

Wiltshire Council Human Resources

Moving Home Allowance Policy

This policy can be made available in other languages and formats such as large print and audio on [request](#).

What is it?

This policy explains the entitlements available for new employees who are relocating in order to work for Wiltshire Council, and therefore need to sell or purchase a new home.

Who is entitled?

Newly appointed employees on a permanent contract, or temporary with a minimum of 3 years fixed term contract, who live more than 15 miles from their centre of work, and need to sell or purchase a new home in order to move within 15 miles of their new workplace.

Employees on fixed term contracts of less than 3 years, or who are moving from fixed term to permanent contracts are not entitled to this allowance.

What is my entitlement?

Relocation expenses

1. If you are currently a home owner and you sell that home and buy another you can claim up to £6,500 inclusive of VAT.
2. If you buy a house, but do not sell one - or sell a house but do not buy one, you are entitled to claim up to £3,800 including VAT.
3. In both cases, you can make the claim for the following expenses:
 - Removal expenses based upon the lower of 2 quotes
 - Furniture storage for up to 3 months
 - Estate agent, legal, stamp duty, valuation and search fees.
4. An advance of up to £700 may be claimed.

In addition to relocation expenses you may also claim incidental expenses, travel allowance and lodging allowance as set out below.

Incidental expenses

5. You are eligible to claim incidental expenses of up to £1,500 if:
 - You sell and buy a house
 - You buy a house but do not sell one

- You sell a house but do not buy one
 - You move from rented unfurnished accommodation to rented unfurnished accommodation
6. Incidental expenses may be claimed towards items which were used at the old home but were unsuitable or unable to be moved to the new home. This could include new carpets, curtains or white goods.

Travel Allowance

7. Whilst in temporary accommodation you can claim for the cost of one person to travel home twice a month.
8. If your family visit you instead, you can claim your normal travelling home cost towards their journey.
9. The journey can be made by rail (standard ticket) or by car (mileage paid at the public transport rate) or by air if this is less than the cost of rail.

Lodging Allowance

10. If you are living temporarily away from home and are still maintaining that home you are eligible to claim an allowance of up to £600 per month (£138.50 per week) towards the cost of lodgings. This rate is based on the current market for rental property in Wiltshire, and is reviewed annually by Human Resources.
11. If, instead of living in lodgings, you choose to travel daily from your home to work pending your permanent move, you may claim a travel allowance based on a standard rail fare or the public transport rate. This is capped at a daily rate of up to £20 and a weekly total of £100 including VAT.

Making a claim

12. You must make your claims within 24 months of commencing employment at Wiltshire Council, and attach relevant VAT receipts or mileage forms to the claim forms.
13. To make a claim for relocation expenses, you should use the [Moving Home Allowance form \(MH1\)](#).
14. To make a claim for lodging and/or travel allowances you should use the [Lodging/travel allowance form \(MH2\)](#).

Repaying expenses

15. If you leave the employment of Wiltshire Council within 4 years of receiving the final claim for your expenses, you will be required to repay all the expenses claimed, including relocation, incidental, lodging travel and commuting expenses, on the following scale:
- If you leave up to 24 months from the date of the final payment being made to you 100% of expenses are repayable;

- If you leave between 24 months and 48 months of the date of the final payment being made to you 50% of expenses are repayable.
16. You must sign the claim form to agree that any monies owed to the council will be deducted from your salary or from any superannuation refund due.
 17. If you are still employed but, despite your best efforts, do not move house within 24 months of your start date with Wiltshire Council (due to such circumstances as falling house prices, economic downturn, etc.) you may apply to the head of paid service on the Application for extension to moving home allowances form (MH3) for an extension of up to 6 months to the timescales during which you need to move. However, during this period you will not be able to continue to claim lodging, travel and commuting expenses.
 18. If you do not move within 24 months (or any extended period agreed by the head of paid service) you will be required to repay 100% of all expenses paid to you including relocation, incidental, lodging, travel and commuting expenses.
 19. Where you believe that there are exceptional circumstances which mean that, although you have made every effort to move you have been unable to do so, you may apply to the head of paid service to waive the repayment of expenses using Application to waive repayment of relocation expenses form (MH4).
 20. If repayment is waived you will not be entitled to claim any further expenses under this policy, even if you do subsequently relocate.
 21. Each case will be considered by the head of paid service, in conjunction with the section 151/monitoring officer, on its own merits.
 22. The outcome will be confirmed to you within 14 days. There is no internal right of appeal against the decision of the head of paid service.

What are my responsibilities as a line manager?

23. You must ensure that a vat receipt is produced for each expense claimed.
24. You must ensure that the employee has signed and understands the undertaking to repay each expense should they leave the employment of the council with 48 months of employment, or should they fail to move with 24 months.

Are there any exemptions?

This scheme does not apply if you are moving from your parental home or if your spouse/partner is eligible to receive similar allowances.

FAQs

I am concerned that I will not be able to move house within 2 years - what can I do?

If there are exceptional circumstances which have prevented you from moving house this period may be extended for an additional 6 months with the agreement of the head of paid service.

If you are still unable to achieve your move within this extension period any expenses already paid to you will have to be repaid in full, unless waived by the head of paid service in conjunction with the section 151 officer.

What if I need an advance of pay prior to me moving?

An advance of up to £700 may be claimed. This will be offset against your total amount claimed.

I am moving from rented furnished accommodation - am I entitled to claim anything?

If you are buying a property you can claim up to £3,800 in relocation expenses plus incidental expenses up to £1,500.

If you are moving to a rented property you cannot claim relocation or incidental expenses but you may claim travel expenses under this policy.

Further Information

For further information please speak to your manager, corporate director or contact a member of your [human resources advisory team](#).

Policy author	HR Policy and Reward Team – (PM)
Date implemented	April 2009
Last updated	October 2011