



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS)

Information for patients and carers
who want to claim back costs for
transport to hospital appointments

This leaflet explains how you can claim back the cost of your travel to hospital appointments if you are on low income or receive benefits and are entitled to this.

Am I entitled to claim travel expenses?

You are entitled to claim travel expenses if you are in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Pension Guaranteed Credit
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit (WTC) with Child Tax Credit (CTC)
- WTC with a disability element or a severe disability element
- CTC but you're not eligible for WTC
- Certificate for Low Income – HC2 (full help) or HC3 (limited help) – to apply for this certificate, please complete the HC1 form: 'Claim for help with health costs', which is available from Jobcentre Plus offices or at the hospital's Cashier's Office
- Universal Credit (see HC12 leaflet for more details). **If you are in receipt of Universal Credit, you must present a copy of your Universal Credit award notice to prove your entitlement.**

You can also claim for help with travel costs if:

- You are named on, or entitled to, an NHS tax credit exemption certificate (if you do not have a certificate, you can show your award notice) – you qualify if you get child tax credits, working tax credits with a disability element (or both), and have income for tax credit purposes of £15,276 or less. You must ensure that the exemption certificate is "in date" for the appointment date/s which you are claiming for.

Patients who are not in receipt of a qualifying benefit, but are on a low income, and whose savings are £16,000 or less (or £23,250 or less if in a care home, or £24,000 or less if residents in Wales) may be eligible for assistance with their NHS travel expenses.

What documents do I need to make a claim?

To claim travelling expenses you must take the following documents to the Cashier's Office:

- Proof of appointment (text or letter)
- Claim form (available from reception or the Cashier's Office)
- Proof of entitlement (for first time claimants only, unless you've received a up-to-date letter from DWP of your benefit entitlement)
- Proof of travel costs, e.g. bus, train tickets, parking receipt

If documentation is correct, payment will be made in cash on the day. You can claim for the cost of your bus or train fair, and in some cases, your parking and mileage.

Claiming for taxi fares must be pre-agreed with your clinical team and you must have a valid reason for not travelling on public transport. If possible, we'd recommend you use a volunteer transport service, if available. For more information, please speak to the cashier.

Claims are accepted up to three months after the appointment date. If you wish to make a claim that is older than three months, please speak to the Cashier's Office about your options.

What if I don't have proof of benefit when I want to make a claim?

If you're in receipt of the benefits listed on page 2 but you don't have proof of benefit to provide to the cashier, please use the HC5(T) form and send to the address at the front of the form. Forms are available from the Cashiers Office or from the NHS Business Services Authority.

Where can I make a claim in person?

Cashier's Office

Address: Level 2, Main Entrance

Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading RG1 5AN

Open: 8.30am to 4.15pm Monday to Friday (Closed 1pm-2pm)
(Closed Bank Holidays)

You can also use this address to send your claim form in the post to receive your reimbursement via cheque.

If you have visited one of our other sites, which include West Berkshire Community Hospital / Townlands Memorial Hospital / Prince Charles Eye Unit / Bracknell HealthSpace / Windsor Dialysis Unit, please ask at your clinic reception for the easiest way to make a claim.

Making a claim by post

To make a postal claim, please send the following to the Cashier's Office (address on page 3):

- Copy of proof of appointment (text or letter)
- Copy of your proof of entitlement
- Proof of travel – tickets, etc.,

Where claims are not made in cash, patients are requested to ensure their home address is written clearly on the green expense claim form so that payment can be made via cheque.

Useful contact information

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk or contact the Cashier's Office on 0118 322 7054 or email: income@royalberkshire.nhs.uk.

Open: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.15pm (excluding Bank Holidays).

The advice line contact details for the NHS Business Services Authority is 0300 3301 343.

You can also visit: <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/check-if-youre-eligible-help/getting-benefits#jumplink2> or refer to the HC12 leaflet which you can collect from the Cashier's Office for more information.

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Cashier's Office, April 2024. Next review due: April 2026.