

STAFF BUSINESS TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATION PLAN

Unique ID

NHSL

1 Procedure

Author(s)

lain Sneddon, Frima Strachan Doreen Howard,

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v 2 Doreen Howard

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1 Version Control

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0.1	Final draft approved by Staff Travel Project team	Lorna Seville Brian Swanson	25.6.15
0.2	Reviewed by Iain Sneddon & Cindy McLeod, Frima Strachan	Doreen Howard	4/1/21
0.2	Final document	Doreen Howard	5/2/21

2 General Overview

2.1 Purpose & Scope

This Plan provides guidance and direction to staff when considering NHS business travel and accommodation. It documents certain key principles and sets out ways in which NHS Lothian staff that are authorised to travel can help the Board meet its commitments to reduce carbon emissions.

This plan should be read in conjunction with the NHS Lothian Expenses Policy and General Procedure for All Types of Expenses.

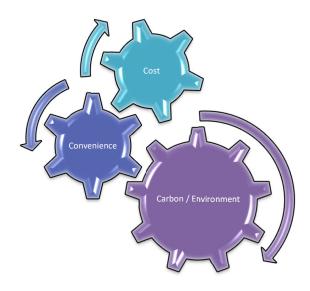
2.2 Key Principles

The Travel Plan applies to all employees and should be adhered to at all times.

While it is accepted that travel by employees is an essential element in meeting the Board's overall objectives' it is also recognised that NHS Lothian has a responsibility to ensure its staff travel responsibly and only when genuinely required doing so. Costs should be kept to the minimum consistent with the effective performance of work on behalf of NHS Lothian. NHS Lothian has a commitment to reduce its carbon footprint.

Where travel is necessary, staff should assess different journey options and give consideration to:

- **Cost:** (Financial) including direct costs (fares, accommodation, subsistence) and indirect costs (excess travel time or overtime).
- **Convenience:** including journey time, traveller comfort and safety, productivity whilst travelling, conditions of service, and the impact on work/life balance.
- Carbon footprint and other known environmental impacts.



2.3 Staff Terms & Conditions

The appropriate staff group's Terms and Conditions in respect of travel and accommodation govern mainly reimbursement of expenses incurred when staff are authorised to use their own private car and/or incur minor 'out of pocket' expenses while undertaking NHS business. While nothing contained within this plan takes precedence over the terms and conditions, this plan is intended to support the management of business travel and accommodation for all staff, taking account of a number of wider considerations.

3 Definition of Business Travel

To determine which journeys may be regarded as business travel the following rules shall apply:

- A business journey is one necessarily undertaken by an employee to carry out his or her duties for the Board, or to attend training courses or conferences necessary for the performance of those duties. Travel between the permanent workplace and a temporary workplace; or travel between home and a temporary workplace; or travel between two temporary workplaces are all considered business journeys;
- In contrast, the cost of travelling from home (or any other place the employee attends for personal reasons such as the home of a friend or relative) to a permanent place of work, is generally not claimable as this is regarded for tax purposes as "substantially ordinary commuting" and therefore a private journey. The Board will reimburse the cost of these journeys only where there is a preauthorised arrangement or where specific staff Terms and Conditions of Service provide for it.

Expenses incurred during a business journey may be reclaimed in accordance with relevant Staff Terms and Conditions of Service. Details of what constitutes Excess Travel are contained in the NHS Lothian Organisational Change policy.

4 Actual Expenditure

All claims made for NHS business travel and expenses must relate to **actual expenditure** incurred and must be supported with receipts wherever possible. Authorisers are responsible for claims paid to staff, however, Payroll (Expenses) staff have the right to exercise final control over all expenses paid which may include taking back amounts paid where ineligible, following discussions with the member of staff.

The mileage rates for use of a personal vehicle will be paid per mile in full without the need for supporting receipts (e.g. for petrol).

5 No Personal Gain

Employees should neither gain nor lose financially in relation to expenditure and reimbursement on business travel arrangements.

6 Travel Hierarchy

The NHS Lothian travel hierarchy should be followed when deciding how to travel for a particular journey, as it aims to use the following principles:

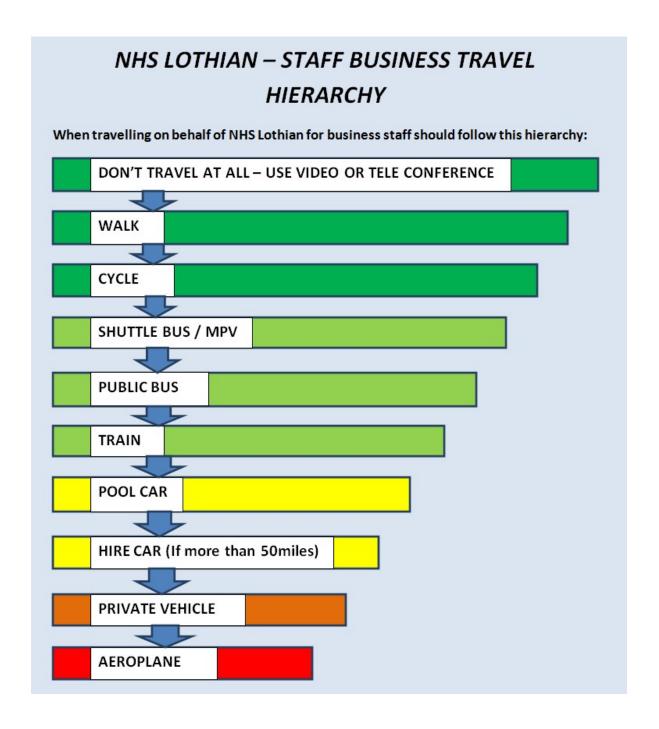
- Reduce overall business travel through use of technology
- Reduce the cost of travel to the Board
- · Increase the productivity of the workforce through increasing work time
- Reduce emissions related to business related travel

Travel avoidance should always be considered. It increases productivity, reduces costs to the Board and reduces emissions. If the journey can be avoided through a video conference / webinar, telephone conference / telephone call without materially affecting an individual employee's benefit / contribution to the meeting or event then this should be the first choice.

When travel is necessary, staff should assess their different journey options and give consideration to the following factors: cost, convenience and carbon footprint. Assessing the right mode of transport for the journey is important. NHS Lothian staff should work to the principle of lowest total cost, but be mindful of the 'three Cs':

- Staff should walk or cycle where they feel that time, convenience and personal safety allows.
- Where transport is required for local journeys, staff are encouraged to utilise
 public transport. Taxis should only be used where issues of time, convenience,
 manual handling of equipment or personal safety would make public transport
 impractical, and must be authorised in advance by their line manager.
- Public transport should be considered before private transport.
- When requesting rail or air travel staff should consider what the lowest total cost for the journey. Train journeys can allow high productivity where good working conditions are available on board.
- Journeys by car should be considered only where issues of time, cost, convenience or personal safety would make public transport impractical.
 Where appropriate, staff should share the vehicle with other staff travelling to

- the same or closely-situated destination (assuming all travellers have a genuine business need to travel).
- Single occupancy car journeys emit high levels of CO₂ per passenger and can show very low productivity. On the other hand, several staff travelling together in one car might be more appropriate than all travelling by train, particularly where this is in a leased car, pool car or hired car.



7 Booking Travel and Accommodation

Out of Lothian travel and accommodation should be booked via the Travel Team based within Financial Services, at Waverley Gate, for all staff except where it is appropriate for staff to use their own private car, leased car, pool car or hire car; and where the journey is over the cost threshold of £30 per person. This threshold has been set to avoid incurring booking charges associated with lower cost journeys. Journeys below the threshold should be paid for by the member of staff and claimed back through eExpenses.

The requirement for staff to use the Travel Team enables NHS Lothian to:

- Obtain appropriate rebates and corporate discounts from travel booked.
- Track employees' business travel and identify their location in case of an emergency or security incident, so that appropriate support can be provided.
- Track the spend pattern to identify potential cost saving opportunities in the future and maintain negotiated savings with preferred vendors.
- Record departmental carbon footprint from travel and identify potential ways to reduce CO₂ emissions.

The Travel Team will source *Value for Money* travel and accommodation solutions and offers the following services:

- Rail and air travel, routing and overnight accommodation
- Tickets and travel documents delivered to the traveller
- Worldwide 24 hour service to all overseas travellers
- Worldwide hotel bookings
- UK and overseas rail bookings
- Ferry bookings
- Conference and group travel
- Overseas travel insurance
- Pre-Paid Lothian Bus smart cards can be purchased via <u>Pecos</u> (Supplier Lothian Buses) and sent to departments.
- Pre-paid train tickets for journeys between Edinburgh and Glasgow can be purchased via the Travel Team and sent to departments.
- Rail warrants for all rail travel can be obtained from a cashier office see section
 8 below

Full details of the Travel Team can be found on the Staff Intranet at Travel

Wherever possible, and subject to business needs, travel reservations should be made well in advance to take advantage of cheaper fares or accommodation rates (e.g. off-peak, Government rates etc.).

The Travel Team operates on the basis that generic requirements should be requested using the TA01 form available on the Staff Intranet at <u>Travel</u>, leaving the Travel Team to put together a suitable *Value for Money* package to meet the stated requirements, taking account of times, distances and standards of service and accommodation

Completed authorised TA01 forms should be emailed to travel@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Where circumstances change and booked travel / accommodation has to be amended or cancelled, travellers are required to inform the Travel Team as soon as possible so that losses / additional costs can be kept to a minimum.

Authorisers, or, in appropriate cases, Site Director / Executive Directors will be accountable for spending decisions arising from acceptance of the package offered by the Travel Team through standard management accounting arrangements. However, the booking and accounting systems used by the Travel Team will be available for corporate audit and monitoring purposes in support of NHS Lothian's governance and reporting obligations.

8 Same Day Rail Tickets

The Travel Team aim to process all TA01 requests within 10 working days from the date they receive the TA01 request. For rail tickets that are required at short notice an alternative is to request a rail warrant from one of the 3 main Cash Offices (Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, St John's and Western General Hospital). The warrants can be exchange for a specific rail journey ticket at a railway station. To request a warrant a Rail Warrant Request (Appendix 3) form should be completed and authorised then presented to the Cash Office.

9 Threshold Limit - £30

The travel warrant can also be used when the cost of the rail travel is below the £30 threshold. The request form should be completed as above and presented to the Cash Office.

10 Class of Travel and Ticket Type

The following tables give guidance on the class to be used for business travel. Additional authorisation required for overseas travel – see section 12

Class of Travel by Air:

Total One-Way Flight Time	Class of Travel	Authorisation Required
Under 8 hours	Economy	Authorisers
	Above Economy	Not permitted unless under exceptional circumstance Authorisation must be by Executive Director
Over 8 hours	Economy	Authorisers
	Above Economy	Executive Director - Consideration should be given to the individual's schedule and requirement to be fit for work both outward and inward bound; however, air travel should be economy/tourist class where possible Authorisation by Executive Director is required

Class of Travel by Train:

Total One-Way Journey Time	Class of Travel	Authoriser
All day time journeys	Standard/ Economy/Saver including the use of defined journey time tickets	Authorisers
Overnight (sleeper) journeys	Above economy	Authorisers

Standard Class Advanced Booking tickets, except where it would be more cost effective to use Advanced Booking First Class tickets, should be used. This includes Restricted / Penalty Fare / Non-Refundable tickets. Open / Refundable tickets are to be used only as an exception and where essential to achieving business needs.

11 Accommodation

When employees are necessarily away from home on NHS business they are entitled to *Value for Money* hotel or other suitable accommodation. Basic standards include cleanliness, privacy, personal security and the availability of breakfast. Special requirements such as Wifi and other business services must be requested in advance.

Accommodation, breakfast and in some cases, evening meal costs are settled directly by the Travel Team. All other incidental expenses should be claimed back through eExpenses.

Hotel bills not invoiced direct to the Board must be settled by the traveller on check out and reclaimed via eExpenses with supporting receipts upon return.

NHS Lothian acknowledges that the rates stated within the Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions are at times not practicable and have set higher rates for overnight accommodation that should be more practicable within the UK which are:

Location	Budget Limit
London	£200
All Other Locations	£150
Outside the UK	£200

The rates included in the table above are inclusive of VAT and breakfast.

Additional authorisation required for booking overseas accommodation-see section 12.

Deviation from these limits must be authorised by Executive Director prior to the booking being confirmed by the Travel Team.

These rates will be reviewed annually, on 1st July, based on the reports provided by the Preferred Supplier and any increase to be agreed by the Head of Financial Control.

12 Overseas Travel

All overseas travel and accommodation must be authorised by an Executive Director or by a "Category A" approver as set out in the <u>Scheme of Delegation</u>

13 Lowest Practical Cost

Staff are required to use advance purchase restricted tickets and penalty fares / rates in order to minimise the cost. This includes accepting a reasonably flexible time window around requested departure/arrival times. It is accepted that occasionally staff may have to pay an additional fare should they miss their timed departure for unavoidable reasons.

Travellers will not be expected to take unnecessary connections or travel unreasonable distances to leave from a less expensive departure point or stay in a less expensive hotel.

14 Conferences and training Courses

Staff may be required to attend training courses in order to perform their duties effectively. The authorisation of conference/course attendance; payment of conference/course fees; and payment of the associated staff business travel and accommodation should be made in accordance with the NHS Lothian Study Leave Policy (Study Leave) and the Study Leave form completed and emailed to the Travel Team.

Travel and subsistence expenses incurred for offsite courses (over and above normal expenses for travelling to and from work) may be claimed through eExpenses.

Where NHS Lothian staff require booking a conference venue, internal options and/or the Beardmore Conference Centre should be considered first and foremost. The booking of all other venues requires the authorisation of an Executive Director and formal quotes should be sought via the Procurement Department.

15 Partner's Expenses

A partner may accompany a member of staff for personal reasons, however, partners shall not travel at the Board's expense except when their presence is required and authorised for a bona fide NHS business purpose e.g. as a designated carer to enable the employee to attend a NHS business event . In all such cases, a Senior Manager must give authorisation. Where both partners are NHS Lothian employees and are to attend a NHS business event, authorisation is required for each.

Where a partner accompanies a member of staff for solely personal reasons, the Board must not be charged more than if the member of staff had travelled alone. The partner's travel and accommodation should be booked and paid privately.

16 Holidays Linked to NHS Travel and Accommodation

An employee shall not claim any additional travel costs, subsistence or other expenses for days taken as holiday linked to a business trip.

17 Air Miles

Travel requested and booked through the Travel Team is not eligible for accrual of air miles

Staff shall not use any air miles accrued through business travel for personal use. Any such air miles must be re-used on official business or foregone.

18 Passports and Personal ID

Employees are responsible for ensuring that they have valid passports for overseas business travel and acceptable ID for flight travel within the UK.

19 Alternatives to Travel

NHS Lothian has made significant investments in video and teleconferencing facilities, with the aim of reducing staff business travel. Videoconferencing (VC) has become a standard, reliable and routine method of meeting colleagues for clinical and administrative meetings between sites.

NHS Lothian is part of the <u>National Video Conferencing Service</u> which connects over 1,000 NHS VC systems on the secure NHSS N3 data network and many hundreds more software VC clients on PCs all over Scotland. It can also connect to almost any other standard VC unit worldwide. Support is provided both locally and nationally though a dedicated distributed support team co-ordinated by a helpdesk service (Mon-Fri 8-6) and ticket logging system.

Further information regarding where the facilities are and how you can book them as well as support information, troubleshooting guides and training materials can be found on the Staff Intranet at Videoconferencing service

20 Use of Own / Leased Car

Members of staff who use their own private vehicles on Board business must have a valid licence and ensure that their motor insurance policy covers them for the relevant business use and that they have a MOT certificate as necessary, otherwise reimbursement of mileage claims may be refused or amounts paid may be suspended pending satisfactory evidence being provided to the Expenses Team.

For an employee to use their car or motorcycle for business travel purposes, it is essential that the following information is clearly recorded and kept on file by the member of staff's line manager:

- 1. Name of driver
- 2. Copy of driver's licence (including any endorsements)
- 3. Make, model, colour and registration of the vehicle
- 4. Date of registration and copy of MOT certificate if appropriate
- 5. Copy of registration document

6. Copy of insurance certificate with effective insurance cover for the relevant Business Use

Guidance on how to complete eExpenses and manual claim forms and guidance on how to register to use private vehicles for business travel is available on the Staff Intranet at Expenses Claims. You can also contact the Expenses team via the Payroll Helpdesk – you need to register/login to allow you to submit your request or view the FAQs.

Under current legislation smoking is not allowed in a car whilst travelling on business as this is now deemed to be a "place of work" especially when and if carrying other Board colleagues or external passengers. Drivers must also be aware that it is an offence to use a mobile phone when driving.

Reimbursement of mileage will be made at the relevant rates, in accordance with Staff Terms and Conditions of Service. Mileage rates are subject to change by Scottish Government instruction. Links to current rates are provided at Appendix 1. Mileage will be checked by reference to a recognised route planner website, such as provided by the AA but allowance will be made for journeys taken by motorway where a longer mileage is incurred for convenience or speed, provided this is marked on the claim.

Tolls that are necessary to achieve the goals of the trip are reimbursable.

Staff must monitor mileage undertaken in their own car. Where this mileage exceeds 3,500 miles in any 12 month period the staff member must consult their line manager to discuss the viability of alternative arrangements. Should alternatives not be viable then the staff member must seek written authority from their line manager to continue using their own car beyond the 3,500 miles and refresh this authority at least every 6 months thereafter. This authority should be held within the employee's personal file.

In accordance with the NHS Lothian Car Leasing Policy, if an employee refuses to take a lease car upon taking up a post for which the average annual business mileage is such that it is economically preferable for NHS Lothian to offer a leased car, reserve rate mileage allowance will be payable for business miles undertaken in the employee's own car. Existing employees who do not wish to participate in the scheme, however, will continue to receive their existing rate of car allowance as determined by the NHS Staff Council as long as they remain in the same post. Currently this is detailed in PCS(AFC)2013/3.

With the exception of lease, pool or hire vehicle users, where other employees or members of an NHS organisation are conveyed in the same vehicle on NHS business and their fares would otherwise be payable by the employer, the passenger allowance is payable to the driver.

The NHS Lothian Car Sharing scheme should be considered on all occasions where more than one person is travelling to the same or other locations which are on the way. Further information on the scheme can be found at <u>car sharing</u>

Staff are encouraged to adopt 'green driving' practices. Drivers should stay within speed limits, avoid over-revving engines and ensure that tyres are properly inflated.

Motorcycles, mopeds and scooters emit less CO₂ than cars, and can reduce time lost due to congestion. Where staff are properly trained and able to do so, motorcycles, mopeds and scooters may be considered as an alternative to car use.

21 Bicycles

NHS Lothian strongly supports the use of pedal cycles including e-bikes for staff business travel where staff feel that time, convenience and personal safety allow.

Employees who use pedal cycles to make journeys in the performance of their duties will require to have personal insurance in place and will be reimbursed for eligible miles travelled at the rate described in PCS(AFC)2013/3.

22 Pool and Hire Cars

If travel by car is necessary staff should aim to utilise a pool car or a hire car where appropriate, for journeys of greater than 50 miles. A list of pool cars and contacts is available on the Staff Intranet. (Transport & Travel Intranet Page)

Car hire should be used for journeys of greater than 50 miles when the first option of Pool car is exhausted, as it is more cost effective to use a hired vehicle rather than a private one. Example @ 1st Jan 2019

Journey Distance	5	10	50	60
AfC rate	0.56			
HMRC fuel rate	0.13			
Personal car claim	3.35	6.70	33.50	40.20
Hire Car cost				
Car	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
Petrol	0.65	1.30	6.50	7.80
On cost	0.13	0.26	1.30	1.56
AP Transactional Costs	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Total	14.78	15.56	21.80	23.36
Hire benefit	(11.43)	(8.86)	11.70	16.84

NHS Lothian's preferred supplier will provide a class B car (Corsa or equivalent) for approximately £12 per day plus petrol costs

Full details on how to Hire a Car on Pecos is available on the Procurement Helpdesk

23 Taxis

NHS Lothian has developed a taxi policy which aims to reduce reliance on taxis, ensure the efficient and effective use of internal resources and minimise costs to the

Board by the appropriate use of taxis and avoidance of misuse. The document defines NHS Lothian's policy in relation to the criteria for the acceptable use of taxis for business and details the relevant authorisation required to book a taxi as well as the booking procedure for taxis.

For staff business travel, taxis should only be used where issues of time, convenience, manual handling of equipment or personal safety would make public transport impractical. For example:

- It is not practical to travel to/from the location by public transport (i.e. it would significantly increase the length or cost of the journey or the staff member has significant luggage).
- There is a need to leave home before 7am or leave the location after 9pm.
- Where there are several travellers in the taxi making it more cost effective than public transport.

Prior to use of a taxi, consideration must first be given to other more economical means of travel i.e. local bus, tram, train services or lift from a colleague.

Taxis should be pre-ordered for a set time wherever possible through the process outlined in the NHS Lothian Taxi Policy.

When an employee requires to use a taxi which is not pre-booked and is an eExpenses user, all expenses must be claimed using eExpenses, supported by receipts in all cases.

Authorisation will only occur when there was no viable alternative form of transport (with reference to the Three Cs).

24 Car Parking

The Board will reimburse all expenses for car parking costs incurred whilst travelling on Board business away from the employee's normal place of work. Claims must be made using eExpenses and supported by receipts. Where no receipt is available, a note to that effect is required in eExpenses.

Claims for parking excess charges, fines, wheel clamping unlocking etc. will not be met by the Board, unless authorised by the appropriate Executive Director.

25 Local Public Transport Expenses

Local bus fares for business journeys (not home-to-office) may be claimed using eExpenses, supported by receipts. However, Lothian Smart cards can also be purchased for the department via the Pecos (supplier – Lothian Buses). This should be the preferred route as it is convenient and also reduces the need for individual expenses claims for relatively small amounts.

26 Day and Night Subsistence

A meal allowance is payable when an employee is necessarily absent from home on official business and more than five miles from their base or any NHS Lothian site, by the shortest practicable route, on official business. Day meals allowance rates are set out in the Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions of service handbook annexes.

These allowances are not paid where meals are provided free at the temporary place of work.

A day meals allowance is payable only when an employee necessarily spends **more** on a meal/meals than would have been spent at their place of work. An employee shall certify accordingly, on each occasion for which day meals allowance is claimed and a receipt should be submitted to support their claim. An explanation should be provided if a receipt is not submitted.

Normally, an employee claiming a lunch meal allowance would be expected to be away from his/her base for a period of more than five hours and covering the normal lunch time period of 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm.

To claim an evening meals allowance an employee would normally be expected to be away from base or any NHS Lothian site for more than ten hours and unable to return to base, any NHS Lothian site or home before 7:00 pm and as a result of the late return is required to have an evening meal. Evening meal allowance rates are set out in the Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions of service handbook annexes.

27 Environmental Impact of Travel

The environmental impact of the different forms of travel are summarised below. This information should be used as part of the decision making process in relation to how to travel; and feeds into the 'Three Cs' framework.

	Carbon/Environment
Walking	Lowest carbon option and healthy for the
	individual
Cycling	Very low carbon
Rail/Bus	Relatively low carbon impact, potentially
	reducing as more electricity is delivered from
	renewable sources. However, account should
	be taken of journeys to and from stations
Car with 2+	Higher environmental impact all around
People or	(carbon, NOx, infrastructure) and some issues
Motorcycles	with Duty of Care (including road accidents),
	particularly with Grey Fleet
Car with Single	As above but higher carbon and environmental
Driver	impact, particularly with some car types and
	engine sizes.
Motorcycle,	Lower carbon emissions than cars
moped or	
scooter	
Aircraft	Very high carbon impact – air travel should be
	avoided where other alternatives are viable

28 Enforcement and Consequences of Non-compliance

Travellers who do not comply with travel plan may be subject to:

- Delay in re-imbursement, or
- Withholding of reimbursement, or
- Disciplinary action may be appropriate in certain circumstances e.g. wilful or repeated non-compliance.

29 Income Tax Liability

NHS Lothian has to ensure that all payments to staff are controlled within the Payroll system and comply with legislation.

Further details on tax implications in relation to costs incurred through business travel are contained in Appendix 2.

Appendix 1 - Rates of Mileage Reimbursement

For Agenda for Change staff:

https://www.msg.scot.nhs.uk/wp-

content/uploads/Circulars/PCS%27s/PCS(AFC)2014%20-%202.pdf

For Medical and Dental Staff:

https://www.msg.scot.nhs.uk/wp-

<u>content/uploads/Circulars/PCS%27s/PCS%20Publications%20DD/PCS2008(DD)05</u>.pdf

Appendix 2 – Tax and P11D

Costs Incurred on Business

It is important that this policy and procedure is observed to avoid creating a situation where either an employee is exposed to an assessment for tax by the HMRCor NHS Lothian is exposed to a fine for incomplete or incorrect reporting and non payment of taxes.

In order to be allowable for tax purposes, any claims a member of staff makes must be for reasonable amounts and must be incurred wholly, exclusively and necessarily in the performance of the employee's duties.

Benefits-in-Kind

Income tax will be payable on certain benefits and expenses provided by the Department. These are termed "benefits-in-kind". These have to be reported direct to the tax office. The Board will do this on a form "P11D".

These forms are sent to the HMRC by 6 July following the end of the tax year in which the expenses were incurred. The HMRC will then amend an individual's PAYE code or make other arrangements to collect the tax due on these benefits. A copy of this return will be given to staff by the Board for the purposes of their tax return.

Other expenses and benefits are, subject to a few exceptions dealt with in the policy, and covered either by:

In the event of any uncertainty surrounding the tax treatment of any benefit or expense, please contact the expenses team via the Payroll Helpdesk

Appendix 3 - Rail Warrant Request

Staff's name:

Monday to Thursday

Friday

Rail Warrant Request

Please issue a Rail Warrant using the information listed below:

Details of Journey:	 			
Ticket required: Date of journey:	Return	/ single	Second Class	S
Reason for journey:				
Cost Centre	 		Detail Code:	3801
Authorised print:	signatory			
Authorised signature:	signatory			
Designation	า:			
	mail the full comple		to receive your Rail W cashiers in advance	
	Telephone	email		
Cash Office				
	22320/22323	CashOffice	.RIE@nhslothian.scot	.nhs.uk
Office	22320/22323 53668/52214		.RIE@nhslothian.scot office@nhslothian.sco	

8.30 -13.00

8.30 -13.00

13.00 - 16.30 13.00 - 16.00