

## Car mileage guidance

### General

1. Any breaches of this scheme will result in disciplinary action being initiated, which may result in dismissal.
2. Mileage claims should be entered on the 'Mileage Claim' function on the Business Management System (BMS). Where an employee does not have access to the BMS they should enter their claims on a mileage claim form.
3. Payment of mileage allowances shall be restricted to official journeys within the County of Tyne and Wear and the areas of the County Authorities of Northumberland and Durham. Other official journeys made by car shall be paid at public transport rate. In exceptional circumstances where it is to the financial advantage of the council, heads of service may authorise the use of cars on specific official journeys outside the stated areas. These journeys should be recorded separately from normal mileage.
4. Each journey must be entered separately. Journeys to a number of locations must be broken down to a series of single journeys, each generating a one-line entry in the order travelled.
5. The purpose of each journey and the names of any passengers carried must be stated in the comments box on the BMS.
6. The mileage run (each to the nearest mile) in respect of each official journey should be entered whenever the vehicle is used on official business.
7. Mileage for journeys shall be calculated by measuring the journey by the most direct route, and where several calls are being made shall be placed to effectively minimise mileage. Any mileage claimed in excess of the most direct route for local journeys, or the agreed most effective route for longer journeys would not normally be paid without full justification.
8. Provision of the full details of all journeys is essential to enable proper justification of mileage claimed in accordance with the council's scheme, and the absence of such information may prejudice an employee's claim for payment.
9. Normal mileage incurred in travelling between an employee's home and normal place of work must not be included in claims.

10. Where an employee makes an official call en route between their normal place of work and his or her home or vice versa, the official **single** mileage between his or her normal place of work and the place of the visit may be claimed.
11. In addition where the **single** mileage incurred in travelling between the places of visit to the employee's home is greater than the normal home to work mileage, the **excess** mileage may be claimed.
12. In all cases the full details of the journeys run must be properly recorded.
13. When leaving home to work away from the normal place of work without visiting it, then the mileage relating to a home to work return must be deducted from the total mileage claimed for that day.
14. Car mileage may be claimed for employees incurring additional mileage commuting to their normal place of work whilst attending evening meetings, emergency call out and in other circumstances where an employee is required for duty outside their normal working hours subject to the prior approval of the head of service. Such journeys are classed as home to office travel and must be recorded separately from business journeys so that they are readily identifiable as income tax and national insurance contributions must be deducted at source when the payment is made.
15. Where the journey is to somewhere other than the normal place of work the journey is business travel and mileage should be claimed in the usual way.
16. Employees who are required for **emergency** call out are entitled to full mileage and must record precise mileage incurred.
17. Should an employee be required to work on what would normally be a 'non working day' and subsequently be given time off in lieu for that day, the mileage may not be claimed for home to office/office to home journeys.
18. In the case of employees qualifying for full payment in respect of overtime working in accordance with their conditions of service, home to place of work mileage in connection with such overtime should not be claimed.
19. The one-up manager **must** check all car mileage claims made by an employee and submit for payment to Payroll. For manual mileage claims these must be submitted to Payroll by no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.
20. All claims for mileage should be submitted on at least a monthly basis. Claims **must** be submitted for payment in the same financial year as the mileage was incurred, failure to do so may result in non-payment.
21. The payment of all allowances will be included in salary/wage payments and will be in accordance with the provisions of the scheme of car user allowances as approved and adopted by North Tyneside Council. The foregoing notes should not in any way be interpreted as superseding or rendering invalid any of the provisions of this scheme.
22. Rates of allowances payable will be in accordance with the N.J.C. Scheme of Conditions of Service or such other conditions as may be applicable to the employment.
23. The following are set out for the information of employees:-

- a. The council shall have the right to require an employee to carry any official passengers without any additional payment.
- b. Public conveyance must be used on all appropriate occasions; the head of service concerned must approve journeys.
- c. Employee shall not use their own vehicles on journeys where there is room in one of the council's cars or in the car of another employee making the same journey on the same business and as far as possible journeys over the same route by employees of a service area should be arranged so as to synchronise.

24. To ensure the correct payments are made, employees must keep up to date the details of all vehicles used for official journeys by providing Employee Services with all vehicle documents, including car registration document, certificate of insurance, MOT, and driving licence. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that the car tax is kept up-to-date. If an employee changes their car details it is their responsibility to notify Employee Services immediately, providing a copy of their new documents so the details can be amended. Failure to provide this information will mean individuals are unable to make claims.

## **Insurance**

25. An employee's policy must indemnify the council completely against all third party claims that could occur whenever you drive on council business.

26. Any vehicle that an employee uses on council business must be insured to cover being driven by the employee on council business (normally the business use provisions on insurance policies only cover an individual's own car when driven by the individual). When the employee drives someone else's car neither their policy nor the other persons will cover the employee for business use even if both policies include the usual business clause. As a result the employee would be totally uninsured without realising it. Employees should check this before using anyone else's car on council business (e.g. spouse/partner) and take out special insurance if necessary.

27. If an employee changes their car he or she must tell their insurance company in writing immediately. Most policies contain cover for "any vehicle owned by you". However, this applies only where the employee has been notified by the company of the car in question. If the employee fails to do so he or she could be totally uninsured without realising it.

28. If the employee has an authority car loan his or her insurance must be comprehensive. The employee must inform their insurance company that he or she has taken out a loan from the council in order to buy the car – the employee must tell their insurance company this fact every time he or she changes their car if he or she has an outstanding council car loan. The reason is that if the car is "written off" in an accident the insurance company must first settle any outstanding car loan debts before paying the remainder of the "write off" value to the individual.

## **Standard Conditions**

29. Whilst using any private vehicle on council business employees must ensure the following conditions are met:

- a. Provide a copy of the following documents to Employee Services on an annual basis:
  - i. Full valid driving licence for the class of vehicle held. In the case of plastic card licences copies of relevant paper documentation must be produced
  - ii. Insurance
  - iii. Registration

#### iv. MOT

- b. Have no medical condition/s that affect their ability to drive
- c. Not drive on council business if their ability to control the vehicle is impaired by fatigue, alcohol, drugs or eyesight
- d. Notify the council of any prosecution for an endorsable offence which will effect the use of their vehicle for council business
- e. Observe all legislation/council policy with regard to the use of mobile phones when driving a vehicle
- f. Report to the council any accident in which they are involved whilst driving on council business

30. Failure to provide relevant documentation will result in non-payment of claims submitted.

### **Car loans**

#### Disposing of or changing cars for which an employee took a council car loan

31. Whilst an employee still has an outstanding council car loan he or she may not sell, dispose or exchange their car – even to their spouse/partner – without first obtaining the council's permission. This applies even if the employee intends to change cars without requesting any additional loan (see below). The request to change cars must be sent in writing with a thorough explanation for consideration by the head of human resource unit.

32. If the employee breaks this rule he or she can be, and may well be, asked to repay immediately the outstanding loan in full (with interest accrued).

33. The employee will normally only be given permission to sell or dispose of their car where the loan has run at least two years and he or she proposes to replace the car with a car suitable for use on council business.

34. The employee may not receive a new car loan within two years of the granting of previous car loan (except in exceptional circumstances approved by the head of human resources). This applies even if the previous car loan has been fully repaid or no extra loan, above that currently outstanding, is requested. Even after the two-year period has elapsed the employee must apply if he or she wishes to transfer the outstanding car loan from one car to another.

#### Leaving the council whilst the employee still has an outstanding car loan

35. If an employee leaves the council's employment whilst he or she still has a council car loan he or she will be liable to repay in full, upon leaving, the outstanding loan (with interest accrued) unless he or she can produce evidence that their new employer will accept a transfer of their car loan.