



ONR RELOCATION POLICY FOR NEW RECRUITS UK & INTERNATIONAL

Please ensure you read this carefully to understand the package available.

Eligibility

1. Relocation expenses of up to £8,000 (in exceptional circumstances this may be increased up to £15,000) will be offered to new, permanent members of staff if:

- difficulties with recruitment, or retaining new members of staff after they have been recruited, are anticipated; and
- payment represents value for money ie it is most cost effective to pay relocation expenses than to undertake another recruitment exercise; and
- costs will be contained within existing budgets; and
- the availability of relocation expenses is specified in the recruitment prospectus and in advertisement. **The approval of the Director of Human Resources, or senior manager within the ONR HR team, must be obtained before relocation expenses are offered in the recruitment prospectus and advertisement.**

2. You are eligible to receive new recruits relocation expenses if:

- you are a new recruit to ONR; and
- relocation expenses were offered in the recruitment prospectus and advertisement; and
- you are a homeowner ie you live in owner occupied or rented, unfurnished accommodation; and
- if you are an owner occupier you sell your property to take up duty with ONR; and
- your current home is not within reasonable commuting distance of your new, permanent office.

Relocation expenses will not be paid if you decide to rent out, rather than sell your existing property.

3. The decision about whether you are eligible to claim relocation expenses (and the amount you are entitled to dependent on circumstances) is made by the ONR HR team from the information provided by you both verbally and on your application form for relocation expenses plus supporting documents.

4. Relocation expenses for new recruits are aimed at existing homeowners. If you are not a homeowner but, you would experience serious financial hardship if you had to finance your relocation yourself, you should write to ONR HR with full details of your circumstances. They will decide whether, exceptionally,

relocation expenses can be paid. This may apply to international recruits in certain circumstances. ONR HR is likely to seek from the individual an estimate of costs before commitment or approval is given.

5. You must not incur any relocation expenses which you intend to claim from ONR, before you have received confirmation of your eligibility to receive them from ONR HR.

- You will be unable to claim back any expenses until you join ONR and have access to RM, where claims are submitted through for HR to authorise.

Limits

6. When claiming expenses for relocation on RM it is the individual's responsibility to keep all receipts for a 12 month period for audit purposes.

7. You are required to complete your relocation within 12 months of taking up appointment with ONR. This deadline may be extended if you are having particular difficulties and have approval from ONR HR but, relocation expenses will not be paid after the third anniversary of your appointment date.

8. From the date of your appointment, you must demonstrate to ONR HR that you are making every possible effort to complete your relocation to the new area as quickly as possible. If selling your property you must have your property for sale on the open market, and you are expected to appoint an estate agent to sell your home. You must send a copy of the sales literature to ONR HR to confirm this.

9. Every 2 – 3 months, ONR HR will ask you about the progress you have made with your relocation. The information you provide must be supported by relevant documentary confirmation.

10. Any difficulties you are experiencing will be treated sympathetically. **However, if at any time ONR HR are not satisfied that you are doing your utmost to complete your relocation, your entitlement to relocation expenses will be withdrawn.** For example, if your estate agent recommends a reduction in asking price to secure a sale, you will be expected to take their advice.

11. You will be given a month's written notice of the withdrawal of relocation expenses which will be copied to your Career and Development Manager. If, during this period, you take the necessary action to progress your move, your entitlement to relocation expenses will continue.

How and when to apply for relocation expenses

12. You must formally establish your entitlement to relocation expenses as soon as possible, but no later than 6 weeks from your date of appointment. To apply for relocation expenses you should complete the following forms "Application for Relocation" and a "signed declaration" (undertaking repayment) and send the completed forms to ONR HR, 4S3 Redgrave Court.

- Upon receipt of your application ONR HR will confirm your eligibility for any relocation package and the amount you are entitled to.

Travel to take up duty

13. You may claim the cost of travelling from your current home to the new area to start work with ONR as follows:

- travel by public transport and claim for a standard class fare; or
- use your own car and claim 15p per mile;
- cheapest flight option (if applicable).

These claims would be part of your overall allowance and falls under the category below.

Temporary accommodation and weekend visits home

14. ONR will contribute a maximum of 30% of the total relocation expenses available towards the cost of temporary accommodation and weekend visits to your old home until it is sold or, you have claimed up to the 30% ceiling. Payments are limited in this way to ensure an amount remains from the relocation allowance to contribute to the main costs.

15. For the first 5 nights after you have started work, you can choose to:

- book a hotel using the ONR hotel booking agency and claim reimbursement of your actual lunch and evening meal, during each 24 hour period, up to a maximum of £5.20 for lunch and £17.00 for your evening meal. Original receipts must be obtained for any meals claimed and the costs must be additional to your normal daily; or
- stay in a commercial establishment and claim receipted costs for bed and breakfast of up to the maximum of £93.00 per night in London or £70.00 per night elsewhere plus the actual cost of lunch and evening meal (as described above); or
- stay with friends or relatives and claim a taxable allowance of £40.00 per night.

16. After that, you can claim the actual, receipted cost of your temporary accommodation up to a maximum of £32.00 for each night you spend in that accommodation.

17. For visits to your old home at weekends you can:

- travel by public transport and claim for a standard class fare; or
- use your own car and claim 15p per mile;
- cheapest flight option (if applicable).

18. If you do not want to go home for the weekend because eg:

- you have a particularly long journey; or
- you want to use the time to look for a permanent home,

You can claim the actual receipted cost of staying in your temporary accommodation limited to either £32.00 per night, or the cost of your normal journey home, whichever is less.

Selling your old home (if applicable)

19. You can claim the fees charged by an estate agent (solicitor in Scotland). The fee is normally a percentage of the selling price, you should not agree to a fee that is higher than 2% without obtaining agreement from ONR HR.

20. You should normally only instruct one estate agent. However, if the housing market in your area is depressed and, you feel that having more than one agent would enable you to sell your house more quickly, you may instruct a second estate agent. You should discuss this with ONR HR **before** you instruct a second estate agent.

21. If further advertising is genuinely necessary to speed up the sale of your home, you may claim reimbursement of the costs involved. You should agree a budget for this with ONR HR **before** you incur any costs.

22. You may claim all usual solicitors fees incurred for the sale of your home.

Purchasing your new home

23. You may claim the cost of a:

- mortgage valuation; and
- full structural survey or home-buyers report; and
- mortgage arrangement fee (maximum £1,000).

24. If your mortgage lender refunds any fees for which you have already claimed reimbursement from ONR, you must not keep the money refunded, it must be passed on to ONR.

25. If you have not already claimed reimbursement when the fees are refunded, you must not do so. You should advise ONR HR that you have received a refund and will not be claiming for the items covered by it.

26. You may claim all reasonable solicitor's fees relating to the purchase of your new home including:

- land registry fees;
- search fees, including a mining search;

- stamp duty.

Failed purchase

27. You would normally be expected to claim legal fees only once. However, you may be able to claim legal fees for the purchase of another property if you are unable to complete the purchase because:

- you receive an adverse survey;
- there are legal complications;
- there are reasons outside your control eg the vendor withdraws the property from the market.

28. Before incurring legal fees on another property you should provide ONR HR with full details of why you cannot complete the original purchase. This should be supported by a copy of the survey report or a letter from your solicitor, whichever is appropriate.

Renting a permanent home

29. If you rent a new, permanent home, you may claim:

- the legal costs of drawing up your tenancy agreement; and
- legally chargeable estate agents fees. House agents cannot legally charge fees directly to a tenant – such fees should normally be the responsibility of the landlord.

30. You can normally make only one claim for legal fees. However, if you incur legal fees but, due to circumstances beyond your control you are unable to secure the rented accommodation, you should provide ONR with full details. They will consider whether you can claim legal fees for renting another property.

Removal and storage charges

31. You can claim the cost of using a removal company to move your belongings from:

- your old home to your new home; or
- your old home into storage and then to your new home.

32. You can also claim the cost of:

- storing your belongings until you complete the purchase of a permanent home; and
- insurance for your belongings while they are in transit and in storage.

33. If you do not want to use a removal company and would prefer to hire a van to move your belongings yourself, you may do so. You can claim the cost of the van hire and fuel costs. You must provide receipts to support your claim.

Leaving ONR

34. Before claiming any expenses you are required to sign an undertaking to repay part of the relocation expenses if you resign within 2 years of your appointment date.

35. The amount to be repaid is calculated as follows:

- Amount received x calendar months from your resignation date to second anniversary of your appointment divided 24 months.

Further information

Contact a member of the ONR HR team – ONRHR@onr.gsi.gov.uk