



GOVERNORS' EXPENSES POLICY

General

The Education (Governors' Allowances) Regulations 2003 make provision for allowances to be paid for any expenditure necessarily incurred by individual governors or associate members when carrying out their duties. Governors should not suffer financially. They should receive all reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, including travel, meals and childcare costs as set out below. Governors cannot be paid an attendance allowance (ie payment for attending meetings) or for loss of earnings.

Why is it necessary to pay expenses?

Payment of governors' expenses is an essential element of good practice. If the Governing Body cannot refund expenses, or is unwilling to do so, some people who wish to be appointed, elected or co-opted as governors will be prevented from doing so. In turn, the school will be deprived of the opportunity to benefit from the skills and abilities of all sections of the community, not just those who can afford not to claim their expenses. A Governing Body that does not refund expenses cannot claim to be promoting equality of opportunity.

What expenses can be refunded?

- Travelling – to compensate governors for expenditure incurred by them in travelling to and from training sessions and training courses for governors, including attendance at meetings of the Governors' Forum and other more general meetings outside the school. The allowance will be at the prevailing rate advised by the LA. Full details of the amounts payable for travelling expenses are available at the school. Mileage may be claimed for the purpose of attendance at meetings of the governing body or other agreed activities at the prevailing rate advised by the LA.

Where public transport is used, the actual cost of the expenditure will be reimbursed, up to standard class rail travel. Where it is not possible to use public transport the actual cost of a taxi fare will be reimbursed. Receipts will be required.

- Subsistence – to compensate governors for the cost of meals/car parking charges if the performance of duties/attendance at training courses and other more general meetings outside the school require them to be away from their normal place of residence for a period of not less than 4 hours and/or not more than 1 day. The allowance will be at the prevailing rate advised by the LA. Again, full details of the amounts payable for travelling expenses are available at the school.
- Absence overnight from the usual place of residence – to compensate governors for the cost of meals and/or overnight accommodation if the performance of duties / attendance at training courses and other more general meetings outside the school require them to be away from their normal place of residence for a period of time of more than one day. Such duties/attendance at training courses and other more general meetings must be agreed by the Governing Body prior to the expense being incurred. The allowance will be at the prevailing rate advised by the LA. Again, full details of the amounts payable for travelling expenses are available at the school.

- The cost of child care while undertaking governors' work – governors who normally look after children as principal carers may claim for the cost of employing a registered child minder or babysitter whilst they are performing their duties. This excludes situations where the individual has a spouse, partner or other responsible adult who normally lives in the family home to care for his/her child(ren).
- Costs may be claimed for care arrangements for an elderly or dependent relative for situations similar to those for child care.
- Governors, who, as part of their duties, need to make phone calls or faxes using their own phone or to purchase stamps to send out letters, are able to claim for the cost of the calls or the cost of the stamps. Only the amount actually spent should be claimed. Receipts must be kept where appropriate; in all other cases a detailed written record should be made and submitted. It is only appropriate for the Governing Body to refund an actual rather than notional cost.

This list is not exhaustive and governing bodies should take account of their individual needs, eg provision of equipment and/or support for governors with special needs or where an individual's first language is not English.

Other Issues

The claims procedure should be straightforward – governors should not have to ask how to claim, but should be given the information on what to claim and how to do so as part of their induction. (This aspect of the induction process is the responsibility of the School Business Manager). If some governors clearly do not wish to claim their expenses, they should be able to decline or refund them to the school, but in a way which does not cause embarrassment to them or governors who do claim.

Governors should claim in arrears on a termly basis unless the amount to be claimed is substantial. Claims should be authorised by the Chair of Governors. The school's Business Manager may reasonably require governors to furnish evidence of expenditure. Evidence may take a number of forms and may include letters, receipts, bills and extracts from bills.

Governors should note that expenses in excess of expenditure count as "earnings" to the Department of Social Security or Inland Revenue. Out of pocket expenses can be set against benefit in these cases. Taxpaying governors receiving "honoraria" or "lump sums to cover expenses" rather than straight refunds of expenses incurred are regarded by the Inland Revenue as "employees" and become liable to tax on money received to cover expenses.