

# Warwickshire County Council

## TRAVEL - CODE OF CONDUCT



### Key Points:

- Expense incurred by an employee for work related travel can be claimed back using the correct process on Your HR.
- All claims must be checked and agreed by the appropriate person.
- Claims must be submitted and approved within 90 days of the journey taking place.
- Employees should consider the use of public transport or pool or hire cars for journeys of more than 100 miles.

## 1. Purpose of Code

- 1.1 This Code of Conduct is to guide employees and managers in matters relating to vehicle travel and travelling allowances. It does not apply to schools, but in all other areas of the Council's operation, it does aim to give a consistency of approach.
- 1.2 The aim is also to encourage employees and managers to plan their journeys in such a way as to limit travelling to the lowest possible level, whilst maintaining the efficient performance of their duties.

## 2. Vehicle Document Record Form and Work-related Road Traffic Incidents

- 2.1 Before any employee may drive either their own vehicle, or a fleet or pool vehicle, in connection with their work for the Council, they must have completed the vehicle, licence and car park information screens on Your HR self-service as appropriate.
- 2.2 By completing the Your HR information, the employee confirms, amongst other details, that they have appropriate business use insurance, a current valid driving licence and that they have read, understood and agree to comply with the Driving at Work Policy.
- 2.3 The Driving at Work Policy can be accessed via the intranet [here](#).
- 2.4 Any employee who is driving on WCC business must report all vehicle/ driving incidents to their line manager or other designated person(s). The reported

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incident may be subject to further investigation/review. The incident must be recorded on the WCC accident recording database.

### 3. Planning of Journeys

- 3.1 Journeys should only be undertaken when they are absolutely necessary. Employees must consider first whether the objective of the journey could be achieved virtually by using Microsoft Teams, telephoning or e-mail.
- 3.2 Employees who live within a reasonable distance of their work base are encouraged to leave their car at home if they are confident they will not require it for business purposes.
- 3.3 Mileage claims for journeys should always equate to the shortest possible route except where the use of other major roads or toll roads, (such as the M6 toll road) would achieve a significant time saving. If an alternative route is used, it must be highlighted on the claim form as an exception and will be deemed to have been approved by the authorising manager when they approve the travel claim. For consistency, the shortest route should always be verified by using measurements obtainable from Google maps, AA Route Finder, or a similar website and this website must be agreed with the manager as appropriate to ensure consistency within that team.
- 3.4 Journeys should be planned to secure the completion of the maximum amount of business with the minimum amount of travelling. Additional mileage should not be incurred by unnecessary visits to the work base at the beginning and end of the day.
- 3.5 Wherever possible, employees should share the use of vehicles, especially when they are required to attend the same site or other meetings away from their operating base.

### 4. Pool Vehicles, Public Transport and Hire Cars

- 4.1 When planning journeys, staff should take into account the relative costs and practicalities of using their own car, public transport, hire cars and pool cars / bicycle. Staff should adhere to the following general principles:
  - Staff should, where possible, avoid using their own cars for journeys exceeding 100 miles. If this is not possible, the employee's use of their own car should be agreed with the manager
  - A pool bicycle should be considered for short journeys in the Warwick area
  - In the case of long journeys, the cost of overnight accommodation when using public transport should be balanced against the cost of car usage which avoids an overnight stay.
  - Discretion can be used (with the support of the Assistant Director), when a member of staff is unable to utilise a hire car due to their accessibility needs, for example, they ordinarily drive a vehicle that is specially adapted for their use.

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Guidance for booking and the use of pool transport (including pool bikes) and hire cars can be found on [i.warwickshire](http://i.warwickshire)

- 4.2 In the case of long journeys, a pool car should be used, but if there are none available, staff should refer to the matrix attached as Appendix B to establish whether it would be more economical to hire a car. **APPENDIX B IS CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW RE COSTS – PLEASE DO NOT USE UNTIL UPDATED COST INFORMATION IS PUBLISHED** Except where the difference is marginal, a hire car should then always be used. If a hire car is required, staff should discuss this with their manager. Staff may use their own car instead of a hire car but in those circumstances will only be able to claim the cost of a hire car.
- 4.3 Employees travelling by rail should travel standard class and where possible book their tickets in advance in order to get the best possible fare available. It is usually expected that tickets for rail travel are purchased through the Chiltern Discount Scheme or paid for personally and reclaimed via the expenses claim through Your HR self-service. Exceptions to this are:
- Staff who do not have access to the discount scheme
  - Tickets purchased for non-Chiltern rail journeys.
  - Staff requiring emergency travel.

Where rail travel is necessary and where this travel is required on the Chiltern Line, staff should use the Chiltern Discount Scheme. On most occasions at peak times, the Chiltern Discount Scheme will provide the best rates. Details can be found on [i.warwickshire](http://i.warwickshire)

For all non-Chiltern Lines travel, or if it is possible to access a better deal through Chiltern group save, or if the employee does not have access to the Chiltern Discount Scheme, then those managers who have access to a P-card are able to use this to purchase tickets. In the event that an employee does not have access to the discount scheme or a P-card, either directly or via a colleague who can purchase on their behalf, then rail tickets must be paid for personally and an expense claim submitted.

## 5. Workbases

- 5.1 A basic principle adopted by the national negotiating bodies is that employees are responsible for their travel to and from work. HMRC guidelines define travel between your home and your regular, permanent place of employment as a non-work journey, making it ineligible to be included as part of your business mileage. Furthermore, the HM Revenue and Customs regards any payment for travel to and from work as a taxable benefit which must be declared.
- 5.2 Business mileage refers to journeys which you undertake in the course of your work with the exception of your regular commute. In calculating business mileage, the employee's normal daily mileage to and from work should not be taken into account. The claim should be for the additional (excess) mileage

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covered by virtue of the visit over and above that normally incurred from home to the work base

5.3 As an example, an individual works from Saltisford in Warwick and lives in Nuneaton. They travel 22 miles each way to work and back, a total of 44 miles each day. The individual is unable to claim for this mileage as it is their usual home to work mileage. If they travel to another work location in Warwickshire, which sees them accrue additional mileage over and above that of the 22 miles each way currently travelled, then they are able to claim for this additional mileage. For example, the individual travels from Saltisford to Bedworth and then home to Nuneaton. The total distance travelled is 26 miles, an additional 4 miles than their usual work to home mileage. The employee is able to claim for the additional 4 miles. The principle of deducting home to work mileage also applies where employees are working remotely at locations other than their normal work base.

5.4 **No Fixed Place of Work/Multiple Work Base** - Where staff genuinely do not have a fixed place of work or where staff work from a number of different WCC locations during their working week, then the Assistant Director must agree the basis for their claims as a local arrangement, balancing the principle incorporated in item 5.1 above against the need for reasonable reimbursement. All local agreements must be discussed with the employee, confirmed in writing and saved onto the employee's HR-ER File by the employee's line manager. Local agreements must be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are being adhered to and remain fit for purpose. Without written formal agreement of a local arrangement the employee is unable to claim business mileage from anywhere other than their previous work base.

## 6. Car Allowances

6.1 The Council has set the allowance rate for all mileage incurred at 45p per mile regardless of engine capacity.

6.2 This includes:-

- excess mileage following relocation
- the reimbursement of volunteers or work experience placements (where payment has been agreed)
- the reimbursement of people attending interviews (where payment has been agreed)
- the reimbursement of anyone else who is not an employee but for whom the County Council would pay expenses to attend, for example, a meeting or conference

6.3 Where it is practical to use public transport, but the employee uses their own car (with the authority of their manager) they should claim either the appropriate public transport fare or the mileage rate, whichever is the lower.

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- 6.4 (For clarification only) a) There is no longer a separate rate for mileage incurred in connection with training or b) out of County mileage and c) carrying passengers does not attract any additional payments.

## 7. Subsistence Allowances

- 7.1 Details of subsistence rates and the meals they can be claimed for are shown at Appendix A. It should be noted that these are not fixed allowances but the maximum amount that can be claimed on production of a receipt.
- 7.2 The cost of meals taken away from the workplace will only be reimbursed if expenditure additional to that normally incurred has been necessary. Managers should particularly note that in signing off the claim they will be deemed to have approved the reason for why the additional expenditure has been incurred.
- 7.3 The County Council will only reimburse expenditure claims that are accompanied by receipts (see Section 8 below).

## 8. VAT Receipts and Certification

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the manager or approved delegate to ensure that details regarding travel (mileage covered) have been checked alongside the necessary receipts. It is the manager's responsibility to ensure the employee has attached the appropriate receipts to Your HR. Once approved the receipts are stored within the system and it may be necessary for these receipts to be made available to HMRC as part of an inspection. This will be arranged centrally, however when inspected if there are any missing receipts this will mean that the VAT cannot be claimed back. Furthermore, failure to provide receipts may result in the employee being liable to pay back VAT already claimed by WCC. Receipts need to cover the same period of time for which the mileage is being claimed.

VAT cannot be reclaimed on mileage relating to an electric vehicle charged at home and so the appropriate option should be selected in YourHR where this is the case.

- 8.2 Managers who approve travel expenses must do so by checking that all the appropriate evidence is available including receipts for subsistence, car parking fee tickets, train tickets etc. Claims must be submitted and authorised by your Line Manger via Your HR within 90 days of the journey taking place. Claims not submitted and approved within 90 days will not be paid unless, in exceptional circumstances, the relevant Assistant Director approves the claim. Expenses incurred in the last month of the financial year must be submitted immediately. The certifier will also ensure that the claim is arithmetically correct and that the amounts claimed are in accordance with the prevailing conditions of service.

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- 8.3 Managers are reminded that when authorising claims, they should be fully satisfied that the claim is genuine and reasonable, before approving that the claim can be paid from the allocated budget.

## 9. Car Parking Fees and Fines

- 9.1 When car parking fees are incurred on a visit and there is no convenient free parking available the appropriate amount will be reimbursed. A parking ticket (or other form of receipt) must always be submitted to the manager (or approved delegate) via Your HR to support the claim.
- 9.2 It is the personal responsibility of the driver to ensure that they park legally and purchase the appropriate ticket. Parking fines will not be reimbursed by the Authority under any circumstances.
- 9.3 It is the personal responsibility of the driver to ensure that they drive responsibly, legally and within speed limits. Speeding or any other such fines will not be reimbursed by the Authority under any circumstances.

## 10. Flights & Overnight Accommodation

- 10.1 An employee proposing to travel by plane, must obtain written permission (email is sufficient) from their Assistant Director, and provide an explanation as to why this is the preferred method of transport. Assistant Directors will require permission from their Strategic Director and Strategic Directors from the Chief Executive.
- 10.2 Similarly, an employee requiring hotel accommodation must obtain written permission (email is sufficient) from their line manager/cost centre manager, including confirmation that reasonable checks have been made to ensure value for money.

## 11 Use of Mobile Phones in Vehicles

- 11.1 The Road Traffic Act makes the using of a hand-held mobile phone or similar device, whilst driving, a specific offence.
- 11.2 The only permitted exception is when there is an urgent need to use a mobile phone to contact the emergency services in response to a genuine emergency when it is unsafe or impractical to stop driving to make a call.
- 11.3 The Road Traffic Act does not actually prohibit the use of hands-free phones or satellite navigation equipment when driving, but drivers may still be prosecuted if they use them, essentially for failing to drive with due care and attention. This Policy therefore extends to the use of hands-free phones.

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11.4 The following guidelines must therefore be followed when driving at work:

- Calls must not be answered or initiated whilst driving;
- Drivers should stop at a safe place to receive, return or initiate a call. It is vital that when stopped you switch off the vehicle engine otherwise liability may still be incurred.
- The hard shoulder of a motorway or the side of a busy road is not a suitable place to make or receive calls.
- Making or receiving calls while at traffic lights or in a queue of traffic constitutes using a mobile phone whilst driving and is therefore an offence.
- Using a mobile phone or similar equipment whilst driving is prohibited, including, for example, text, message, or facetime
- If visiting areas that prohibit or restrict use of mobile phones on their site, then those site rules/signage must be followed.

11.5 The inappropriate use of mobile phones by employees on Council business will be considered as a disciplinary offence.

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## Appendix A

### Car Allowances (includes electric and hybrid cars)

The following scales of allowances apply to all WCC staff (excluding teachers and fire-fighters)

1 April 2021 Onwards

	Engine Capacity
<b>All Users</b>	<b>All sizes</b>
Per mile first 10,000	45.0p
Per mile after 10,000	25.0p

### Motorcycle and Cycle Allowance

20p per mile

### Subsistence Rates

	Maximum allowance	
Breakfast	<b>£4.48</b>	If you set out before 7.30 a.m
Lunch	<b>£6.50</b>	If you are away between 12.15 – 14.15
Tea	<b>£2.43</b>	If you arrive home after 18.30 but before 20.30
Dinner	<b>£10.00</b>	If you arrive home after 20.30 p.m

- a) The allowances shown are the maximum amounts that can be claimed
- b) All claims for subsistence must be evidenced by receipts
- c) Tea and dinner cannot both be claimed on the same day

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## Appendix B – **UNDER REVIEW PLEASE DO NOT USE**

Northgate vehicle  
Hire

### USE OF HIRE CARS

#### Example Medium Car i.e. FORD FOCUS

	£18.2		
Cost of Car Per Day	0	+ Insurance	£5.00
Average Pump price per Ltr	£1.09	Cost Gallon	£4.96
Miles per gallon	35	Cost Per Mile	£0.14

Distance Miles	Cost Of Hire Car	Cost of Car Allowance	Hire Saving
		£0.40	
10	£24.60	£4.00	-£20.06
20	£26.00	£8.00	-£18.00
30	£27.40	£12.00	-£15.40
40	£28.80	£16.00	-£12.80
50	£30.20	£20.00	-£10.20
60	£31.60	£24.00	-£7.60
70	£33.00	£28.00	-£5.00
80	£34.40	£32.00	-£2.40
90	£35.80	£36.00	£0.20
100	£37.20	£40.00	£2.80
110	£38.60	£44.00	£5.40
120	£40.00	£48.00	£8.00
130	£41.40	£52.00	£10.60
140	£42.80	£56.00	£13.20
150	£44.20	£60.00	£15.78
160	£45.60	£64.00	£18.40
170	£47.00	£68.00	£21.00
180	£48.40	£72.00	£23.60
190	£49.80	£76.00	£26.20
200	£51.20	£80.00	£28.80
210	£52.60	£84.00	£31.40
220	£54.00	£88.00	£34.00
230	£55.40	£92.00	£36.60
240	£56.80	£96.00	£39.20
250	£58.20	£100.00	£41.80
260	£59.30	£104.00	£44.40
270	£61.00	£108.00	£47.00
280	£62.40	£112.00	£49.60
290	£63.80	£116.00	£52.20
300	£65.20	£120.00	£54.80

Fuel Price taken from AA website. Due to changing fuel and car hire charges this matrix is only included as a guide for staff and managers as to where it becomes cheaper to use a hire car, and should not be used as an accurate representation of the cost of hiring a car.

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