



## **Relocation Policy**

**December 2023**

Organisation	North Devon Council
Title	Relocation Policy
Approvals	
Owner	Head of Organisational Development
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North Devon District Council recognises that relocation can result in financial and domestic pressures to new members of staff. This scheme is to provide assistance if you move home to take up an appointment with us.

We aim to help new staff to adapt to a new area and hope to enable staff to maintain overall standards of living, however we recognise that this is not always possible especially for those moving from a low cost housing area to Devon, a relatively high cost housing area.

The relocation package is discretionary and Managers will need to discuss the matter with the Head of Organisational Development in advance of advertising/offering relocation. Before any commitment is made the dates of the move and its associated costs, must be discussed with a member of Human Resources Team.

### **Guidelines/Terms**

The maximum financial assistance payable under this scheme will be £8,000. This does not mean that there is an automatic entitlement to the full amount.

To qualify for financial assistance under the scheme, you must:

- Have to move your home to take up employment with North Devon District Council. Move from a location more than 50 miles by road from your new place of work to a location within 20 miles of your place of work
- c) Complete the move within 12 months of joining the Council
- d) Produce and attach evidence/receipts of costs incurred to support claims.

This scheme will not apply if:

- Your appointment is temporary, less than 2 years
- You do not move within 1 year of taking up your job with the Council. This may be reviewed in exceptional circumstances subject to agreement by Head of Organisational Development
- You are moving to the area to join a member of the family/partner who is already resident here
- You moved before a job offer was made to you by the Council.
- Your spouse/partner is receiving financial assistance for moving to the same residence
- You have not previously maintained your own home
- You are receiving full assistance from the government or another source in respect of your move

You will be required to repay in full the financial assistance provided under the scheme within 2 years of the start of your employment with the Council if:

- Your employment is terminated by the Council for any reason other than compulsory redundancy or
- If you resign from the Council's employment.

You will be required to repay in part, if you leave between 2 and 3 years. 1/12 of all payments received will be repayable for each month not completed.

The amount to be repaid will be deducted from your final salary payment. If such payments are not sufficient to meet the debt, you will be required to repay the outstanding balance within one month of the date of termination of your employment.

The amount due to the Council under this scheme represents a genuine attempt to mitigate the Council's loss as a result of the termination of your employment and it takes no account of any derived benefit to the Council. It is not intended to act as a penalty on you upon termination of your employment.

You must disclose to the Council details of assistance you receive from any other source in respect of the move. You will not be entitled to claim twice (from the Council and another source) for the same costs.

### **Financial assistance**

The maximum financial assistance payable under this scheme will be £8,000. This does not mean that there is an automatic entitlement to the full amount, but it may include:

#### Visits to select accommodation

Preliminary visits, up to a maximum of three visits will be reimbursed for yourself and your partner, which will be deducted from your claim, this can include mileage and overnight accommodation (3 star or similar).

#### Removal and/or Storage Expenses

Removal costs will be paid in full for normal household effects or moving from another part of the United Kingdom, but do not include contents of a second home, cars, caravans, portable buildings etc.

Three quotes are required, one of which should come from a North Devon based company. The lowest estimate should be selected but if you wish to select a higher estimate, you will be required to pay the difference between the two estimates. If you chose to carry out the removal personally, by hiring a van, please produce receipts for the van hire and fuel costs.

Storage costs will be paid for normal household effects (as per removal expenses) if you have sold your existing home, but are unable to purchase another immediately. This includes transport to and from the storage depot.

Storage payments are for a maximum of 26 weeks and will cease in any case as soon as your permanent residence is available.

#### Legal fees

Any fees incurred in the purchase of a property in North Devon, and the sale of your previous property may be claimed/

Staff carrying out their own conveyancing may claim expenses incurred; search fees, land registry charges etc. Note staff should take care to be thorough, as the Council will not take responsibility for any errors which come to light later.

Three quotes are required, the lowest estimate should be selected but if you wish to select a higher estimate, you will be required to pay the difference between the two estimates.

### Incidental Expenses

You may claim towards incidental expenses in respect of the move, not included in other elements of the scheme which are incurred directly due to the removal process. This could include:

- The cost of replacement furniture, household appliances where it is not feasible/possible to move them from your current property.
- The cost of transfer and fitting of domestic appliances; the provision of floor coverings and curtains and replacement of fitted furniture in the 'old' home and not provided in the 'new' home.

It does not include the cost of items such as linen, cutlery, crockery, tools or anything else not directly attributable to the move.

Receipts must be provided of expenditure.

These expenses can only be claimed once contracts have been exchanged and a completion date has been agreed.

### **Flexibility**

This scheme has been designed to give you flexibility to choose how you spend the allowance according to your individual needs. However, when submitting claims you must bear in mind the total costs involved in moving house and the overall allowance that can be claimed. For example, if all the available allowance is spent on lodgings than any other costs will have to met by you.

### **Relevant legislation**

The policy operates within HMRC regulations which state that, to receive exemption for the benefits provided, a claim must be made before the end of the tax year following the one in which you start your new job – a tax year runs from 6th April one year to 5th April the next. For example, if you started March 2024 you will have to make a claim by 5 April 2025.

### **Paid leave of absence**

There is no entitlement to paid leave of absence for either seeking a property or for moving into your new home. Any time off work should be taken as annual leave, time off in lieu or flexitime (if applicable to post).