# Travel and Subsistence Guidance

## Introduction

This guidance sets out the circumstances in which the Inquiry will pay the reasonable expenses of those attending to give evidence and how to make a claim.

As travel and subsistence costs are being met from public funds strict rules will apply and you are asked to ensure that journeys are made in the most cost-effective manner possible. You may claim for reimbursement of taxi fares or parking fees, for example, only where the expenditure is justified in your claim.

The Inquiry will pay expenses on a compensatory basis as opposed to a full reimbursement basis. This means attendance expenses are capped at an upper daily rate.

The deliberate submission of a false claim is a serious offence and legal action may be taken.

## Travel

### i. Public Transport

The Inquiry will repay in full your rail or bus fares at standard rate on production of your ticket.

### ii. Private car

If you use your own vehicle, we will pay you 25p a mile. You will have to include the following information on the claim form:

* The total number of miles you travelled to and from the Inquiry.
* Your reasons for claiming the higher rate (see below, if this applies)

If you give a lift to another witness who also has to attend the Inquiry or to a person authorised to come with you to the Inquiry, we will pay you an extra 2p a mile for the first passenger and 1p a mile for every other passenger. To claim this, you will need to include:

* the number of miles each of them travelled with you
* the name of any passengers.

If you were a passenger in a companion’s car your companion can claim a passenger allowance on top of their own mileage claim.

### ****iii. Taxi****

We will only pay the cost of taxi fares if you are ill, disabled or elderly, or if you had no other available method of transport. Ideally public transport should be used to travel to Belfast and then a taxi from the relevant train or bus station.

You will need to give us the following information:

* Why you travelled by taxi.
* What the cost was.

You must attach receipts to support your claim.

## Subsistence

Subsistence is intended to reimburse you for the necessary additional costs associated with attending to give evidence to the Inquiry. The following rates will be payable upon production of a valid receipt:

Attendance time of 5 hours or less: a maximum of £4.25

Attendance time of 10 hours or less: a maximum of £9.30

Please note, if you have finished giving your evidence and decide to stay on at the Inquiry, you cannot claim any costs for that time.

## Financial Loss Allowance

A financial loss allowance is payable to compensate for any other expenditure (other than travelling or subsistence) which you would not otherwise have incurred. For example, you can only claim for loss of earnings or benefit suffered as a result of attending the Inquiry. This is subject to an **upper limit of £67.00**. You must claim for earnings/benefits actually lost.

For periods of absence (per day)

* Not exceeding 4 hours the maximum amount payable is £33.50
* Exceeding 4 hours the maximum amount payable is £67.00

Financial loss may not fully reimburse for loss of earnings. Its purpose is to provide some compensation and to relieve hardship as a result of attending the Inquiry. The period of absence includes any time spent travelling to and from the Inquiry.

If you are an employee, then your employer either with a formal headed letter or with an official stamp, must certify that actual loss has taken place; i.e. that they have not paid you for that day or that you were required to take a day’s holiday in order to attend.

If you are self-employed then please ensure that you provide relevant evidence of self-employment such as a letterhead or firm stamp, and evidence of loss where possible to support your claim.

Financial loss allowance is not payable in cases of hypothetical loss – only where a financial loss was actually incurred.

## Child Care Allowance

Claims to cover child minding costs may be submitted up to an upper limit of £67.00. Evidence must be produced if you incur additional costs for child care arrangements.

Please note that if you are claiming for child minding fees in addition to loss of earnings, the total payable cannot exceed the upper limit of £67.00.

If you do wish to claim child care allowance please get in touch with the Inquiry at the email below.

## Claims & Payments

Payment can only be made to the witness who undertook the travel. The payment method is by credit transfer. Your claims, with full supporting details, original receipts etc., should be sent to:

Urology Services Inquiry

Bradford Court

1 Bradford Court

Belfast

BT8 6RB

Alternatively it can be submitted by email to: info@usi.org.uk.

Please note that the Inquiry’s decision on payment of compensation for financial loss is final.