

Social Services Directorate

Financial Procedure

Reimbursement of Carer (Service User) expenses. (Including the Carers Involvement Framework)

Procedure

1. A sub float from Localities petty cash accounts needs to be set up and dedicated to the payment of carers/users expenses.
2. Appropriate Managers will need to identify the requirement within their own area of operations in regard to the number and location of sub floats. For example each office may have this facility on split sites, or it may be shared in buildings which have staff from different divisions or areas of work.
3. The suggested amount for each sub float is £200 but this could be adjusted to reflect the usage in each area. This needs to be in mixed amounts to ensure the correct payment can be made to the carer. Here is a suggested breakdown
 - £5.00 x 26 = £130
 - £1.00 x 50 = £50
 - £0.50 x 20 = £10
 - £0.10 x 80 = £8
 - £0.02 x 50 =£1.00
 - 0.01 x 100 =£1.00
4. Each sub-float would need a separate cash box to enable the cash to be taken to carers meetings.
5. The regulations relating to petty cash accounts would apply.
6. The relevant budget holder in each Service Division and Locality or group of staff (for example an operations or unit manager) would need to authorise appropriate officers (for example a care manager, trainer) to pay carers travel expenses from an identified budget code.
7. Before attending the meeting the manager would sign out the cashbox to the authorised officer who would then become responsible for this. The authorised officer will need to check in advance that the appropriate manger or an appropriate delegate will be available when the money needs to be signed out

8. The value of the cash needs to be checked and recorded by finance staff before it is signed out.
9. At the meeting each carer attending who wishes to claim fills out an Expenses Claims Form (SS92) with travel details and signs the form to signify that the travel expenses claimed are correct and he/she has or has not received reimbursement in regard of the claim.
10. This form is then signed by the authorised officer who then pays the cash to the carer.
11. After all expense claims have been paid the authorising officer completes the Summary Form (SS93) and then returns the Summary Form, all the Expenses Claims Forms and the cash box to the finance staff.
12. Where the claim is not reimbursed at the meeting the Expenses Claims Form must still be completed. The authorised officer certifies that the claim has not been paid and the form is then passed to the Finance staff in the Locality for processing through FINEST where a cheque would be raised and sent to the carer.
13. The cash is then checked against the summary form by the finance staff and the balance reconciled with any discrepancy being noted.
14. The sub float would be topped up to the agreed amount from the petty cash account after each meeting by a finance officer.
15. Travel claims paid in cash should relate to expenses incurred at that particular date and should not be accrued over a period of time.
16. Where an event continues for more than one day, agreement can be made for the completion of the claims form at the end of the event, but the authorised officer must ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet the expected levels of claim.
17. The maximum level of individual cash payments at one time to be set in consultation with Carers representatives and with reference to the total amount of petty cash to be held.
18. The procedure does not replace any current arrangements which Divisions may have with other organisations who set up and run events and who would ordinarily make reimbursement payments to carers/users attending. It should however give a consistent framework for payments made by these groups.

Health and safety considerations

Whilst the amount of money being carried by the authorised officer is not excessive, reasonable precautions should be taken to ensure they do not put themselves at unnecessary risk. Consideration should be given to the following;

- Put the cash box into a strong bag so that it can not be seen or easily identified as a cash box and is easier to carry. For example a rucksack, or briefcase which can be securely shut.
- If the venue is not close and a car is being used, park as close as you can to the office and the venue to minimise the opportunity for theft to take place and any strain incurred by carrying the box.
- If possible try to travel with a companion when carrying the money.
- Collect the money as late as possible from the safe and return it as soon as possible to minimise the period of risk.
- Do not leave the money unattended at the meeting unless it has been left in a secure place.
- If any attempt is made to steal the money by force the worker should not put themselves at any risk but trying to prevent the theft.

Phil Dyson, Carers Support Team – May 05