



# Ordinary Commute Policy

February 2023

**BOOKER**

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## What is ordinary commute?

Ordinary commute is your journey to and from your normal place of work. Your normal place of work is anywhere you go on a regular and permanent (permanent being more than 12 months) basis to carry out your normal work duties – this is defined by HMRC. In most circumstances, you cannot claim any travel costs for your ordinary commute. This not only applies to fuel, but also to train, plane and bus fares.

The commute is based on how often you visit the same location and annual leave is factored into this. You may visit differing people at the same location, or you may visit the same location regularly for only a couple of hours, in both scenarios this would still be classed as an ordinary commute.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you comply with the 'Commute rules' when completing your normal mileage return. We will conduct regular audits to ensure that there are no unintended infringements. Managers are expected to review their teams mileage to ensure compliance.

There is also a requirement for both the Manager and colleague to ensure that the correct normal commute locations are entered into SAP.

### 1. What is classed as a permanent workplace?

It is usually clear whether or not a location is your permanent workplace (and, therefore, whether a journey to or from that place is ordinary commuting). A place is a permanent workplace if you attend it regularly to perform your duties of employment, and it is not a temporary workplace (see Section 7).

You attend a workplace regularly if your attendance is:

- Frequent (At least once a week, it does not have to be the same day each week)
- For all or almost all of the period for which you hold or are likely to hold that employment

It's possible that you may have two or more normal workplaces depending on your working arrangements.

### 2. Roles with one normal workplace

If you have one normal place of work, travel to and from this location is your ordinary commute and cannot be claimed for.

#### **For example:**

**I work in Haydock DC and travel there from home five days a week. I cannot claim any of my journeys to or from Haydock.**

### 3. Roles with two or more normal workplaces, Dual located or multi-sited roles

If you have more than one normal place of work, travel to and from any of these locations is your ordinary commute and cannot be claimed for or supplemented.

#### **For example:**

**I am based in the Equity office, but I travel to Eccles every Monday and Deeside every Wednesday. All three of these locations will be my normal place of work and I cannot claim any of my journeys to or from them.**

**I am based in the Watford office, but once a week I work from High Wycombe. I don't work from High Wycombe on a set day each week, it can depend on which day is most suitable, High Wycombe is still a normal place of work and I cannot claim for my journey to and from here as it is my ordinary commute.**

**In my role I look after four different branches in my area. I visit all four of these branches once a week in order to perform my duties. Journeys to and from home to these sites cannot be claimed for or supplemented, however my travel in between these sites can be claimed for. E.g. I look after Avonmouth, Bristol, Bath and Trowbridge branches. I cannot claim for my travel to and from these branches to home, but when I travel to Avonmouth and then on to Bristol in the same day, I can claim for my journey between Avonmouth and Bristol, but not from Bristol to home.**

A normal place of work doesn't just apply to our offices or branches, it can also apply to suppliers, if you visit a certain supplier on a regular and permanent basis.

**For example:**

**I work in Quality Control and as part of my role I visit one of our suppliers every Friday in order to carry out the duties of my role. I have visited this supplier on Fridays for the past 18 months. As I visit this location on a regular and permanent basis it is a normal place of work, therefore my journey to and from here is an ordinary commute and cannot be claimed for.**

If you have one or more normal place(s) of work and travel to a different location for a temporary business purpose and a limited duration, travel from home to the different location can be claimed for.

Being cost conscious, we don't expect you to claim if your journey is shorter than your ordinary commute and/or it costs less. Effectively you are already saving money on your journey.

**For example:**

**I am based in the Wellingborough DC, but I attend a training day at the Northampton branch. I can claim all of my journey to and from home and the Northampton branch, as this is longer than my normal commute to Wellingborough. When I attended a training day at Kettering, this journey was much shorter than my normal commute to Wellingborough, therefore I didn't claim for the journey.**

**I am based in Hatfield DC and I need to attend a meeting in Equity. I have only been to the Equity offices once before, therefore it is not my normal place of work. I can claim my travel, train fare or bus fare to and from the Equity office.**

## **4. Regionally/Area based roles**

If you are regionally/area based, your normal place of work will be your region/area. Any travel within your region/area can be claimed for, unless it is to a normal workplace. If you are regionally based and live outside of your region/area, we have agreed with HMRC that travel to and from the closest site/store in your region/area cannot be claimed for. (This may not be your normal place of work) This amount of miles must be deducted from any other claims you make when travelling into your region.

### **a. You live within your region**

If you live inside your region and do not have a normal place of work, any travel to Booker sites can be claimed for.

If you live within your region and have a normal place of work/base office within your region, then travel to and from this location cannot be claimed for, as this is ordinary commute.

**For example:**

**I live within my region, which is Region One. My normal place of work is Falkirk and I cannot claim my journeys to and from this store as it is my ordinary commute. When I travel to other stores within my region, which are not a normal place of work, I can claim for these journeys.**

If you live within your region and have a normal place of work somewhere outside of your region, then you will not be able to claim for this journey.

**For example:**

**I live within my region but attend a team meeting on a fortnightly basis in a set location outside of my region. I can claim for this journey as this would be regarded as a temporary workplace. However, if the team meeting was on a weekly basis, I would be visiting this location on a regular and permanent basis and therefore I cannot claim for the journey as it would be classed as my ordinary commute.**

### **b. You live outside your region**

If you live outside of your region and are travelling into your region to visit a third party or Booker location, we have agreed with HMRC that you cannot claim for any travel from your home to the nearest Booker site within your region and this particular journey will be deemed as your ordinary commute. When you travel to another location within your region, you must deduct this ordinary commute from the mileage you are claiming.

**For example:**

**I live outside of my region and my journey to the nearest Booker Branch/site in my region is 26 miles, this is my ordinary commute. I travel from home to a different branch in my region, which is 118 miles away. I cannot claim for the first 26 miles, meaning my claim would be 92 miles (118-26 = 92). I would make the same deduction when travelling home.**

If you live outside your region and visit a location outside of your region on a regular and permanent basis to perform your work duties, then you will not be able to claim for this journey.

**For example:**

**My region is Region 3, but every Monday I attend a team meeting in Equity for four hours. Therefore, on a Monday, Equity is my normal place of work, and I cannot claim for my journey to and from Equity.**

## **5. Nationally based roles**

If you are nationally based, i.e. your role covers the whole of the UK, all of your travel to third parties and Booker locations (other than to and from a normal place of work e.g. Watford Office) can be claimed.

**For example:**

**I am nationally based and do not have a normal place of work. On Monday I travel to a store in Leeds, on Tuesday I travel to a store in Scarborough, and on Wednesday I travel to a store in Bristol. I can claim all of my journeys to Booker locations or third parties as none of them have a set pattern or regularity and therefore are not my ordinary commute.**

**I am nationally based and once a week I work from the Northampton branch. This is a normal place of work for me and I cannot claim my journey as it is my ordinary commute. During the rest of the week, I travel to different Booker sites around the country, with no set pattern or regularity. I can claim all of my journeys to these sites as none of them are my ordinary commute.**

**However if I have more locations that I visit on a weekly basis, I cannot claim for these as they would be classed as normal daily commute.**

## **6. Temporary workplace**

A location is a temporary workplace if you visit there only to perform a task of limited duration, or for a temporary purpose, even if you are visiting it regularly, i.e., weekly, as long as this is for a period of less than 12 months. This also applies to you if you are on secondment to a different location for less than 24 months, working on a project, covering someone else's role etc.

**For example:**

**I work in Hatfield DC but I'm currently working in Hemel Hempstead DC for 10 months in order to work on a project. Even though I am attending the Hemel Hempstead site on a regular basis for 10 months, the project is a task of limited duration and temporary purpose and therefore I can claim my commute from home to Hemel Hempstead, unless it is closer than my normal ordinary commute. Hatfield would still be classed as my normal place of work. If I visit Hatfield during my time on the project, I cannot claim for this journey.**

## **7. When does a temporary workplace become a permanent workplace?**

Where a temporary location becomes permanent, travel becomes ordinary commute.

If you are working at a location for a period of continuous work which lasts, or is likely to last, more than 12 months then this would be classed as a permanent location. A period of continuous work is classed as a period of work where duties of the role are performed to a significant extent at a workplace. HMRC class a 'significant extent' at a workplace as 40% or more of your working time spent there.

This means that where you have spent or are likely to spend 40% or more of your working time at a particular workplace over a period of 12 months, it will be classed as a permanent workplace.

**For example:**

**I work in Peterborough but I'm also working on a project in Wellingborough DC on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays for 18 months. Because I spend more than 40% of my working time at Wellingborough over a period of more than 12 months, Wellingborough is also a permanent workplace and I cannot claim for my journey as it is my ordinary commute.**

However, secondments are an exception to this. Your secondment duration can last up to 24 months before being classed as a normal commute. The location will cease to be a temporary workplace from the date the expectation of the length of secondment changes.

**For example:**

I am currently on secondment from Chester branch to Liverpool branch and have been for 17 months of an 18 month secondment. I have been claiming for my journey from home to the Liverpool branch. Yesterday I was told that my secondment would be extended by a further 10 months. From this point onwards I can no longer claim my journey to Liverpool as the secondment will last for more than 24 months and therefore is classed as a permanent place of work.

**Guide info**

Version No.	Date of change	Summary of change
1	February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>New guide</li></ul>

**Guide owner:**

Human Resources

**Ownership and confidentiality**

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## Frequently Asked Questions

- Q** - If I am only visiting my regular place or work 35/40 per year, would this still be classed as my regular place of work as I am not going to it every week?
- A** - This would still be classed as your normal place of work even if you miss some weeks in the year due to other commitments, as in the main it is still your normal place of work.



## Appendix 1 - Commute type & what you can claim for

Commute Type	Description	What is your normal place of work and what can you claim for
National role	You travel the country and do not have a defined region or area	You can claim for all journeys as they are not a usual place of work unless you visit the same office at least once a week, in which case this cannot be claimed for.
Regional/Area role	Living OFF region  e.g., regional support team, BRP RDM	You cannot claim for travel to the nearest branch on the region. You can claim for travel to other sites less the normal travel to the nearest site if not visiting your closest location. You can claim any mileage you complete after visiting your normal base.
Regional/Area role	Living ON region  e.g., Regional support team, BRP RDM	You cannot claim for travel to your normal base or office if you visit it on a weekly basis. You can claim for other business journeys as long as you do not visit them at least once a week. (If your normal daily location is off region, you cannot claim for it). When you travel to other branches on the region you can claim for all travel from home.
Single Site	Office, DC or Branch based.  e.g., CDM, RDM, AM	Cannot claim mileage as this is seen as your ordinary commute. If you visit a customer or a supplier en route this does not mean that you can then claim for the mileage to your normal place of work. You can claim the distance to a customer to and from the branch if you visit during the day.
Dual or Multi site role or roles with two or more workplaces	You are responsible for two or more locations, or you travel to two or more sites at least once a week	You cannot claim for your nominated locations if you visit them at least once a week. If you visit another location (which may be one of your normal commute's) on the same day then you can claim the mileage minus the travel to the first site. You can claim for meetings or site visit to a location that you do not visit on a regular basis as usual.
Temporary Workplace	You are working at the location for a period of less than 12 months	If you are covering someone's role or working on a project etc you can claim your daily travel from home up to 12 months. After this time, it becomes a normal daily travel.
Secondment/Temporary Workplace	You are on secondment to a location for a period of less than 24 months	If you are on secondment, you can claim your daily travel from home for a period that does not exceed 24 months. (Should you have completed 19 months and then be extended for a further 6 months, you are then unable to claim normal daily travel from that point in time, due to your secondment period now being beyond 24 months).
Other	I am dual sited (work regularly in two locations) and my business journey is shorter than my normal daily commute	Being cost conscious we do not expect you to claim for this journey.
Other	I am dual sited (work regularly in two sites), and my business journey is longer than my normal commute	You would have to take off normal daily travel before claiming for the business trip.



Other	I rotate my meetings within a small proximity on a weekly basis	If your meetings are in sites within 10 square miles of each other, they would be classed as an ordinary commute and cannot be claimed for.
Other	My meetings are only for a couple of hours with a supplier each week.	This would be classed as your normal daily commute due to your weekly visit. It is based on the regularity of the visit rather than the length of time that you are there.
<p>* A normal place of work or ordinary commute is a site that you visit at least once a week. It is possible to have multiple sites that are classed as an ordinary commute or usual work place.</p>		
<p>* Any breach of policy could lead to the colleague being treated as receiving free fuel in addition to being taxed for the car. Free fuel BiK is calculated, currently by: Your car's CO2 emissions x the fuel benefit charge (currently £25,300) x your income tax bracket.</p>		

- **Please note that it is the Drivers responsibility to determine that they are using the correct category.**