

REMOVAL & RELOCATION PROCEDURE

Removal & Relocation Procedure

1. Purpose

To assist newly appointed employees and employees who are re-deployed (other than on redundancy) in meeting the cost of removal expenses and subsistence and travelling expenses incurred through taking up their new appointments.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, meeting the criteria described, except those employed in schools where the Governing Body performs the function of the employer.

3. Eligibility

Eligibility for financial assistance under this scheme is limited to employees who are:

- a. Taking up a first appointment with the Council and who are at present residing more than 20 miles from their new place of employment and the Chief Executive / Strategic Director concerned certifies in consultation with the Director of Human Resources that it is essential for the employee to move his/her permanent place of residence within 20 miles of the new place of employment for operational reasons or
- b. Transferring from one post to another post within the Council, providing there is a change in their working base and that their new base is more than 20 miles from the employee's existing place of residence, and that the Chief Executive / Strategic Director concerned certifies in consultation with the Director of Human Resources that it is essential for the employee to move his / her residence to within 20 miles of the new working base, for operational reasons.

Payment will not normally be made to an employee who applies for and is appointed to a post, as a consequence of a move of another member of their household, whether or not an employee of Derbyshire County Council. Payment will not be made where an employer of the spouse reimburses relocation and other expenses.

Advertisements for posts will state whether these allowances will apply. In cases of redeployment, the employee will be informed in writing whether these allowances will apply.

The move to the new place of residence must take place within one year of commencing new employment with the Council. In exceptional circumstances the Director of Human Resources will have the authority to approve an extension of the time limit. An application for such an extension must take place within one year of commencement of employment with the Council.

The employee must be advised in writing of the details of the scheme before taking up the appointment and where any claim is likely to be submitted, he/she should verify with the Chief Executive / Strategic Director his/her eligibility under the scheme before any expenditure which he/she is likely to claim, is incurred. Such approval of eligibility should be declared in writing by the Chief Executive / Strategic Director concerned.

4. Entitlement

Reimbursement will be made towards the following expenditure:

a. Removal Expenses

The reimbursement of the total expenses on the basis of the lowest of at least two estimates from different removal firms. The employee will be free to choose whichever of the tendering firms are to carry out the removal.

b. Storage Fees

Where newly appointed employees are unable to obtain permanent accommodation within 20 miles of their new base by the date they take up their duties, and rather than maintain two homes prefer to place their furniture in storage and move into lodgings, or to rent furnished accommodation in the area in which they are employed, reimbursement of total storage costs will be made for a period not exceeding 3 months. This is because the Council will not be paying a lodging allowance as the employee will not be maintaining two homes. Payment may be extended for a further three months subject to the agreement of the Director of Human Resources. Any application for such an extension must be made within the three month period.

c. Legal, House Agent's and Survey Fees

Subject to the provision of evidence to the satisfaction of the Chief Executive / Strategic Director, that a new employee who, prior to commencing employment with the Council was a householder, within the normal meaning of the term, outside the distance limit in this scheme and becomes a house-owner within the distance limit as a consequence of taking up the new employment with the County Council, an allowance will be made

towards expenses incurred by a new employee taking up employment with the County Council and who moves home in accordance with the scheme.

d. Disturbance and/or Settling In Allowance

Subject to the provision of evidence to the satisfaction of the Chief Executive / Strategic Director and prior to and since taking up the appointment the employee was/is the main contributor to the household and was/is not residing with parents, or in lodgings, or in hostel type accommodation, or shared accommodation with other persons (e.g. student accommodation), disturbance and/or settling-in allowances are payable to new employees who move their homes.

The allowance is payable only where the new employee leaves vacant his previous accommodation and takes up residence as a householder or joint householder, within the specified distance limits.

This allowance is intended to cover the cost arising from re-connecting or re-fixing existing household fittings/equipment and cover the cost of purchasing new soft furnishings where necessary.

e. Overnight Visits

The maximum entitlement (see (f) Financial Limits) includes provision to bring the family for a maximum of 3 overnight visits to Derbyshire to search for accommodation.

f. Financial Limits – wef. 1 April 2013

Homeowners

- i. The total maximum benefit allowable under the scheme for a homeowner is detailed in appendix A. This is inclusive of removal expenses, storage fees, legal, house agent's and survey fees, disturbance and/or settling-in allowance, a maximum of 3 overnight visits to Derbyshire for the family to search for accommodation and the Lodging/Excess Travel Allowance. It is exclusive of VAT subject to production of the relevant invoices. Allowances will be revised in April of each year to take account of inflation.

Non Homeowners

- ii. The total maximum benefit allowable under the scheme for an individual who is not a homeowner is detailed in appendix A, and is 50% of homeowners allowance (inclusive of all expenses set out in (f)(i) above).

Discretion to Increase Maximum Benefit may apply

- iii. Where the Chief Executive / Strategic Director is satisfied that the post which is being filled, has previously been designated as a 'key post' within the Department, or where recruitment and retention difficulties have been identified, then the Chief Executive / Strategic Director has discretion to extend the benefits up to the amounts detailed in appendix A.

5. Lodging / Excess Travel Allowance

The object of the allowance is to offset the cost of maintaining two homes and will only be paid to an employee who moves home.

In addition to any other expenses, an accommodation allowance of 50% of the locally agreed current Bed and Breakfast rate for four nights per week for a maximum period of 13 weeks may be made to an employee who is unable to effect an immediate removal and has to make temporary arrangements for his/her accommodation. See Appendix A for current rates.

Such an employee will also be paid one second class rail fare per month in respect of journeys actually undertaken between their home and their new work base. This period may in extenuating circumstances be extended by the Director of Human Resources. An application for such an extension must be made within the 13 week period.

A travelling allowance may be paid in lieu of lodging allowance. The allowance will be payable provided that the employee does not travel less than 10 miles. Wherever possible, and if appropriate, public transport should be used. In these circumstances public transport costs (if rail – second class fare) will be paid. Where suitable public transport is not available or the use of a car is essential for work purposes, mileage will be paid at the standard user rate for cars of a capacity of 1000 – 1199 cc. All payments are on the basis of excess miles subject to a maximum per week payment equal to the current accommodation allowance and limited to a period of 13 weeks. This period may in extenuating circumstances be extended by the Director of Human Resources. An application for such an extension must be made within the 13 week period.

6. Leave of Absence with Pay – Moving Home

The Chief Executive / Strategic Directors are empowered to grant up to two days leave with pay to newly appointed employees in connection with the removal of their home and effects to their new location.

7. Application for Reimbursement of Expenditure

Applications in the prescribed form, together with supporting quotations, tax invoices, receipted vouchers etc. should be submitted to the Chief Executive / Strategic Director for checking and certification before being passed to the Director of Finance for payment.

The prescribed form contains an undertaking that must be signed by the new employee that in circumstances where he/she either voluntarily resigns, for whatever reason, the employment of the Council or are dismissed from the employment of the Council for reason of improper conduct within two years of the date of commencing employment with the Council, they will repay the allowances paid to them in full. Only in the event of death in service, redundancy or early retirement will the Authority not seek recovery of the allowances paid. In all other circumstances recovery will be pursued.

8. Additional Information

The 20 miles limit referred to in the text above includes all the parishes falling within any part of the 20 miles radius.

'Excess miles' is the difference between the journey from home to the new place of work and home and the former place of work, and return.

Payments of lodgings and travel allowances to newly appointed staff are made on the understanding that the officer has an intention to move his/her place of residence.