

## INFORMATION FOR RELATIVES

### ASSISTED VISITS SCHEME FOR SECURE CHILDREN'S HOMES

This document provides information for parents and carers of sentenced young people in Secure Children's Homes (SCH's). You may receive help with the cost of visiting your child and this leaflet explains what you may claim and how to claim it.

#### What you may claim

- The cost of a weekly visit (1 visit every 7 days) for either a social visit or for a review.
- A contribution towards petrol costs from a home address to the SCH or Carlford Unit.
- Toll fees
- Train and bus tickets. When traveling by public transport tickets all receipts must be retained and attached to the AVS2 claim form as proof of expenditure. Failure to provide these could result in payments being restricted or refused. Alternatively, train tickets may be available in advance from your Youth Offending Team (YOT) office if you give them at least 3 working days notice.
- A contribution towards refreshments.
- Taxi fees will only be paid for those with a medical condition; a Doctor's note will be required, and if public transport is not available.
- Overnight stays if required.
- A discretionary payment may be authorised for a registered childminder to take care of young children while relatives attend the establishment.

**Remember to always book your visit with the Unit before traveling.**

#### Who can claim?

The following is a list of those who are eligible to apply for assistance. There is no means testing requirement.

- Parents (including step, foster and other carers)
- Grandparents
- Aunts and Uncles
- Siblings (including step and foster)

Friends and cousins are not covered by the scheme.

Up to two adults (aged 16 or over) and up to three children (aged 15 or below) may be included on each claim.

### How to claim

Complete the AVS2 form and send it to your YOT office together with any tickets and receipts. If you require a train ticket in advance, contact your YOT office and they may be able to provide you with tickets.

## **Rates**

### **Car allowance**

- A fixed mileage rate of 12 pence per mile can be claimed. This is based on the shortest route, obtained from an online AA or RAC route planner, i.e. no diversions or side trips will be subsidised, unless the diversion is to pick up another visitor from a separate address.
- When sharing a car with somebody else who is claiming, the claims should be sent together.
- Toll Fees will be paid

### **Meal allowance**

A contribution towards meals taken during the trip at the following rates:

- Over 5 hours (adults and children over 3 years old) £2.55 each
- Over 10 hours (adults and children over 3 years old) £5.10 each

Receipts are not required for this payment.

If a visitor has a medical condition that requires they travel with an escort, the escort's expenses will also be paid at the rates above. A Doctor's note will be required to evidence this.

### **Overnight**

If a journey is of such distance that an overnight stay is required, your YOT will be able to book a B&B for you (from approved suppliers). These suppliers should invoice the YJB directly, so no payment will be required from the visitor(s). You can also claim an allowance on over night visits at the following rates –

#### **London and SE**

£25.50 (maximum) per adult per night

£13.80 (maximum) per child per night

#### **Elsewhere**

£18.00 (maximum) per adult per night

£9.00 (maximum) per child per night

Receipts for an overnight stay are required, we will pay actual or up to the maximum rate as stated, whichever is the cheaper.

### **Child-minding**

The costs of a registered child-minder to care for the children of someone who is visiting a young person can be claimed. To claim this we need the following:

- Name of child-minder
- Their address
- Registration number
- Name and address of the local authority they are registered with
- Rate charged per hour

Confirmation of these details will be sought from the child-minder before any payments are authorised.

### **TO MAKE A CLAIM**

- Complete the AVS2 form in full. You should have written something in every part of the form (parts 1 – 7)
- Sign the declaration that all the information you have written is true, remember checks are taken that visits have been made
- Send your claim to your local YOT office as soon as the visit took place (preferably within 10 days as this form needs to then be passed to the YJB within 28 days of the visit). If any later, payment will not be made.

### **CANCELLATIONS**

- If you cancel a visit and train tickets have been issued these must be returned to the YOT office as soon as possible, otherwise future train tickets may not be provided.

### **NOT AUTHORISED TO CLAIM**

- Claims cannot be made through the YJB for young people who are on Remand.
- Claims cannot be made for the collection of young people from the establishment.
- Taxis, social services drivers and volunteer drivers can only be paid for if there is a medical reason and you have a doctor's certificate or a note is provided.