

## RELOCATION POLICY: NWIFCA Chief Executive Officer

### Introduction

This document sets out the North West Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (NWIFCA) policy regarding relocation. Relocation assistance may be given by the NWIFCA to help with out-of-pocket expenses incurred when an employee relocates as a result of employment with the NWIFCA. This generally occurs on joining the NWIFCA, although it can also occur if an employee changes location during employment.

To be eligible for relocation assistance, an employee must be either moving to a new base because of taking the job with the NWIFCA or taking up a new position within the NWIFCA which is outside the area in which the employee is currently working. Relocation expenses are judged on a case-by-case basis. Employees should always note that relocation expenses are discretionary and are not a contractual entitlement. The NWIFCA reserves the right to withdraw them at any time.

To be eligible for relocation assistance, the employee must, when accepting the offer of employment with the NWIFCA, be living more than 50 miles away from their new place of work and must be moving to within 50 miles of their new place of work. The employee must move to a permanent residence, which can either be purchased or rented within the area. Proof that the employee is actively trying to relocate will be sought. There is a time limit and financial assistance limit as explained below.

HM Revenue & Customs sets out a time limit on relocation. Relocation must be completed before the end of the tax year after the one in which you take up your new position. The tax year ends on 5 April each year. Your line manager at the time of offering you relocation assistance will confirm the date by which your relocation must be completed.

The maximum level of assistance provided by the NWIFCA will not normally exceed £10,000. This amount is not a lump sum but is reimbursable for eligible expenditure as described below against valid receipts and invoices.

Under exceptional circumstances and after the approval of the Finance and Personnel sub-Committee the level of assistance may be increased to a higher level.

Applicants should note that there is a tax liability associated with relocation payments of more than £8,000. These are explained here: <https://www.gov.uk/expenses-and-benefits-relocation/print>.

### House hunting

The NWIFCA will reimburse travelling and accommodation costs incurred by an employee or prospective employee in respect of a maximum of three visits of up to two days each to the area in line with the current scale of expenses paid to NWIFCA staff for travel, accommodation and subsistence. Costs in relation to travel and accommodation will be reimbursed upon valid receipts being submitted.

### Temporary accommodation

In circumstances where an employee has not been able to move home by the time they commence work at the NWIFCA, consideration will be given to the reimbursement of the costs of temporary accommodation. Typically, these take the form of bed and breakfasts and should be in line with the Reimbursement of Expenses Policy.

## Bed and Breakfast

Bed and breakfast accommodation will be allowed up to a maximum of 3 weeks, to allow new employees to find alternative temporary accommodation, which could be renting a property or staying with friends or relatives. To extend beyond the 3 weeks, agreement must be sought from the Chair of the Authority.

## Renting temporary accommodation

If approved, the NWIFCA will pay the deposit on the rented temporary accommodation. The deposit must be paid back to the NWIFCA when you vacate the property i.e. move to your new permanent home or leave our employment, whichever is the sooner. In addition, if you exhaust the time limit and have not progressed relocation, you will be asked to repay the deposit. The employee must reimburse cleaning or other deductions made from the deposit by the agent or landlord for any damages. You will be asked to sign a deposit agreement.

## Temporary accommodation whilst selling property

If the employee's house is for sale and empty whilst awaiting a buyer, or the employee's family is still occupying the house and the employee is still incurring outgoing expenses such as mortgage payments, then the cost of temporary accommodation in the area of the new place of work will be covered by the relocation allowance.

If the employee is renting out their property before or whilst trying to sell it, any rent received on the rented out property must be offset against the cost of the temporary accommodation. The difference will be covered by the relocation allowance.

If bills for services like electricity and gas are being incurred in two locations whilst property is waiting to be sold, only the bills relating to the old property may be reimbursed out of the relocation allowance. The cost of telephone calls will not be reimbursed.

## Buying and selling property

If approved, the NWIFCA will reimburse costs reasonably incurred in the buying and selling of property to relocate, as follows:

- Costs of selling an existing property, such as legal and estate agency fees;
- Costs involved in the purchase of a new property, such as legal and survey fees, stamp duty, loan arrangement costs, valuation and land registry fees;
- Connection/disconnection of gas, electricity, water and telephone supplies; and
- Removal and, if necessary, short-term storage costs including insurance. Three quotations should be obtained from removal companies and the cheapest should be used unless there is a valid reason not to do so. The quotations should be attached to the expense claim along with the invoice.

## Travelling between properties

Until relocation has been completed, the cost of travel home between the house being sold and the temporary accommodation can be claimed from the relocation allowance at normal rates.

If you are travelling from your permanent residence to work, rather than renting, prior to relocating, the mileage can be claimed from the relocation allowance and will be paid at normal rates.

Mileage from temporary accommodation to the normal place of work is not eligible for reimbursement.

## Rented to rented accommodation

If the employee has previously been living in rented accommodation before joining the NWIFCA and is intending to live permanently in rented accommodation in the area, then relocation allowance is limited to the following:

- If approved, the NWIFCA will pay the deposit on the new rented accommodation. The deposit needs to be reimbursed to the NWIFCA within three months of moving to the property. You will be asked to sign a deposit agreement;
- Any associated administration costs from the agent;
- Resettlement allowance as detailed below;
- Removal costs as detailed above in “buying and selling property”.

## Resettlement allowance

If approved, this allowance will only be paid once relocation has been completed for expenses incurred as a direct result of the move, such as the purchase of carpets and curtains. It covers any items that you have needed to replace because you have disposed of your old home and the goods used there are unsuitable for installation in your new home. The removing and refitting of domestic goods can also be reclaimed.

## Authorisation

All expense claim forms containing relocation expenses should be signed by the Chair of the Authority.

Payment of relocation expenses will normally be made directly into your bank account. Invoices can be paid directly by the NWIFCA. You must discuss this with your line manager prior to making this arrangement with the supplier. Cheques will only be issued when specifically requested and will be issued in exceptional circumstances only.

## Data Protection

The NWIFCA will process the personal data collected in connection with the operation of this policy in accordance with its data protection policy and any internal privacy notices in force at the relevant time. Inappropriate access or disclosure of personal data will constitute a data breach and should be reported immediately to the NWIFCA’s Data Protection Officer in accordance with the NWIFCA’s data protection policy. Reported data breaches will be investigated and may lead to sanctions under the NWIFCA’s disciplinary procedure.

## Repayment of allowance

In the event that you terminate your employment with the NWIFCA within three years, you will be required to repay the NWIFCA a proportion of the relocation expenses paid under this policy as follows:

