

Produced by:  
*Human Resources*  
Inverclyde Council  
Municipal Buildings  
GREENOCK  
PA15 1LX

# Inverclyde Council Travel & Subsistence Policy



**INVERCLYDE COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER  
THIS POLICY BOOKLET IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST, IN LARGE PRINT,  
BRAILLE, ON AUDIOTAPE, OR CD.**

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Responsibility		
Name	Title	Service
Anne Lamont	Policy Development Officer	Human Resources
Alex Hughes	OD Team Leader	Human Resources

Change History		
Version	Date	Comments
Barbara McQuarrie HR Manager	19/8/19	OD, Policy & Communications

Distribution		
Name	Title	Date
0.1	April 1997	
0.2	March 2008	Reflect change to new layout. No change to content.
0.3	May 2017	Changes to reflect HMRC rates
0.4	Sept 2019	Policy refresh

***Distribution may be made to others on request.***

## **CONTENTS**

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>PAGE NO</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>2-4</b>
<b>2 CAR, MOTORBIKE AND BICYCLE USE</b>	<b>4-6</b>
<b>3 PROCESSING OF CLAIMS</b>	<b>6-7</b>
<b>4 RATES</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5 TRAVELING EXPENSES</b>	<b>7-8</b>
<b>6 SUBSISTENCE REIMBURSEMENT AND CRITERIA</b>	<b>8-9</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The purpose of the policy is:

- To ensure value for money at all times whilst undertaking duties which, as part of their employment, take employees from their normal place of work.
- To ensure that employees are appropriately reimbursed for expenditure reasonably incurred whilst undertaking such duties.
- To ensure that appropriate documentation checks have been carried out in relation to all employees who drive a private vehicle whilst undertaking such duties.

### 1.2 This policy applies to all employees of Inverclyde Council and provides guidance for staff and managers on ensuring its fair and appropriate application.

#### Reducing the need to travel

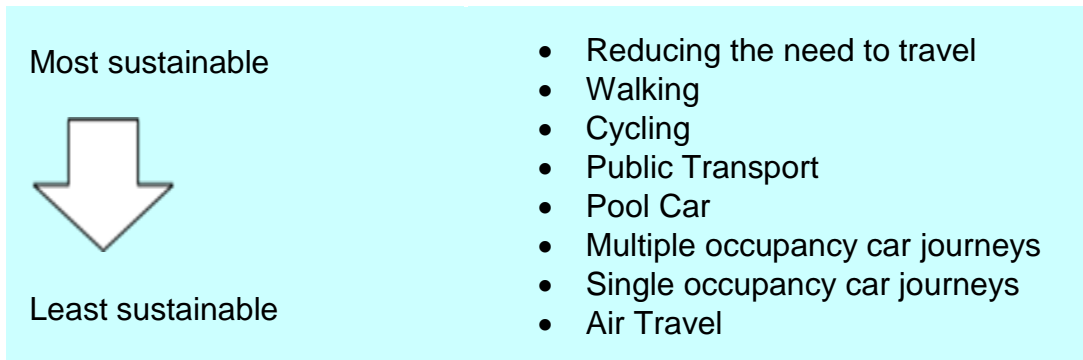
### 1.3 When planning journeys, employees are required to consider the following:

- **Time** – Is there a specific time constraint that requires travel to fulfil a time-dependent task?
- **Location** – Is there a need to travel to a specific location to carry out a task?
- **Expectation** – Does a customer or client expect a member of staff to visit in order to meet their requirements?
- **Alternative** – Is there a way the requirements of this journey could be met without the need to travel (e.g. could the task be taken forward by a telephone call or using video conferencing facilities)?

#### Modes of Travel

### 1.4 When a journey is authorised, the employee should be encouraged to use the most efficient, cost effective and environmentally friendly method of travelling whilst undertaking their official duty.

### 1.5 This section looks at the business travel decision-making process and introduces an options guide to allow employees to make a decision on the most appropriate way to travel.



### Walking and Cycling

- 1.6** Although often overlooked as options when traveling for business, active travel choices such as walking and cycling are healthy, sustainable and very low cost travel options, ideal for short journeys.
- 1.7** Employees should be actively discouraged from travelling distances of less than 1 mile (15-20 minutes) by car unless in exceptional circumstances (e.g. requirement to carry heavy equipment or staff with mobility impairments), as this is neither environmentally sustainable or cost effective.

### Public Transport

- 1.8** Frequently overlooked as an option when travelling for business, public transport can offer a convenient and cost-effective alternative to car-based business travel for short, medium and long distance journeys.
- 1.9** For medium to long trips in particular, public transport options should always be the first mode of transport considered. With a small amount of forward planning, bus and train travel can provide a good alternative to car travel for many journeys. Employees would also be able to utilise the time on public transport to work remotely whilst following the Council's Data Protection Procedures.
- 1.10** Where travel by public transport compares favourably with car travel, it should be the default mode of travel except in exceptional circumstances.

### Car-Sharing

- 1.11** Sharing car journeys is a key way of minimising the financial cost and environmental impact of car travel. When travelling to the same meeting or location, or locations in close proximity, employees should, where practical, share vehicles rather than travelling separately.

- 1.12** The Council currently operates a car-share policy for commuting, through an online facility in partnership with SPT (accessible via the intranet). However, this could also be utilised for arranging car-sharing for business trips.

### Basic Principles and Definitions

#### Definition of Normal Working Location

- 1.13** An employee's place of work (work base) is detailed in their Offer of Appointment & Written Particulars of Terms of Employment.

Employees may be required to work in another location within the Council subject to any request to do so being reasonable and following consultation.

#### Peripatetic Employees

- 1.14** Defined as an employee who is not attached to a particular base/establishment but who can be deployed in any location to which he or she is directed by the employer (e.g. Teaching Staff, Home Carers etc.).
- 1.15** It is recognised that a variety of arrangements exist where employees are deployed across a number of working locations as part of their normal working pattern.
- 1.16** Whilst reasonable expenditure incurred for essential business journeys taken throughout the duration of a working day can be claimed, those incurred during the initial travel from home to place of work and final travel from work to home is excluded.

## **2. CAR, MOTORBIKE AND BICYCLE USE**

- 2.1** Employees authorised by the Council to use their own vehicles (including electric cars) for official business shall be classified as an Authorised User and become entitled to reimbursement of expenditure subject to the following conditions:-

### Authorisation/Eligibility Requirements

- 2.2** Before any journeys are undertaken, employees must be determined as authorised users by their Authorising Officer and have completed the annual vehicle documentation check form as detailed in paragraph 2.11 below.
- 2.3** All employees who use their own private motor vehicle whilst undertaking official duties as part of their employment and in

connection with the Council's business must ensure that their motor vehicle insurance cover includes business use and that this is documented in the Certificate of Motor Insurance. This applies regardless of whether or not mileage allowance is claimed. The Council will not contribute to any cost related to this

- 2.4** If an employee who is classified as an authorised user is involved in an accident involving their vehicle while at work, any claim by a third party arising out of the accident will be against the employees' own motor vehicle insurance.
- 2.5** Journeys taken should be by the most economical route balancing journey distance and time taken.
- 2.6** Payment of vehicle mileage is restricted to travel within Inverclyde Council boundaries. however, taking all factors into consideration (i.e. time taken for journey/costings) the Authorising Officer may authorise journeys by vehicle outwith the boundaries. Payment of vehicle mileage in these circumstances will only be authorised if permission is granted in advance.
- 2.7** For journeys outwith the Council area where the use of public transport would represent a reasonable alternative, payment for the whole journey shall be at the public transport rate. If public transport is not a reasonable alternative then the normal mileage rate will apply.
- 2.8** When claiming for vehicle mileage, employees must use established mileage calculators e.g. odometers to ensure that the correct distance and mileage is being claimed.

The mileage rate covers the costs of buying, running and maintaining the vehicle, such as fuel, oil, servicing, repairs, insurance, vehicle excise duty and MOT. The rate also covers depreciation of the vehicle.

#### Compliance

- 2.9** Heads of Service must ensure that Authorising Officers are in place across their areas of responsibility, as appropriate, and that these are updated following any changes in personnel or service structure.
- 2.10** The Authorising Officer will ensure that all new employees of the Council who will be carrying out official Council business using their own vehicles will be subject to a vehicle documentation check on commencement of employment with the Council. All other employees will have an annual vehicle document check carried out by the Authorising Officer in November of each year to ensure that they are complying with the conditions of the policy.
- 2.11** The Authorising Officer will ensure that the annual vehicle documentation check process for checking the driving licence, motor

insurance certificate and MOT (if appropriate), of all employees who are authorised to use their own vehicle on Council business is in place. The Authorising Officer must see the documentation.

- 2.12** All parking fees, etc., that are reasonably incurred will be reimbursed in respect of authorised business, with the appropriate receipt

#### Bicycle Use

- 2.13** Employees authorised by the Council to use a bicycle for official business journeys are entitled to be reimbursed subject to journeys being prior approved in respect of journey duration and the impact upon productive time.

### **3. PROCESSING OF CLAIMS**

- 3.1** All claims under this policy must be made using the Travel and Subsistence claim form. The HR21 self-service system for employees, is currently being developed and when available should be used by all those who have access. Employees must forward claims to their designated Authorising Officer for approval. All appropriate details must be recorded on the claim form including reason for journey and the start and end point of journey.
- 3.2** An appropriate VAT receipt for fuel consumed during the period of the claim, dated no later than the date of the first journey, should be submitted with your claim to allow authorisation. Electricity is not considered as a fuel for car benefit purposes therefore; electric car users are not required to provide VAT information.
- 3.3** "Claims shall be submitted promptly, and on a regular basis, Claims applicable to a financial year shall be submitted within one month after 31 March that year" in accordance with para 8.5 of the Financial Regulations." Claims relating to a period longer than 3 months may not be authorised for payment.
- 3.4** The nominated Authorising Officer shall be required to certify that the journeys were authorised and necessarily undertaken and that the claim is approved for payment.
- 3.5** It is the responsibility of both the employee and Authorising Officer to be fully conversant with the policy for payment of business travel and subsistence prior to any claim being authorised for payment
- 3.6** All employees have a responsibility to adhere to this policy. Any abuse or failure to do so constitutes a breach of the policy and will be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate Council Disciplinary Policy.



- 3.7** The Council will not accept any liability, whether financial or otherwise, for parking fines, fixed penalty notices or driving endorsements incurred whilst an employee is travelling on Council business. No reimbursement of associated costs will be made.
- 3.8** Each Head of Service shall arrange for the monitoring of an employee's accumulated mileage for the year.

## **4 RATES**

### **4.1 Car User:**

Per mile – first 10,000 miles	45p
Per mile – over 10,000 miles	25p
Amount of VAT per mile in petrol element	0.9976p

### **4.2 Motor Cycle Rates**

Per Mile – 24p

### **4.3 Bicycle Rates**

Per Mile – 20p

### **4.4 Travel Outwith Council Boundaries**

Individuals who are traveling outwith the Council area where the use of public transport would represent a reasonable alternative, but have chosen not to use public transport, payment for the whole journey shall be at the public transport rate

Managers authorising allowances must ensure this rate is applied.

## **5. TRAVELLING EXPENSES**

### Employees Working Sessions, Irregular Hours and/or Split Shifts

- 5.1** Employees working sessions, irregular hours and/or split shifts shall not be entitled to claim expenses for journeys undertaken after completion of their normal contracted working hours.

### Commencing or Finishing Work at other than Work Base

- 5.2** Where an employee is authorised to commence or finish work at a place other than the employee's work base, the employee may claim travelling expenditure in excess of the expenditure which would have normally been incurred in travelling from the employee's home to Administrative Centre or vice-versa.

### Call-Out

- 5.3** In accordance with the Standby & Disturbance Policy - In responding to an emergency call-out, employees will be entitled to a flat travel rate of £3.50 per call-out, where it has been deemed necessary to use their personal vehicle or for reimbursement in the use of approved public transport. All employees who are using their personal vehicle must hold a motor insurance certificate which proves they are able to use their vehicle for “business use”. The flat rate should be claimed on a travel and subsistence form under column ‘taxable other expenses’.

### Overtime

- 5.4** Journeys from home to work base for overtime are considered as a normal home to workplace journey for which employees would not be entitled to claim expenses.

### Longer Journeys and Overnight Stays

- 5.5** Where it is necessary for claimants to stay overnight in a hotel, arrangements should be made in advance and authorisation for reimbursement of expenses agreed with the Authorising Officer. Hotels should be assessed based on cost and convenience. A minimum of 3 hotels should be reviewed prior to booking.
- 5.6** Where appropriate, advance booking should be applied. If more than 1 individual is travelling, booking should be made at the same time to ensure the most competitive rate.

## **6. SUBSISTENCE REIMBURSEMENT AND CRITERIA**

- 6.1** Subsistence is payable where an employee is directed to undertake duties outside the Inverclyde Council boundaries. If an employee is required to undertake duties at a work location that is not their usual place of work, but is within the boundary area of Inverclyde Council, then subsistence will not be paid. The only exceptions to this will be:
- Where an employee is undertaking unplanned duties. Reimbursement in respect of meals will only apply if the costs incurred are over and above the employee’s normal meal time expenditure
  - or
  - Where the employee is a social care professional claiming reimbursement for aiding a Service User.

- 6.2** The cost of purchase of breakfast, lunch, or evening meal will be reimbursed, up to the maximum published rate if the employee meets the criteria. This is also subject to evidence of the expenditure being incurred, and within the time limits specified.

Breakfast	The employee must have left their home/work base before 7am (or is required to commence duties prior to 7.00am and meets the exception criteria shown above) – maximum up to £4.48
Lunch	Employees will be re reimbursed costs incurred up to the maximum £6.17
Evening Meal	Depending on the time of arrival at home/work base (or if required to continue duties which meet the exception criteria shown above re imburement for an evening meal may be claimed up to £7.64

#### Work at Normal Place of Employment

- 6.3** Re imburement of evening meals will be payable to employees working at their work base outside normal hours who are not paid overtime payments, provided work continues after 8.30 p.m.
- 6.4** Re imburement will not be paid where a suitable meal is provided.

#### Other Expenditure

- 6.5** It is recognised that there may be other circumstances, not otherwise described in this Policy, where employees will incur expenses whilst undertaking official duties as part of their employment with Inverclyde Council.
- 6.6** Employees are expected to adopt a reasonable and responsible approach when submitting these claims. In all circumstances receipts must be provided.
- 6.7** In these circumstances advanced approval is required by the Authorising Officer for such payments.

Employees must always exercise prudence when incurring business-related expenses, and ensure that any expenditure incurred meets the standards of public accountability and transparency. Any abuse of the Travel and Subsistence Policy will be considered gross misconduct and may result in the employee's dismissal.

## **Important Check Points for Claimants and Authorising Managers**

1. Line managers and authorised signatories must scrutinise claims to ensure they are valid and in line with the Councils Travel & Subsistence Policy.
2. Sufficient detail of the nature and purpose of journey including start and finishing points, points of call, purpose and any other relevant information must be included on claim form
3. Fuel receipts/ proof of expenditure to support travel /subsistence claim and covering the period of the claim must be submitted
4. There must be a justification for journeys outwith Inverclyde, particularly where there is a high mileage by private vehicle
5. "Claims shall be submitted promptly, and on a regular basis, Claims applicable to a financial year shall be submitted within one month after 31 March that year" in accordance with para 8.5 of the Financial Regulations. Claim may not be accepted if outwith 3 months.
6. Claimants and authorising managers need to have a checking system in place to avoid duplicate claims
7. The mileage claims require to be accurate e.g. recorded using vehicle odometer readings where possible
8. Claim form needs to be fully completed and signed by the claimant and by an appropriate authorised manager who has knowledge of the journey undertaken
9. Mileage claims should not be rounded up.
10. If travelling direct from home address to an event / training course regular home to work commuting mileage should be deducted
11. When Overtime working , home to work payments are not eligible to be reimbursed even if e.g. weekend overtime etc. – where the overtime payment (paid where eligible) would be expected to compensate the employee
12. In accordance with the Standby & Disturbance Policy - In responding to an emergency call-out, employees will be entitled to a flat travel rate of £3.50 per call-out, where it has been deemed necessary to use their

personal vehicle or for reimbursement in the use of approved public transport

13. Mileage claims should not be claimed or authorised for periods which cover when an employee is/was on sickness absence
14. Subsistence e.g. breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea & coffee etc. must be validated and represent value for money and should only be claimed in accordance with para 6 e.g. used when supporting clients and in accordance with more detailed guidance of claimants own service
15. Business mileage – where an employee is authorised to start or finish work at their normal place of work or administrative base the employee may be entitled to claim business mileage in excess of the expenditure which would have normally been incurred in travelling from their home to the normal location or administrative centre.

Head of Service and /or Head of OD, Policy & Communications reserve right not to approve processing where claims are late, are not accurate and/or where they do not have a reasonable justification acceptable to management.