

SALISBURY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST Assistance with Relocation Policy

1. Quick Reference Guide

This document details the Trusts position on assistance given to newly appointed employees who are required to move house as part of accepting a permanent appointment.

2. Introduction

There is no automatic right to receive assistance with relocation, but the Trust needs to ensure that its processes are clear, fair and designed to attract and retain high calibre staff into the organisation.

This policy adheres to the Trust's values and behaviours: Person Centred and Safe, Professional, Responsive, Friendly, Progressive. Managers and employees using this policy should ensure that such values and behaviours are followed when the policy is applied.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the Recruitment and Retention Policy and the Starting Salaries Policy, which also form part of the attraction strategy for the Trust

Version No.	Updated by	Updated On	Description of Changes
1.0	Vicki Horrill	11/09/2012	Change to maximum limit for relocation expenses, new Equality Analysis completed, changes to wording in Introduction following Equality Analysis
2.0	Directorate HR Manager	August 2015	Addition of values and behaviours paragraph, extension to review date, Rewrite of the policy
3.0	Head of Resourcing and Talent Management	August 2018	Minor grammatical amendments and review
4.0	Head of Resourcing	24/05/2023	Clarification that relocation allowance is normally to be approved at the stage of advertising the vacancy. Simplification of the approval process, with oversight being provided by Head of Resourcing.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide financial assistance to newly appointed employees, in agreed key posts, who would incur removal expenses as part of accepting a permanent job offer.

4. Scope

Possible assistance with relocation expenses can be considered in the following circumstances.

- Newly appointed employees to permanent roles, at band 5 or above who are employed under Agenda for Change terms and conditions.
- All substantive Medical and Dental Staff.

Assistance with relocation does not apply to:

- Doctors in Training who are subject to national guidance on relocation expenses.
- Staff employed to work on the bank.
- Agency staff, contractors, or volunteers.
- Overseas nurses (recruited from outside of the UK)

5. Eligibility

The Manager responsible for recruitment must decide whether a post is eligible to be considered for relocation expenses. The following key criteria should be assessed:

- The post is permanent.
- The post is banded as an Agenda for Change Band 5 or above or is a substantive Medical and Dental post.
- The individual's existing property is more than 40 miles away from the Trust.
- The property the individual is moving to is a maximum of 35 miles or equivalent to less than a 1-hour drive away from the Trust. The Trust reserves the right to review this condition on a case-by-case basis.
- Only one claim per property will be made.
- The vacant post must be classified as being hard to fill due to a shortage of suitable candidates, whether this is due to a skill shortage, or other labour market pressure. Within this policy, this includes any role:
 - which is on the Immigration Rules shortage Occupation List,
 - where there is a national/local skills shortage, or
 - has been previously advertised externally without success and it would be a serious risk to the organisation if the role was not filled.
 - has been vacant for over 6 months

In all cases the Divisional Director of Operations/Head of Nursing or Clinical Director must agree that relocation is appropriate as part of the vacancy authorisation process.

The advert will also need to explicit that relocation may be appropriate. If the advertisement has not been annotated in this way relocation expenses will not normally be authorised.

In addition, in exceptional cases where approval for relocation has not been sought at the advertising stage, as part of the negotiation of an offer, it may be possible for the Divisional Director of Operations/Head of Nursing or Clinical Director to authorise the offer of relocation allowance on an individual basis. This must be approved prior to it being included in an offer of employment. The circumstances of the rationale must be outlined in full to include the reasons why relocation is essential.

Other Points to Consider

It may be a requirement of the post to live within 1 hour of the Trust for on-call purposes (AA Route Planner will be used to gauge distance/time). The Trust reserves the right to refuse an application for assistance if the applicant chooses to relocate further away from Trust than this distance/time.

The applicant must also confirm that the assistance claim is not recoverable from another NHS employer by a partner or spouse.

NB All relocation assistance is funded from the Departmental Budget.

6. Duties & Responsibilities for Authorising Eligibility

If the Manager determines that a vacancy fits the eligibility criteria for a relocation package, then the following process should be undertaken:

- As part of the normal process for authorising recruitment to a vacant role, the request to add relocation allowance must be included in the online form in TRAC. In addition, appropriate supporting rationale needs to be provided (see section 5 above) before the vacancy is authorised. The supporting information should include information such as number of attempts to recruit, the number of previous or current applicants and a business rationale as to why a relocation package may help with recruitment.
- Supporting information will be reviewed by the Head of Resourcing to ensure consistency of application. Any concerns will be discussed with the relevant Recruiting Manager/authorisers as necessary prior to advertisement. Reports on the take up of relocation allowance will be provided quarterly to the Workforce Control Panel.
- Relocation costs will be charged to the service budget and in approving relocation allowance the department/division are responsible for ensuring that they have the necessary budget available.

7. Reimbursement

Relocation reimbursement will be available in the following situations: -

- Buying and selling property.
- Sole or additional renting.
- A rental-to-rental move
- Removal expenses only

Please note that relocation reimbursement will not be available for an abandoned purchase or an abandoned rental.

Please see [Appendix A - Application for Assistance with Relocation](#) and [Appendix B - Details of Expenses](#) for the forms required to submit a claim and provide details of expenses

7.1 Buying and Selling Property

The following costs, inclusive of VAT, will be reimbursed subject to a maximum of £8,000 on the production of:

- Estate Agency particulars for house purchases and house sales.
- Purchase completion statement.
- Relevant receipts and invoices.

House Purchase

- Local search fees; environmental search; water and drainage etc.
- Bankruptcy search fee.
- Land Registry search fee.
- Stamp Duty costs
- Associated administration charges.
- Solicitor fees.

House Sale

- Estate Agency fees.
- Solicitor fees.
- Associated administration charges.
- Removal of furniture.
- Storage of furniture.

Other Expenses

- Where employees incur unavoidable expenses in respect to concurrent payments on their 'old' and 'new' properties, they will be entitled to assistance such as rental costs.
- Subsistence and travel expenses, including during a search for accommodation.
- Subsistence, travel and unavoidable expenses as detailed above will be subject to a maximum of 6 months and £800 per calendar month.

7.2 Rented Accommodation (Sole or Additional Renting or a Rental-to-Rental Move)

The following costs, inclusive of VAT, will be reimbursed to those employees moving from rented-to-rented accommodation, subject to a maximum of £8,000 on the production of:

- Rental/letting agency particulars.
- Rental/letting agency agreement/contract.
- Relevant receipts and invoices.

Rental Fees:

- Rental Agency Administration fees (this may include advance fees to secure property, take up references, create contracts, undertake in/out going inventory, move out charges).
- Deposit fees
- Removal of furniture.
- Storage of furniture.

Other Expenses:

- Where employees incur unavoidable expenses in respect to concurrent payments on their 'old' and 'new' properties, they will be entitled to assistance
- Subsistence and travel expenses, including during a search for accommodation.
- Subsistence, travel, and unavoidable expenses as detailed above will be subject to a maximum of 6 months and £800 per calendar month.

7.3 Removal Expenses Only

Reimbursement of removal expenses subject to a maximum of £2,000 inclusive of VAT can be offered to employees on the following basis:

- The individual is moving to the area (from more than 40 miles away).
- The property the individual is moving to is a maximum of 35 miles or equivalent to less than a 1-hour drive away from the Trust. The Trust reserves the right to review this condition on a case-by-case basis
- No other assistance is being offered by the Trust to either purchase or rent accommodation.
- The individual must provide the original invoice from the Removal Company.

8. Taxation of Relocation Reimbursements

Some relocation costs up to £8,000 are exempt from reporting and paying tax and National Insurance. These are called 'qualifying' costs and include:

- the costs of buying or selling a home
- moving costs
- buying certain things for a new home
- bridging loans

The Trust follows the most up to date HMRC guidance on taxation of relocation and as relocation scenarios may differ, individuals should refer to the most up to date government requirements to ensure that they understand the tax position in relation their own particular circumstances.

9. Timeframes for Requesting/Submitting Claims

A request for relocation assistance must be made by the applicant during the recruitment stage or within 3 months of commencing employment with the Trust

A reimbursement claim must be made by the employee within 12 months of their contract start date.

10. Repayment of Relocation Expenses on Termination of Employment

As part of the Application for Relocation Expenses, new employees will be required to sign an undertaking that, if they leave the Trust's employment within 2 years of their commencement date or within 2 years of the final payment of relocation expenses, then they will need to repay all or part of this sum.

Refunds to the Trust are as follows:

- Leaving within 12 months of commencement date – 100% repayable.
- Leaving within 12 to 24 months of commencement date: 50% repayable

11. References

NHS Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook
[NHS Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook | NHS Employers](#)

Recruitment and Selection Policy/Procedure
[Intranet](#)

Recruitment Toolkit
[Intranet](#)

12. Equality Impact Assessment for policies

Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust aims to design and implement services and policies that meet the diverse needs of its services, population and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.

This document has been assessed against the Trust's Equality Impact Assessment Tool which was presented to the ratifying committee.

APPENDICES

Appendix	Title	Link
A	Application for Assistance with Relocation	https://mg.salisbury.nhs.uk/media/3593/appendix-a-application-for-assistance-with-relocation-expenses-may-2023.doc
B	Details of Expenses	https://mg.salisbury.nhs.uk/media/3594/appendix-b-details-of-expenses-may-2023.doc

Post Holder Responsible for Policy:	Head of Resourcing
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