

FALKIRK COUNCIL

RELOCATION POLICY

***Please see HR Update 17 for revised payment arrangements effective
from August 2015***

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PART 1

1.1 POLICY

Falkirk Council is fully committed to the recruitment and retention of high quality employees. As part of this commitment the Relocation Policy aims to provide reasonable financial assistance to new employees who are required to relocate to the Falkirk area to take up a new position with Falkirk Council. This Policy is in line with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

PART 2

2.1 INTRODUCTION

It is acknowledged that expenses will be incurred when moving house, and the policy is designed to reimburse newly recruited employees, in relation to these expenses.

Application of the policy is subject to prior approval. New employees will be made aware of the policy at the time of their recruitment and should be advised of their eligibility or otherwise by their line manager.

The overriding principle is that all expenses incurred should be for the purpose of costs associated solely with relocation and all claims must be substantiated.

2.2 SCOPE

The policy is applicable to all newly recruited employees within Falkirk who meet the eligibility criteria outlined below:

- Permanent employees;
- Fixed term or temporary employees whose contract is for a period of 2 years or more.

Payment of relocation expenses is dependent upon the new employee:

- Living out with the Falkirk area boundary at the time of their appointment (greater than a 30 mile radius);
- Relocating to within the geographical area of the Council (see Appendix 1);
- Acquiring a sole permanent residence in the Falkirk area; second homes do not qualify for relocation allowance.

The policy is limited to one member of each household. Reimbursement of Relocation allowances will not be paid to an employee whose partner or other member of the household has already obtained employment in the area and has received financial assistance from the Council or another source.

Where possible, an employee undertaking relocation should move within six months of the date of taking up their new position. In exceptional circumstances this period may be extended, normally up to 12 months, on authorisation from the relevant Service Director.

Relocation assistance will only be open for a period of 12 months from the date employment commenced and all reimbursement claims must be submitted within this timescale. Any claims made after this period shall not be eligible for reimbursement.

N.B. In exceptional circumstances, the Chief Executive may authorise situations where an employee does not meet the criteria, but where due to skill shortages within the area, the interests of the Council are served by relocation.

2.3 REIMBURSEMENT

2.3.1 Relocation expenses will be reimbursed **up to** a maximum of £6000. This sum may be increased to meet special requirements of disabled employees and should be discussed and agreed with the relevant Service Director.

2.3.2 Reimbursement is available for costs which are incurred during the process of relocation. Employees should sign the Relocation Reimbursement and Termination Agreement (Appendix 2) prior to claiming any expenses. Any expenses should be agreed in advance between the employee and their line manager.

2.3.3 All claims for reimbursement should be completed on the Relocation Claim Form (Appendix 3) and forwarded, along with receipts of all expenses, to the employee's Line Manager and then Human Resources for approval. Human Resources will then forward the approved form to Finance Services for payments to be processed. Receipts must be provided with all reimbursement claim submissions.

2.3.4 Costs associated with the relocation process may include:

Removal of household effects:

Reimbursement under this heading will be made for the cost of removal of furniture and effects, including insurance.

Reimbursement will cover one move, where the move is direct from the former principal place of residence to the new place of residence, or for two moves where the employee is required to live for a period of time in temporary accommodation or to put furniture into storage.

The choice of method of transportation will be a matter for the employee. However, reimbursement will be based on the lowest of three quotations, which must be submitted to their Line Manager for approval.

Storage

The cost of temporary storage of household furniture and effects, until a new permanent place of residence is found, up to a maximum of 12 months. Reimbursement will be based

on the lowest of three quotations, which must be submitted to their Line Manager for approval.

Legal and Other Fees

Reimbursement will be made for the costs directly associated with the sale of the employee's old house and purchase of a new house, such as reasonable advertising costs, survey, legal, estate agent and mortgage redemption fees.

Where an employee is currently renting and wishes to buy a property, all legal fees associated with the purchase of the house will apply.

Settling-in Allowance

A lump sum of **up to** £500 may be authorised in respect of a settling-in allowance to meet ad hoc costs associated with moving house, for example, purchase of new curtains, fixtures and fittings or installation of electrical goods.

Temporary Accommodation

In the case where temporary accommodation is required pending a house move, the Council cannot undertake to provide temporary accommodation but will provide a weekly allowance up to a maximum of £95.00. This allowance will be paid for a maximum period of 39 weeks after which, the situation will be reviewed.

Employees must confirm in writing that they are maintaining two homes and if their former principal residence is mortgaged that it has been placed on the property market for sale or rent.

Assistance, in the form of contact details of local Letting Agencies, can be given to new employees requiring temporary accommodation. The new employee can contact Human Resources for this information.

Rented accommodation

Reimbursement will be made for costs associated with obtaining permanent rented accommodation. This will cover removal and storage of furniture and personal effects, travelling and settling-in allowances. The conditions of these are as outlined within the specific sections.

Travelling

In order to assist an employee to take up the appointment, travelling costs will be reimbursed in the following circumstances:

- Return journeys for the employee and partner for one pre-employment visit to the area to view housing, prior to taking up the new appointment;
- One return journey per month following an employee's appointment to their previous permanent residence. The purpose of the visit will be to either visit partner/dependants who are still living at the previous address or to supervise the sale of the property. These visits can be taken up to the point of moving to new permanent residence;
- Travel and subsistence costs for the employee and dependants who normally live with them, when moving from the old to the new home.

Reimbursement for travel is based on standard rail fares. If a private car is used, reimbursement will be made on the mileage incurred and paid at the public transport rate.

Mileage Allowance

As an alternative to the weekly accommodation allowance, and subject to prior approval from the employee's Line Manager, an employee may commute on a daily basis from their existing home providing it is within a reasonable travelling distance of their place of work. Mileage will be paid at the public transport rate and should be claimed on the Relocation Reimbursement Claim Form.

This allowance will only be paid for a maximum of 26 weeks and only applies where an employee is unable to move to their new permanent accommodation immediately. It is not possible for employees to claim mileage and the weekly accommodation allowance in the same week.

Note: This mileage allowance is separate from any casual or essential user allowances which may be paid as part of an employee's travel between other work locations.

2.4 PROCEDURE FOR PAYMENT

Reimbursement claims must be claimed using the relevant form (Appendix 3). Payments will be processed through the Accounts Department and employees will receive reimbursement, via cheque, within 30 days.

In exceptional circumstances, such as payment of removal, legal, estate agent or surveyors fees, where the amount may be in excess of £500, employees may receive a cheque advance. This payment must be authorised by the employee's line manager and Head of Service and will only be made upon receipt of the appropriate paperwork/receipts from the Company (such as a letter or invoice confirming the appropriate fees).

2.5 RECORDS

The Director of Finance Services will keep a record of all transactions. This will include copies of all receipts, the undertakings signed by the employee regarding expenditure and repayment of reimbursed expenses.

2.6 RELOCATION LEAVE

New employees will be entitled to:

- One day's leave for house hunting where this takes place after they have started work with the Council;
- Up to 2 days paid leave for moving house where this takes place after they have started work with the Council.

This leave will be granted to new employees who are required to relocate to the local area to take up their new position and who fulfil the eligibility criteria for assistance through the Relocation Policy. This is a one-off entitlement in relation to the terms of the relocation assistance. All leave requests must be discussed and approved in advance with the employee's line manager.

Should an employee leave within 12 months, any relocation leave taken will be deducted from their outstanding annual leave or salary where appropriate.

2.7 LEAVERS

Employees will be required to repay any relocation expenses should they leave the Council's service within 2 years of taking up the appointment. The amount to be repaid will be pro-rated to 1/24th of the sum involved for every full month short of 2 years service.

It will be the responsibility of the employee and their Line Manager to discuss any repayment of relocation expenses that are due. The Line Manager will be responsible for ensuring that Finance Services (Payroll) are notified if an employee is required to repay some element of the allowance. This notification should be made as soon after the employee has resigned to allow Payroll to make the necessary arrangements.

The repayment of relocation expenses will not apply where the Council terminates the employment, unless the termination is for reasons of discipline.

N.B. In exceptional circumstances, if an employee is required for personal reasons to cease their employment with the Council, the Chief Executive may give consideration to waiving the repayment due. The employee and/or their representative will be able to make a case for this.

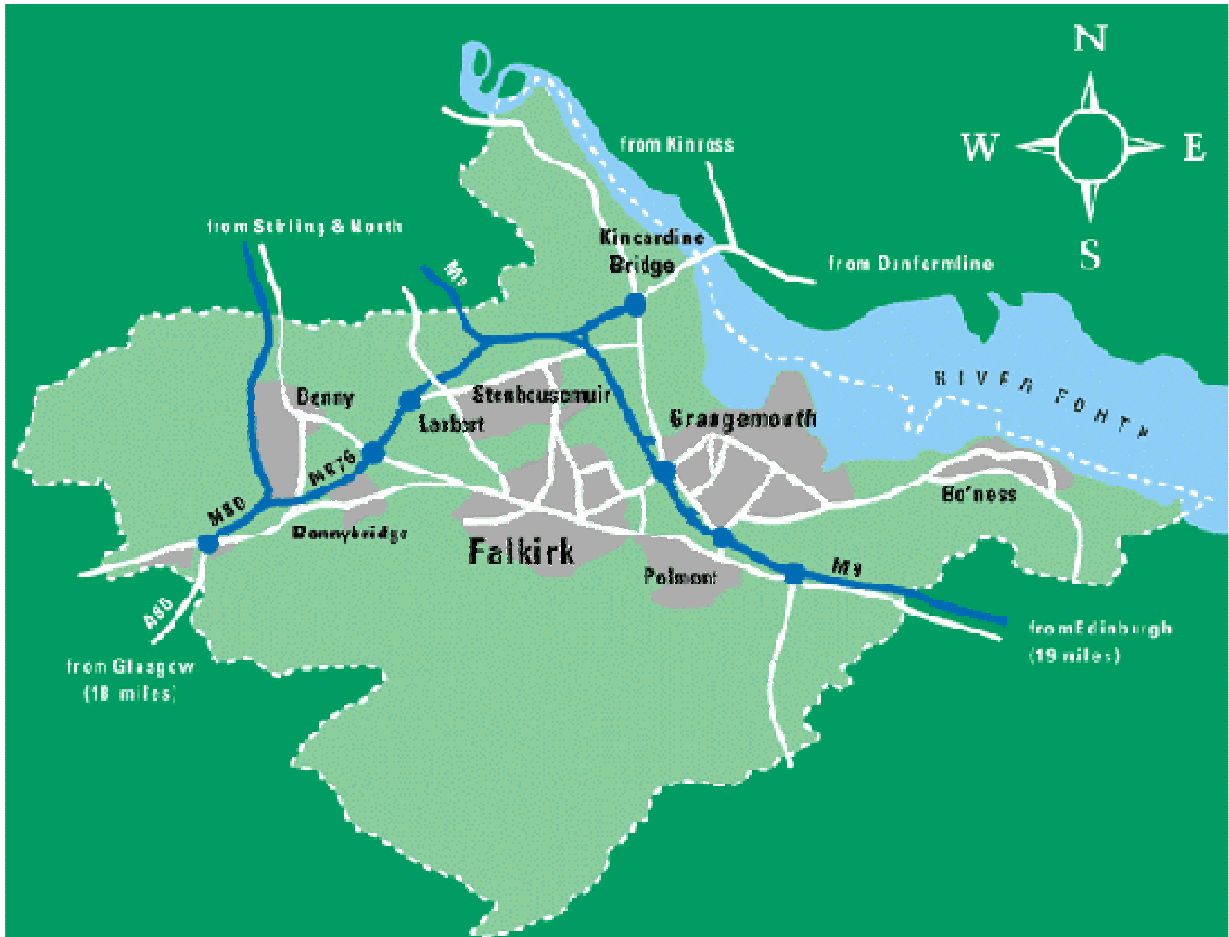
PART 3

3.1 IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW

This Policy is implemented with effect from 1st December 2008.

The Head of Human Resources in conjunction with Services and Trade Unions will monitor and review the policy as necessary.

MAP OF GEOGRAPHICAL AREA



Relocation Reimbursement and Termination Agreement

In consideration of Falkirk Council (hereinafter referred to as “the Council”) agreeing to pay my removal expenses in respect of my moving from my present address to one which is now within the Falkirk area boundary, I hereby confirm that:-

- I am currently living out with the Falkirk boundary at the time of my appointment;
- I am relocating to within the geographical area of the Council;
- No other member of my household is claiming or will claim relocation expenses in connection with the move, from either the Council or any other source;
- I will claim for all associated costs in line with the terms and timescales outlined within the Policy and will provide all relevant receipts as appropriate;
- If I leave the service of the Council by voluntary resignation or following a disciplinary/capability issue before the expiry of 2 years service, I shall repay to the Council, on a monthly reducing basis the whole of my removal expenses (maximum value £6,000).
- I authorise the Council on receipt of notice given to me to terminate my employment with the Council, to deduct from any salary or money which may be due to me from the Council any amount of my removal expenses which the Council may be entitled to recover.

Signed:

Dated:

Employee’s Name:

.....

Service:

.....

Job Title:

.....

Claim for Reimbursement of Relocation Expenses

All relevant expenditure is reimbursed in accordance with the Council's Relocation Policy. Prior approval must have been given and all allowances will be paid on the basis of reimbursement on production of receipts. Qualifying expenditure may be claimed for individual items as the expenses are incurred or as a single claim, as appropriate.

PART 1 – EMPLOYEE DETAILS

<i>Name:</i> _____	<i>Employee Number:</i> _____
<i>Start Date:</i> _____	
<i>Service:</i> _____	
Address Details:	
New Address: _____	Post Code: _____
_____	_____
Old Address: _____	Post Code: _____
_____	_____

PART 2 – CONFIRMATION OF ELIGIBILITY

At my date of appointment, I was a new employee of Falkirk Council moving to within the geographical area of the Council to take up employment.

Yes No

I am employed on a permanent contract or a fixed term/temporary contract of not less than 2 years in length.

No

Yes

Prior to my offer of employment I lived outwith the Falkirk Council Area boundary

No

Yes

PART 3 – CLAIM DETAILS

Please complete the relevant sections as appropriate.

1. Pre-Employment Visit	
Claim Details	Total (inc VAT)
<i>Travel Costs for pre-employment visit</i>	
<i>Date of Visit:</i> _____	
Mileage Claimed _____ miles @ £0.278	£
Standard Class Return Rail Fare/s _____ @ £ (provide details where more than 1 fare claimed)	£

2. Move of Location	
Claim Details	Total (inc VAT)
<i>Removal of Belongings</i>	
<i>Date of Move:</i> _____	
<i>Company Chosen:</i> _____	£
<i>Amount Claimed</i>	
<i>Storage of Belongings</i>	
<i>Dates: From</i> _____ <i>To</i> _____	
<i>Company Chosen:</i> _____	£
<i>Amount Claimed</i>	
<i>Travel Costs on removal day</i>	
Mileage Claimed _____ miles @ £0.278	£
Standard Class Return Rail Fare/s _____ @ £ (provide details where more than 1 fare claimed)	£
<i>Subsistence Costs on removal day (attach receipts)</i>	
Breakfast _____ @ £2.00 = £	
Lunch _____ @ £3.00 = £	
Evening Meal _____ @ £5.00 = £	

<i>Total Amount Claimed</i>	£
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3. Settling-in Allowance	
A maximum payment of £500.00 will be made in respect of this. Receipts must be provided	
Claim Details	Total (inc VAT)
<i>Total Amount Claimed</i>	£

4. Temporary Accommodation Costs (whilst waiting to move home)	
A maximum weekly allowance of £95.00 for no more than 39 weeks will be paid for temporary accommodation.	
I confirm that in I am maintaining 2 properties and that where my former property is mortgaged, I have placed this on the market for sale or rent and I have provided evidence to support this.	
Signed: _____ Date: _____	
Claim Details	Total (inc VAT)
<i>Period Claimed: From</i> _____ <i>To</i> _____ Cost Claimed (attach receipts for weekly costs incurred) _____ per week X _____ weeks	£

5. Mileage Costs (alternative to weekly accommodation allowance)	
Mileage allowance, at public transport rate, will be paid for daily commute between existing home and work for a maximum of 26 weeks.	
I confirm that I am commuting to work on a daily basis and am not claiming for the weekly accommodation allowance in addition to mileage.	
Signed: _____ Date: _____	

Claim Details	Total (inc VAT)
<i>Period Claimed: From _____ To _____</i> Cost Claimed (attach receipts for weekly costs incurred) _____ per week X _____ weeks	£

6. Monthly visits to previous residence	
Claim Details	Total (inc VAT)
<i>The purpose of these visits is to either visit partners/dependants still living at your previous address or to supervise the sale of your property.</i>	
<i>Dates of visits: _____</i> _____ _____	
Mileage Claimed _____ trips X _____ miles @ £0.278	
£	
Standard Class Return Rail Fair/s _____ journeys @ £	
£	

7. Buying/Selling of Property	
Claim Details	Total (inc VAT)
<i>Legal Fees</i> <i>Company Chosen: _____</i> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>Amount Claimed</i></div>	
£	
<i>Survey Fees</i> <i>Company Chosen: _____</i> <div style="text-align: right;"><i>Amount Claimed</i></div>	
£	
<i>Advertising Costs (provide details and receipts for costs incurred)</i>	

<i>Amount Claimed</i>	£
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8. Total amount Claimed	
Claim Details	Total (inc VAT)
Total claimed in this application	£

PART 4 – EMPLOYEE DECLARATION

I confirm that I have read and understood the process and requirements outlined in the Council's Relocation Policy.

I confirm that I have enclosed 3 quotes for all appropriate costs/fees that I have claimed for and that all relevant receipts are attached in accordance with the Policy.

I understand that all claims submitted for authorisation are within the 12 months after my first date of date of employment with Falkirk Council.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PART 5 – AUTHORISATION FOR PAYMENT

Please ensure that Part 5 is signed and attached to all Relocation Claims.

Line Manager

I confirm that the above employee has commenced employment with the Council and is entitled to financial assistance (up to a maximum of £6,000) under Falkirk Council’s Relocation Policy.

Total Claimed in this application **£**

<i>Total of any previous applications</i>	£
<i>Overall Total Claimed</i>	£

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Designation: _____

Human Resources

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Designation: _____

Finance Services

I can confirm that the above reimbursement claim has been approved in accordance with the Relocation Policy and payment will be made accordingly.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Designation: _____