

FSF - Travel Expenses for Job Interviews

Introduction and eligibility

1. The costs associated with attending job interviews (i.e. travel and, in some cases, overnight accommodation) can be prohibitive for many claimants. Advisory teams can deploy Flexible Support Fund to help claimants in such circumstances.
2. Help of this type is discretionary and advisers have considerable flexibility as regards making awards.
3. Anyone that falls within the [over-arching eligibility](#) for FSF could qualify for an award to cover expenses for attending a job interview.
4. From a national policy perspective, the only specific eligibility criteria is the job interview must be in United Kingdom (although the job can be abroad). The United Kingdom is defined as England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and includes the offshore islands (for example Shetland, Orkney, Isle of Skye, Isle of Lewis, Isle of Wight and the Isles of Scilly). Assistance cannot be given to travel to the Isle of Man, Channel Islands, Republic of Ireland or any other country.
5. Whilst FSF can help with travel and, where necessary, overnight accommodation, under no circumstances can it be used to pay for meals or food / drink.
6. 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

7. With regard to awards of FSF for travel to a job interview, it is recommended strongly that advisers:
 - consider the case for payment before the claimant travels wherever practical
 - confirm job interview details with the [employer](#)
 - 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)
 - utilise [Jobcentre Plus Travel Discount Card](#) and other concessionary public transport passes available to claimants, such as [Railcard](#) and [concessionary bus travel](#) wherever possible
 - ensure [overnight stays](#) are only authorised where absolutely necessary

Employer checks

8. Advisers are required, under DWP standards, to ensure public funds are properly safeguarded and not used inappropriately.
9. With regard to job interview travel costs, discharging this duty will, inevitably, mean checking the validity of claims with the employer; it is for advisory teams to determine the timing and nature of the check(s) undertaken.
10. Contacting the employer in advance of the interview is recommended as this will not only provide reassurance that the claimant actually has an

interview arranged, it will also help identify cases where the employer reimburses an interviewees expenses.

11. Where employers do reimburse, the claimant might still need Jobcentre Plus support to attend the interview. In such cases, the adviser should explore their options. If it is decided to provide the claimant with support, the adviser will need to take steps to recoup the award made from either the employer or the claimant. Letters [FSFL06](#), [FSFL07](#) and [FSFL08](#) should be used in these circumstances.

Overnight stays

12. Where an overnight stay 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.

13. The funding of overnight accommodation is certainly an area in which advisory teams should be considering the 'tabloid test' and their financial responsibilities.

14. When funding an overnight stay, it is important to remember that funding must be awarded on a 'room only' basis.

Process for awarding expenses

15. This section of guidance supports advisory teams in making awards in cases where the claimant has been considered eligible for help. This section covers:

- [forms and letters](#)
- [payment methods](#)
- [LMS action](#)
- [post interview actions](#)

Forms and letters

16. Details of the FSF forms and letters can be found in the [Forms and letters](#) chapter.

17. Claims for support with travel expenses for a job interview (and, where appropriate, accommodation) 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 decision to make the payment, for example:

- employer details (e.g. name and address, contact name and number)
- details of job
- date and time of interview
- details of travel (e.g. date, method and cost)
- (if appropriate) details of overnight accommodation

[For guidance when completing the FSF1, see Annex 1 in the 'Forms and letters' chapter.](#)

18. 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

19. For travel expenses for job interviews, 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](#)

20. 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

21. 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

22. Awards are registered on the LMS ADF Hotspot. See the [LMS Actions](#) chapter.

Post interview action

23. Follow-up action is necessary to ensure Jobcentre Plus meets its financial responsibilities. Integral to the follow-up process is a [call to the employer](#) to check that the claimant actually attended interview.

24. Depending on the method of award adopted and/or the outcome of the call to the employer, some further actions may be necessary and certain scenarios may present themselves.

Employer check

25. Contacting the employer after the interview, to confirm the claimant's attendance, is necessary to identify if:

- payment is appropriate (in cases where financial support wasn't given in advance of the interview)
- the payment made has been used for the purpose intended. If it has not, overpayment action should be taken.

Travel warrant issued

26. These payments appear on Transaction Listing Reports which should be checked to ensure Jobcentre Plus has been invoiced correctly. If there are discrepancies between the amount on the Transaction Listing Report and the goods authorised on the travel warrant, contact the local bus company (if bus warrant FF181 was used) or the Warrant Account Service (if rail warrant 09079 was used). You can contact the Warrant Account Service on 0121 335 7789 or by emailing xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xxxx.xxx you will need to tell them:

- the account and warrant numbers (located in the bottom right of the travel warrant)
- the journey details
- where the travel tickets were issued (if known)

27. If the claimant failed to travel or attend the job interview, contact the local bus company or railway station that may have been used to check whether the warrant has been exchanged for tickets. For rail warrants, contact the Warrant Account Service on 0121 335 7789, or by emailing xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xxxx.xxx if the railway station does not hold the information. If the warrant has been exchanged and tickets used, see the 'Persons who do not travel as intended' section of the [Shared Services Payment Guide, Part 1 Stockholding Duties, Section 4 Receipt pads and travel warrants](#).

28. If the claimant has exchanged a warrant for tickets and then returned them unused, a refund can be claimed on the tickets; see the [Shared Services Payment Guide, Part 1 Stockholding Duties, Section 4 Receipt pads and travel warrants](#).

Retrospective payment method adopted

29. In such cases, the claimant will have been asked to provide receipts (except if they were travelling by private transport). If receipts are not supplied, the [FSFL01](#) letter can be used to contact the claimant:

- to request receipts
- where there are discrepancies
- to cancel awards

30. If a claimant supplies receipts for a higher amount than originally anticipated - consider whether it is reasonable for a payment to be made for the additional amount.

31. If the claimant has no receipts, it is for the advisory team to decide how to proceed.

Advance payment method adopted

32. In such cases, the claimant will have been asked to provide receipts (unless they were travelling by private transport). If receipts are not supplied, the [FSFL02](#) letter can be used to contact the claimant:

- to request receipts
- where there are discrepancies
- where it transpires [overpayment action](#) is necessary

33. If a claimant supplies receipts for a lower amount, ask them to refund the difference. If they do not comply, take [overpayment action](#).

34. If the claimant is unable to provide receipts, the advisory team will need to consider [overpayment action](#). The advisory team will also need to consider if, in regards to future FSF awards, this payment method is appropriate.

Fraud referrals

35. 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.

Management Information and checks

36. See the [Management information and checks section](#) of the FSF Adviser Overview and General Information chapter.