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| Sheffield City Council  Fostering Service  **Guidance on Foster Carers’**  **Travel Cost  Expenses Claims:**  **Task & Permanence Carers**  April 2023 |  |

The ‘Weekly Fostering Allowance’ covers the usually expected incurred cost of transporting a child. In addition to this, foster carers may claim expenses for specified journeys they undertake as part of their fostering role as outlined in the table below:

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| **Activity** | **Mileage of 45p per mile plus parking fees or public transport cost can be claimed in the following circumstances** |
| **School** | For journeys below 3 miles each way: Foster carers will not be reimbursed separately for these journeys.  For journeys above 3 miles each way: The full cost of the journey can be claimed. |
| **After school/leisure time activities** | For journeys below 3 miles each way: Foster carers will not be reimbursed separately for these journeys.  For journeys above 3 miles each way: The full cost of the journey can be claimed, providing that the activity was arranged by the child’s parent/previous carer and the child’s plan stipulates that it would be in the child’s best interest to continue attending, or if it is near the child’s school which is located 3 miles and more away. |
| **Family time** | Travel costs can be claimed for all family time arrangements, including official sibling family time agreed at placement planning meeting or child’s review. |
| **Attendance at meetings** | Travel costs can be claimed for attendance at all social care or social care related meetings regarding children (e.g. PEP meetings, LAC reviews, attending a Home Office appointment with a UASC). |
| **Travel for day care, support care or other agreed alternative placements, including introductions meeting** | Travel costs can be claimed. |
| **Hospital and specialist health care appointments** | Travel cost for routine health appointments such as G.P., dental, optician or for emergency treatment cannot be claimed.  Travel costs to other health appointments such as therapy and ‘specialist’ hospital or consultant appointment can be claimed. |
| **Introductions/transitions to a new placement/adoption** | All travel costs in relation to introductions/transitions to a new placement/adoption can be claimed. |
| **Attending court** | All travel costs to court for a carer to give evidence or transport or support a child to attend court can be claimed. |
| **Support groups** | Travel costs to support groups organised and facilitated by the Local Authority can be claimed. |
| **Training** | Travel costs to attend fostering training organised by or agreed by the Fostering Service can be claimed. |
| **Supporting the Fostering Service in addition to a pre-agreed fostering task, for example:**  **Co-facilitating training**  **Supporting recruitment events**  **Attending ambassador meetings** | Travel costs can be claimed. |
| **Exceptional circumstances** | In cases where foster carers face exceptional circumstances requiring additional travel that is not covered in the policy, they should discuss the situation with their supervising social worker, who will seek approval from the Fostering Service Manager or their delegate for reimbursement of the travel expenses. |

**Claims Submission and Expectations:**

Claims must be submitted using the ‘*Mileage Claim – Expenses Form’* (which can be found here [www.fosteringhandbook.com/sheffield/local\_resources.html](http://www.fosteringhandbook.com/sheffield/local_resources.html)) within **2 months** of the journey; any relevant receipts and documentation (e.g., parking tickets, public transport tickets) need to be attached to the form. Any claims submitted after 2 months may not be approved.

All journeys undertaken should follow the shortest practical route for the journey and may be subject to checks using a Google route planner or equivalent. If during such checks a journey exceeds the shortest route, carers may be asked to account for the difference by their supervising social worker.

It is the expectation that children/young people use a Zoom travel pass or other type of a travel pass which entitles them to discounted journeys.

Taxi fares will be reimbursed only in exceptional, pre-agreed circumstances.

Carers should discuss any issues or queries regarding mileage claims with their supervising social worker before submitting the claim form.

This policy was agreed and signed off by: Anne-Marie Banks (Service Manager)

Date: 03/04/2023