

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

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

Booking Travel and Accommodation through the Inquiry

Bookings for train, coach, air travel and hotel accommodation can now be made by the Inquiry for people who have a confirmed place at Inquiry hearings, or meetings, where costs are incurred which are considered reasonable for the Inquiry to meet.

This will mean that people attending Inquiry events do not have to fund such costs in advance, and wait for reimbursement following attendance at a hearing or a meeting. We will seek to reclaim costs where people fail to attend without a good reason.

When we contact you to confirm your place at a hearing or meeting we will ask whether you want us to book your travel and accommodation and for the details we need to make those bookings.

Travel bookings through the Inquiry

Train journeys will be booked at standard class, and coach and air travel will be booked at economy class. When making these bookings the secretariat team will establish your preferred travel times with you.

Hotel bookings through the Inquiry

Hotel accommodation will be booked at a location close to where the hearing or meeting is taking place and will be within the Inquiry rates.

Other expenses

You will still need to claim expenses for taxis, parking and mileage. We will not be able to organise travel where the cost is under £10 a day.

Advice on ticket collection - important

We ask that you don't collect your travel ticket until the day before you travel. The reason for this is that it is easier for the Inquiry team to cancel the booking (for instance if you cannot attend the Inquiry event) if the ticket has not been collected.

Please contact the Inquiry team immediately if your plans change.

Booking your own travel and accommodation

Please note that, if you choose to book your own travel and accommodation it will not be possible to refund your expenses before any meeting or hearing takes place, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you feel your circumstances should be taken into account in this instance please contact the Inquiry before making a booking .

The Inquiry will refund train, coach or air travel at standard or economy class only.

All expense claims must be supported by receipts for each individual expense other than fuel charges. It would be very helpful if any claims could be submitted within one month of attending a public hearing or meeting.

For claims made by email a photo of the receipt must be attached.

Travel expenses

Claims for travel expenses must include tickets that clearly show the date of travel, the details of where travelled to and from, and the price.

The cost of journeys by rail or coach can be reimbursed at standard rate or economy fare. Tickets should be booked as soon as confirmation of hearing or meeting attendance is received from the Inquiry so that less expensive fares are secured.

Car and motorcycle mileage will be reimbursed at 32p per mile. Receipts are not required for proof of purchase of fuel. Parking expenses will be reimbursed and receipts will be required.

Rail, tube and bus services should be used for journeys in London and other cities where this is more convenient, quicker and cost-effective.

Taxis may be more appropriate than other forms of public transport but if your journey is longer than 20 miles you must contact the Inquiry to obtain prior approval.

The cost of flights in the UK will be reimbursed at economy class only. Costs of travel from outside the UK will only be reimbursed in exceptional circumstances. Please contact expenses@infectedbloodinquiry.org.uk to obtain approval before making any bookings for such flights.

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.

Accommodation:

Hearings

Anyone 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 venue, Fleetbank House..

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

£150 (+vat) – London (for a double, twin or single occupancy room)

£100 (+vat) – 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.

Where accommodation is required for multiple nights, and where different nights incur different rates, an average of the total number of nights will be accepted as the rate. The total amount can be refunded if each night averages to be equal, or less, than the maximum nightly rate allowed by the Inquiry.

Local Meetings

People attending local meetings are encouraged to attend the meeting closest to their home. In exceptional circumstances, accommodation costs will be reimbursed for an overnight stay with prior written agreement by email.

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

£150 (+vat) – London (for a double, twin or single occupancy room)

£100 (+vat) – 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.

Other costs

If you have incurred costs which are not covered in this guidance, please contact expenses@infectedbloodinquiry.org.uk. The team will review the claim and will notify you if costs will be paid.

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 form, please email expenses@infectedbloodinquiry.org.uk. If you complete and return your claim form online which you can do [here](#) 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.

Payment of expenses

Provided all information submitted is correct, payment of your expenses will be made via BACS with reference CO within 10 business days.