

FSF - Travel Expenses for Work Trials

Introduction and eligibility

1. Jobcentre Plus gives an assurance that when undertaking a Work Trial the participant will not be 'out of pocket'.
2. This means that while advisers have discretion in terms of agreeing a Work Trial, for someone who meets the Work Trial eligibility criteria there is no such discretion regards paying a participant's travel expenses.
3. With the exception of claimants engaged in Work Programme or Work Choice, anyone taking part in a Work Trial is eligible to have their travel expenses met from the Flexible Support Fund (FSF).
4. While FSF can support the claimant with travel, and where necessary, accommodation, under no circumstances must it be used to pay for meals or food/drink.
5. This guide sets out the national guidance relating to the payment of travel expenses for a Work Trial. If something is not specifically mentioned within this guidance chapter, decisions should be made locally, taking into account any limitations imposed by the District Manager.

Further considerations

6. If a Work Trial has been authorised, this section details other things you should consider when making awards for travel expenses.
7. We recommend that you:
 - establish and authorise a payment rate prior to the Work Trial commencing
 - calculate expenses based upon a daily rate to reduce the risk of overpayments
 - pay travel costs for the cheapest and most convenient form of transport (NB Travel by private transport must be funded at the DWP standard rate of 25p per mile)
 - ensure overnight accommodation is only authorised where absolutely necessary.

Overnight stays

8. Where overnight accommodation is necessary, it should be treated as part of the travel award but, depending on the circumstances, may require a separate claim form to be completed.
9. The funding of overnight accommodation is certainly an area in which advisory teams should be considering the 'tabloid test' and their financial responsibilities as explained in the FSF 'Adviser Overview and General Information' chapter.
10. When funding an overnight stay, it is important to remember that funding must be awarded on a 'room only' basis.

Process for awarding expenses

11. This section of guidance supports advisory teams in making awards in cases where the claimant is eligible for help. This section covers:
 - forms and letters
 - payment methods
 - LMS actions

- post Work Trial actions

Forms and letters

12. Details of the FSF forms and letters can be found in the Forms and letters chapter.

13. Claims for support with travel (and, where appropriate, accommodation) expenses for a Work Trial are made on form FSF1. When completing it, it is important that you **fully document** the reason for the payment in parts 2 and 3. The details must be sufficient to support the payment, for example:

- details of Work Trial
- period of travel
- method and cost of travel
- (if appropriate) details of overnight accommodation

For guidance when completing the FSF1, see Annex 1 in the 'Forms and letters' chapter.

14. To comply with financial requirements (and mitigate the risk of fraud) all awards must be approved by one person (usually the adviser) and then authorised by a different person (either another adviser or their line manager depending on the level of delegated financial authority required); this is referred to as 'separation of duties'.

Payment methods

15. For travel expenses for Work Trials, we recommend strongly that the most appropriate payment method is used and the methods, in order of preference, are:

- Retrospective payment
- Travel warrants
- Advance Payment

16. This section does not detail how to make a payment; this information is contained within the separate Making a payment chapter.

Cost Centre and Account Codes

17. It is important that the correct Cost Centre Code and Account Code are used. You must obtain these from the Account Codes Made Easy (ACME) tool from your desk top.

Labour Market System (LMS) action

18. Awards are registered on the LMS ADF Hotspot. See the LMS Actions chapter.

Post Work Trial action

19. Processes for confirming an individual's start and progress on Work Trial can be found in Work Trial guidance.

20. These processes may highlight cases where an overpayment of expenses has occurred; in such cases, advisory teams have a clear responsibility to pursue recovery action as per the Overpayments chapter.

Fraud referrals

21. In case of suspected fraud, access the Fraud Referral Form (FRF) icon on your desktop and follow the on-screen completion instructions. See the FRAIMS Guidance for full details of the FRF.