

Expenses Guidance

Claiming expenses for Inquiry meetings and hearings

The Inquiries Act and Rules allow for the reasonable costs of attending Inquiry meetings or public hearings to be refunded and this statement provides guidance for people infected and/or affected who claim expenses for this.

The Inquiry finance team will consider individual circumstances, reasonable costs and travelling distance when deciding claims for travel and other expenses.

All expenses, such as for travel and accommodation, must be supported by receipts. It would be very helpful if any claims could be submitted within one month of attending a public hearing or meeting.

The conditions and rates in this statement have been set, where possible, in line with the practice of public bodies.

Please note, it will not be possible to refund your expenses before any meeting or hearing takes place, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Travel expenses

- Claims for travel expenses must include tickets that clearly show the date of travel, the details of where someone has travelled to and from, and the price.
- The cost of journeys by rail or coach can be reimbursed at a standard rate or economy fare. Where possible tickets should be booked in good time so that cheaper fares are secured.
- Car and motorcycle mileage will be reimbursed at 32p per mile.
- Prior agreement should be obtained for parking charges expected to cost over £10. All other parking expenses can be refunded.
- Rail, tube and bus services should be used for journeys in London and other cities where this is more convenient, quicker and cost-effective.
- For people with mobility difficulties, taxis may be more appropriate than other forms of public transport. Prior approval should be obtained from the finance team.
- The cost of journeys by air in the UK will be reimbursed for economy class travel only. Costs of travel from outside the UK will not be reimbursed.
- For travel to and from London airports, the London Underground, the Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted express services, Thameslink (for Luton or Gatwick) or the Docklands Light Railway should be used at standard class.

How to claim expenses

Where you need to obtain prior agreement, please ensure that you receive a written response from the Inquiry. To obtain prior agreement, or request/submit an expense claim form, please email expenses@infectedbloodinquiry.org.uk. If you complete and return your claim form online the finance team is likely to be able to process this more quickly. If it is not possible to complete the form, please feel free to email or phone the team on 0800 4700 427.

Accommodation

Hearings

Those attending a public hearing will be reimbursed for an overnight stay if they live 1 hour and 45 minutes away or more from the hearing's venue, Fleetbank House. Prior written agreement by email must be obtained from the finance team for reimbursement before any bookings/reservations are made.

The following maximum rates will apply to claims for hotel (bed and breakfast rate) / self-catering accommodation:

£130 – London (for a double, twin or single occupancy room)

£100 – Elsewhere (for a double, twin or single occupancy room)

Participants sharing a room can only be reimbursed at the maximum allowable amount per night per room.

Local Meetings

Those attending local meetings are encouraged to attend the meeting closest to their home. However, in exceptional circumstances, accommodation costs will be reimbursed for an overnight stay. Prior written agreement by email must be obtained from the finance team for reimbursement before any bookings/reservations are made.

The following maximum rates will apply to claims for hotel (bed and breakfast rate) / self-catering accommodation:

£130 – London (for a double, twin or single occupancy room)

£100 – Elsewhere (for a double, twin or single occupancy room)

Participants sharing a room can only be reimbursed at the maximum allowable amount per night per room.

Companion's expenses

If someone attending an Inquiry meeting or hearing requires a companion to accompany them (such as a support worker or family member), this person's travel costs may be reimbursed by the Inquiry. In such cases, individuals must obtain approval from the finance team in advance.

Loss of earnings

Witnesses who are attending a public hearing to give oral evidence and would otherwise suffer a loss of wages should contact the finance team to discuss this.

Childcare costs

Witnesses who are attending a public hearing to give oral evidence may claim for the reasonable cost of childcare required to allow them to do so, if not covered by any employer childcare scheme. Prior written agreement must be obtained from the finance team. As with all other expenses, receipts will need to be provided.