

TRUST-WIDE NON-CLINICAL POLICY DOCUMENT

Reimbursement of Expenses Council of Governors

Policy Number:	HR35
Scope of this Document:	All Governors elected to/ appointed to the Council of Governors
Recommending Committee:	Human Resources Policy Group
Approving Committee:	Executive Committee
Date Ratified:	May 2019
Next Review Date (by):	May 2022
Version Number:	May 2019 – Version 2
Lead Executive Director:	Executive Director of Corporate Governance and Communications
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2019 – Version 2

*Striving for perfect care
and a just culture*

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Further information about this document:

Document name	HR35 Reimbursement of Expenses Council of Governors
Document summary	This document sets the framework within which claims for expenses incurred by Governors will be processed along with the individual responsibilities to ensure that claims are subject to an appropriate level of scrutiny and authorisation.
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Published by Copies of this document are available from the Author(s) and via the trust's website	Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust V7 Building Kings Business Park Prescot Merseyside L34 1PJ Trust's Website www.merseycare.nhs.uk
To be read in conjunction with	Policy No HR.10: Equality Policy and Procedure Policy No HR.15: Lease Car Policy Policy No F.04: Standards of Business Conduct Policy No F.06: Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy
This document can be made available in a range of alternative formats including various languages, large print and braille etc	
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Version Control:

		Version History:
Version 1	Approved by appropriate Executive Director	May 2016
Version 2	Approved by Executive Director following minor, non procedural amendments	May 2019

SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

This document should be read in conjunction with the following statements:

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

All Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust employees have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults, including:

- being alert to the possibility of child / adult abuse and neglect through their observation of abuse, or by professional judgement made as a result of information gathered about the child / adult;
- knowing how to deal with a disclosure or allegation of child /adult abuse;
- undertaking training as appropriate for their role and keeping themselves updated;
- being aware of and following the local policies and procedures they need to follow if they have a child / adult concern;
- ensuring appropriate advice and support is accessed either from managers, *Safeguarding Ambassadors* or the trust's safeguarding team;
- participating in multi-agency working to safeguard the child or adult (if appropriate to your role);
- ensuring contemporaneous records are kept at all times and record keeping is in strict adherence to Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust policy and procedures and professional guidelines. Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, will differ depending on the post you hold within the organisation;
- ensuring that all staff and their managers discuss and record any safeguarding issues that arise at each supervision session.

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mersey Care NHS Trust recognises that some sections of society experience prejudice and discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 specifically recognises the *protected characteristics* of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender. The Equality Act also requires regard to socio-economic factors including pregnancy /maternity and marriage/civil partnership.

The trust is committed to equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice both in the provision of services and in our role as a major employer. The trust believes that all people have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and is committed to the elimination of unfair and unlawful discriminatory practices.

Mersey Care NHS Trust also is aware of its legal duties under the Human Rights Act 1998. Section 6 of the Human Rights Act requires all public authorities to uphold and promote Human Rights in everything they do. It is unlawful for a public authority to perform any act which contravenes the Human Rights Act.

Mersey Care NHS Trust is committed to carrying out its functions and service delivery in line the with a Human Rights based approach and the FREDA principles of **F**airness, **R**espect, **E**quality **D**ignity, and **A**utonomy

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1. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

- 1.1 As a Foundation Trust, Mersey Care NHS Trust is accountable to the public, patient and staff members through the elected and appointed governors on the Council of Governors. The roles and responsibilities of a Governor require the Governors to communicate with their constituencies and attend meetings (as agreed through the Corporate Governance Team). This ensures that the public, patient and staff members are engaged in planning, delivering and improving NHS services.
- 1.2 The post of Governor of a Foundation Trust is voluntary, and it is a fundamental principle that no Governor shall receive any form of salary or remuneration for being a Governor, however, reasonable expenses should be covered to ensure governors were not out of pocket.
- 1.3 The Trust's Constitution makes the provision for reimbursement of expenses to members of the Council of Governors.
- 1.4 This policy:
 - 1.4.1 Sets the framework within which claims for expenses incurred by Governors will be processed and will set out responsibilities to ensure that claims are subject to an appropriate level of scrutiny and authorisation.
 - 1.4.2 Encourages equal opportunities by facilitating participation for all governors by ensuring that individuals contributing their views or time are not excluded due to financial restraints.
 - 1.4.3 Promotes an ethos of fairness and delivering value-for-money by making clear the appropriate level of reimbursement of expenses incurred. At all times the spirit of fairness and value-for-money will prevail.

2. OUTCOME FOCUSED AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Members of the Council of Governors have a responsibility to set high standards of ethical conduct and lead by example in embracing the Nolan Principles of Standards in Public Life. This responsibility is explicit in the Trust's Constitution. One area where Governors can demonstrate adherence to the principles of Integrity and Selflessness is associated with the submission of claims and subsequent authorisation of expenses.
- 2.2 The Trust will reimburse Governors for reasonable travel expenses incurred through participation in pre-agreed Governor Activities.
- 2.3 Claims should be proportionate, reasonable and directly related to business of the Council and it is the responsibility of Governors to ensure that correct claims are made.
- 2.4 Any expenses other than vehicle mileage must be supported by valid receipts. Failure to produce such receipts may result in reimbursement being withheld. Any expenses outside of the above must be agreed with the Chairman or Trust Secretary.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 All Governors (appointed and elected) have an entitlement to claim business expenses in accordance with Paragraph 22.1 of the Trust's Constitution. This Procedure document applies to all members of the Council of Governors equally, with the exception of the Chairman. For the avoidance of doubt, members of the

Council of Governors include; public governors, staff governors, service user governors, carer governors and appointed governors.

4. DUTIES

4.1 It is the responsibility of all members of the Council of Governors to ensure that they understand and comply with this document. Specific responsibilities in relation to the authorisation of expenses claims are as follows:

4.2 **Executive Director of Communications and Corporate Governance**

4.2.1 Over responsibility for ensuring an appropriate policy is in place and implemented in respect of Governor expenses.

4.3 **The Trust Secretary / Deputy Trust Secretary is responsible for:**

- 4.3.1 authorisation of expenses in accordance with this policy;
- 4.3.2 bringing the content of this document to the attention of new members of the Council of Governors during the induction process;
- 4.3.3 ensuring that the document is subject to periodic review;
- 4.3.4 providing advice and guidance on the general nature and level of expenditure to be incurred prior to be expenses being incurred

4.4 **Director of Finance**

4.4.1 Providing notification of any changes to the relevant reimbursement rates.

4.5 **All Governors**

- 4.5.1 Governors should;
- Submit expenses claims in a timely and accurate manner;
 - Incur only expenditure that is consistent with the Council's needs and exercise care in determining appropriate expenditure;
 - Ensure adherence with this policy.
 - Seek approval in advance by the Trust Secretary where a Governor intends to incur travel and subsistence expenses incurred whilst attending external meetings, seminars and events at the request of or on behalf of the Trust in his/her capacity as a Governor.
 - Where possible, book travel by public transport in advance and take advantage of any available special deals, to maximise cost savings;
 - Use public transport to carry out their duties where possible, e.g. standard class rail return, bus and coach. However, if necessary to use a vehicle, mileage may be claimed.
 - Ensure valid receipts are retained for any expenses incurred, with the exception of mileage.
 - Where multiple mileage claims are anticipated, keep a record of the mileage of claims submitted in a financial year, to enable the cumulative total to be carried forward on subsequent claims.

- In extreme circumstances (for example, due to physical disability/medical reasons/late evening meetings in circumstances when personal safety may be compromised), reimbursement may be considered for reasonable taxi fares and agreed in advance by the Trust.

5. CLAIMABLE EXPENSES

- 5.1 Elected governors can claim reimbursement of expenses for attending the following:
- 5.1.1 Travelling expenses (including mileage at 56p per mile, public transport and parking fees) incurred by a Governor whilst attending Governor meetings, internal seminars and events organised by the Trust to which Governors have been invited.
 - 5.1.2 Internal and external Governor training and development events
 - 5.1.3 Travelling and subsistence expenses (including mileage at 56p per mile, public transport and parking fees) incurred by a Governor whilst attending external meetings, seminars and events at the request of or on behalf of the Trust in his/her capacity as a Governor. Expenses of this type must be approved in advance by the Trust Secretary and, if necessary, can be arranged by the Membership Office through current Trust travel booking/accommodation mechanisms.
 - 5.1.4 Subsistence allowance for a single meal where the governor is away from their home for longer than five hours (including the period 12noon to 2pm) for the purpose of attending a designated meeting and where no refreshment is provided at the Trust's expense to be reimbursed to a maximum of £5 in line with Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions.
 - 5.1.5 Additional reimbursement such as an individual or representative of a group being requested to undertake specific work such as a presentation or training, including preparation and administration should be authorised by prior written agreement;
 - 5.1.6 Particular needs, such as linguistic support or specialist audio equipment, may be authorised by prior written agreement. This will be purchased directly by the Trust on behalf of the governor;
- 5.2 Where a mileage rate is claimed, the recipient, where appropriate will be responsible for declaring this income to the Inland Revenue for tax purposes and must ensure their vehicle insurance appropriately covers business use.

6. PROCESS FOR STAFF GOVERNORS

- 6.1 Staff Governors will comply with the standard Trust Policy (**HR24 Travel and Subsistence Policy**) for submission of claims for costs incurred on Council business and will be reimbursed through the standard payroll process. A drop down code will be added to their online account so that any expenses incurred as part of their duties as a Governor will be coded to the correct budget.

7. PROCESS FOR PUBLIC GOVERNORS, SERVICE USER AND CARER GOVERNORS AND APPOINTED GOVERNORS

- 7.1 Public Governors, Service User and Carer Governors and Appointed Governors are required to submit claims for expenses on official Trust claims forms. Forms should be completed in black ink with entries made in all relevant fields. A claim form is included

for reference at **Appendix A** and copies will be made available by the Corporate Governance Team at each Council of Governor meeting.

- 7.2 All claims must be retrospective and should be submitted on a monthly basis and in no circumstances should be submitted more than six calendar months in arrears.
- 7.3 Any claim for expenses incurred, other than mileage, must be supported by a valid receipt. All receipts should be attached to the claim form prior to submission. The only exception to this rule will be the amount of toll payable for using the Mersey Tunnels.
- 7.4 If a governor is receiving State Benefits, it is their responsibility to check with their local government agency whether the receipt of any expenses might affect their entitlements.
- 7.5 When claiming expenses, Governors are required to sign a claim form to certify that:
- The journeys have been undertaken by the Governor whilst attending Governor duties and that the expenses claimed are correct;
 - The Governors vehicle insurance policy (where claiming mileage) provides cover while the vehicle is used on official business including cover against risk of injury or death of passengers and damage done to property and that the policy is now in force;
 - That the car (where claiming mileage) has a current MOT certificate (if required) and has been maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's guides.
- 7.6 Governors are to submit certified claims forms for authorisation to the Trust Secretary / Deputy Trust Secretary. If these can not be submitted in person, they should be posted to the following address:
- Trust Secretary
Executive Wing
V7 Building
Kings Business Park
Prescot
Merseyside
L34 1PJ**
- 7.7 On receipt of claim forms, authorised signatories (i.e. the Trust Secretary and Deputy Trust Secretary) are to satisfy themselves that the expenses being claimed are appropriate and that forms are fully complete prior to authorising reimbursement.
- 7.8 Once authorised, claims forms will be promptly forwarded to the Accounts Payable department, for payment. Copies of authorised claim forms are to be retained by the Trust Secretary for budget / audit purposes.
- 7.9 Authorised claim forms will be validated on receipt by the Accounts Payable department and processed for payment by electronic transfer direct to the Governor's nominated bank account. Payments will usually be cleared within three working days of the payment date.
- 7.10 Reimbursement will normally be paid electronically directly into a Governor's bank account. This is the quickest and most secure form of payment. All Governors should complete the form in **Appendix B** to ensure their bank details are provided

into which their expenses will be paid, and submit this to the Trust Secretary or Deputy Trust secretary with their first claim. Governors are required to provide timely and accurate notification of any subsequent changes, and any failure to do so may result in late payment of expenses.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 The following staff have been involved in the consultant of this policy:

- HR Department
- Council of Governors
- Deputy FT Project Lead
- Trust Secretary
- Deputy Trust Secretary
- Financial Accountant

9. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

9.1 There is no formal training requirement connected to this policy. However, both the Trust Secretary and the Accounts Payable department will be available to provide advice to members of the Council of Governors in relation to expenses claims and can be contacted as follows:

Trust Secretary
Accounts Payable

Tel: 0151 471 2387
Tel: 0151 472 4008

10. MONITORING

10.1 The Corporate Governance Team will ensure compliance with this policy through checking completion of claims forms prior to authorisation and payment.

10.2 Any claims suspected to be fraudulent will be referred to the Trust Local Counter Fraud Specialist for consideration of formal investigation in line with the Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy.

Appendix A

Governor Expense Form



Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Please complete **one form for each day of carrying out your duties.**
The additional space is to be used if your duties are at more than one location on the same day.

Date Of Journey	Time of Session	Details of Journey		Purpose of Journey
		Outwards	Return	

Car Registration/ make/model	Number of Miles	Total at 0.56p per mile	Parking or Tunnel tolls	Public Transport <small>(value of receipted journey, copy of receipt to be attached)</small>	Evidence of public transport verified <small>(Staff to sign)</small>	Sundries <small>e.g. lunch/coffee must be pre approved Max £5.00 (see section 5.1.4)</small>	Total to Pay £

1. I certify that the information in this claim form is correct and only includes expenses incurred:
2. I am responsible for declaring this income to the Inland Revenue for tax purposes and that (where mileage is being claimed) my vehicle insurance appropriately covers business use

Total Claimed	£
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Signed (Governor):

Date:

Authorised (designated staff):

Date:

Approved (Trust Secretary/Deputy Trust Secretary):

Date:

Budget Code: 3NN10 Account: 34540

Please return completed forms to: Trust Secretary, Executive Wing, Mersey Care NHS Trust, V7 Kings Business Park, Prescot, L34 1PJ

Appendix B

GOVERNOR EXPENSES - BANK DETAILS

Governor Name

Payee Name (if different to above)

Address

Telephone number:

Bank Details:

Name:

Address:

Post Code:

Sort Code:

Account Number:

Form Completed by

Print Name

Job Title:

Signature:

Date:

Finance Use Only:

Requested By:

Payment Method:

Load to Register:

Cost Centre

Date:

*Payment Terms

Job Number:

Account Code