Studies**

These case studies illustrate that the relocation / recruitment allowance can be used flexibly to fit very different situations.

### **A. Relocation / Recruitment allowance (Renting)**

*£4000 maximum*

Tom currently lives and works as a nurse in Worcester having recently qualified. He lives with his parents there and pays a nominal rent to them having recently moved back into the family home following his graduation. He wishes to broaden his experience and therefore successfully applies for and obtains a Band 5 role at NBT.

As he doesn't drive he cannot easily commute from Worcester to Bristol and therefore as a temporary measure finds a room in a shared house at £450 per month. This is a temporary measure for Tom as he wants to find his own place within the local area. After 4 months he manages to locate a 1 bed flat through an agency which is more expensive (£650 per month) but better suits his situation.

He doesn't own many personal effects and his parents help him to move this down to Bristol initially and therefore there are no removal costs. Tom is able to claim £400 a month toward the cost of the temporary<sup>1</sup> accommodation (4 x £400 per month = £1600) as part of his relocation expenses (non-taxable), and the agency costs of finding him the flat (£100 non-taxable). The remainder of his allowance (£2300) he uses to help him with his rent for the next 5+ months (£400 x 5 ¾ months = £2300 – taxable)

### **B. Relocation / Recruitment allowance (Renting)**

*£4000 maximum*

Sandra lived with her partner in Bridgend working at a local NHS Trust there. She secures a full time Band 5 job with NBT but her partner now needs to find work in this area. It is also a lot more expensive to rent in this area than Bridgend. Therefore he stays on in Bridgend in their existing rental property for the time being and she commutes over to Bristol for her (3/4) long shifts whilst looking for permanent residence

She is able to claim excess daily travelling expenses for those days at the reserve rate including bridge tolls. As she works long shifts if she has 2 consecutive long shifts and feels too exhausted to travel home she occasionally stays in a nearby B&B / hotel and claims this as subsistence allowance. This is non-taxable providing Sandra relocates within two years and has committed to relocating to join NBT.

The above arrangement works fine for her for a limited time, but after 3 months, her partner has found a job here and they move into a new rented property.

Under this policy, provided that her partner does not receive any relocation allowance for the same relocation, she is able to claim removal of effects from the old to new property (£1,200 – non taxable) and then uses the remainder of her allowance for rent assistance for the first 7 months in her new place (She has £2800 of her allowance left paid at £400 per month - taxable).

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<sup>1</sup> *It is temporary because he is still classing his parents' address as his main residence*

### **C. Relocation (Buying)**

*£8000 maximum*

Tara owns a 3 bed semi-detached property in Yeovil and works locally there. She secures a role at NBT and puts her existing house up for sale in order to move to the outskirts of Bristol. Her family will remain in Yeovil until she has sold her old property and bought a new one.

She claims daily travelling expenses and subsistence allowance (only staying on an ad hoc basis in Bristol when her shifts warrant this) for a 9 month period. She finds and purchases a new home in the Bristol area and claims estate agent and legal fees etc on both the old and new properties as well as removal fees. Under this policy Tara is able to claim up to £8000 towards relocation (non-taxable).



## **Appendix 2: Reserve and subsistence allowance rates @May 2018**

Reserve rate – The current trust rate for travel as per the Trusts Expenses Policy  
Subsistence allowance for first 30 nights – maximum of £55 per night (must be receipted)

Subsistence allowance for 30+ nights – maximum of £35 per night (must be receipted)

### **Illustrative (not exhaustive) list of eligible expenses for relocation**

- Legal fees/Stamp duty
- Estate agent fees
- Rental costs/temp accommodation – where you are currently selling and buying a property or where there is an overlap of rental costs
- House contents, removal, and storage
- Conveyancing services
- Excess travel
- insurance, and security of existing residence whilst unoccupied

Please check with Staff Expenses if you are unsure.

### Appendix 3: Confirmation of type of relocation to be claimed for

**Please note: If you have not already had your eligibility for the relocation expenses policy agreed as part of your employment offer letter, then you are not eligible to claim for relocation expenses.**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Job Title</b>	
<b>Budget Holder</b>	
<b>Cost centre no</b>	
<b>Start Date</b>	

**Current address**

**New Address** *(to be added within 2 years of start date if not currently known)*

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**Current residence type** (please tick one)

Owned

Rented or other

**Type of relocation expenses to be claimed for** (please tick one)

Rented (or other) to rented

Rented (or other) to rented

Owned to owned

**I hereby confirm that I give my consent to the recovery from my salary in the event of any overpayment or required repayment (see section 6, above) of relocation expenses covered within auspices of the this policy. In this unlikely event, Payroll with discuss how this will be recovered with you.**

**Candidate signature**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

**Line Manager / Budget Holder signature**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

## **Appendix 4: FAQs**

### **1. Can I have time off to move?**

No additional time off will be given to move - you should therefore use your annual leave entitlement if you need time off to move.

### **2. Can I claim for loss of part / all deposit for an existing rent**

No, you can claim for an early break clause within your exiting tenancy agreement but there is no facility to claim loss of deposit through, for example, rent arrears, damage, etc.

### **3. Can I remain in my existing property and claim recruitment assistance if I think it's commutable?**

No. In order to access the benefits stipulated you must be able to demonstrate that you are relocating from outside to inside the 25 mile radius in order to ensure the daily commute to NBT is reasonable. This can mean that you remain in a particular area but moving closer to NBT.

### **4. Will relocation / recruitment count as part of my basic pay?**

No these payments will not be pensionable or count for purposes of overtime, sick pay, unsocial hours payments or any other payments linked to basic pay.

## Appendix 5: Relocation Policy: Roles eligible for Relocation Assistance

The following roles have been authorized by NBT's Executive Vacancy Review Panel as being eligible for Relocation Expenses Policy:

1. All 'frontline' band 5 nursing vacancies – i.e. Band 5 registered nursing roles with a direct clinical (as opposed to Research or Teaching) focus within Medicine, ASCR, NMSK, CSS and W&C. *Please note that this does not include midwives.*  
**Maximum claim allowance- £4,000**
2. Band 5 Operating Department Practitioners