



Truth Recovery Independent Panel
Seeking the Truth

Protocol On Testimony Participant Expenses

Introduction

1. This Protocol outlines when the Truth Recovery Independent Panel (“Independent Panel”) may cover the costs of expenses you incur as a result of giving testimony to the Independent Panel, such as travel and other incidental expenses.
2. This Protocol will not necessarily cover every eventuality that may arise. The Independent Panel may need to depart from the Protocol in the interests of fairness.
3. This Protocol may also need to be amended in the course of the Independent Panel’s work; in which case the amended version will be published, at the earliest opportunity, on the Independent Panel’s website.

Provisions

4. A person may request that the Independent Panel cover the costs of their expenses only if they provide oral testimony to the Independent Panel in-person.
5. The Independent Panel will not cover any financial loss incurred by a person as a result of providing testimony. A financial loss means any expenditure, other than travel and permitted subsistence, which a person would not otherwise have incurred. This includes, but is not limited to:

- i. Loss of earnings.
- ii. Child / dependant care allowance.

6. In deciding whether to cover the cost of expenses, and the amount of any award, the Independent Panel will act with fairness and with regard to what is reasonable.

Travel Expenses

7. The Independent Panel will consider paying travel expenses for persons providing oral testimony to the Independent Panel in-person, where the Independent Panel considers it reasonable to meet those costs.

8. If a person giving testimony requires a companion to accompany them (such as a support-worker or family member) then that person's travel expenses may also be reimbursed by the Independent Panel where it is considered reasonable to do so.

9. In considering whether it is reasonable to pay for travel expenses, the Independent Panel will consider the individual circumstances of the applicant, whether the costs were properly and reasonably incurred, and whether the costs are reasonable and proportionate in their amount.

10. The Independent Panel will not normally pay for overnight accommodation, unless there are exceptional circumstances which justify this. Any person wishing to make an exceptional claim for overnight accommodation must contact the Independent Panel to seek approval **before** incurring the cost. The Independent Panel will not reimburse the costs of overnight accommodation where prior approval has not been obtained.

11. All claims must be made within one month of when the claimant provided testimony to the Independent Panel.

12. As any payment of travel expenses by the Independent Panel will be met by public funds, journeys should be made in the most cost-effective manner

possible. The use of public transport is encouraged. How to make a claim depends on the method of transport used.

i. Public Transport

The Independent Panel will usually repay, in full, a rail or bus fare at a standard rate upon production of a ticket to the Independent Panel.

ii. Private Car

If you wish to make a claim for travel expenses and you have travelled by private car, you must submit a claim using the form in Annex 1.

The Independent Panel may reimburse parking fees which are incurred whilst a person is providing testimony. Any claim for parking fees must be supported by a receipt.

iii. Taxi

If you wish to make a claim for travel expenses and you have travelled by taxi, you must submit a claim using the form in Annex 1. The Independent Panel will usually only pay the cost of taxi fares if the person giving oral testimony is ill, disabled or elderly, or has no alternative means of transport. Receipts must be attached to support a claim.

13. The rate at which mileage can be claimed is set out below:

| Rate of Mileage Allowance Payable for the Use of Private Vehicles (Rate per mile) | |
|--|-----|
| Motor Cars (including Electric Cars) | 45p |
| Motor Cycles | 24p |
| Pedal Cycle | 20p |

Subsistence allowance

14. Subsistence allowance is intended to compensate for necessary additional costs associated with giving oral testimony to the Independent Panel in-person. A claim for subsistence allowance must be made by completing and submitting the claim form in Annex 1.
15. Should the Independent Panel accept a claim for subsistence allowance, the claim will be paid in-line with the rates laid out below:

| Day subsistence rates | Increased Ceiling Rate (from 1 February 2024) Up to a maximum £ |
|---|--|
| More than 5 hours and also more than 5 miles from your home address, subject to the production of receipts. | 6.50 |
| More than 10 hours and also more than 5 miles from your home address, subject to the production of receipts. | 10.00 |
| More than 12 hours and a breakfast was necessarily purchased, subject to the production of receipts. | 16.50 |
| Overnight meal allowance – subject to the production of receipts. | 25.00 |
| Overnight accommodation/Night Subsistence Bed & Breakfast - ROI and Central London (i.e., 5 miles from Charing Cross). <u>All</u> overnight accommodation must be booked through Departmental Travel Booking team, without exception. | 150 |

16. **Receipts must be attached to support** a claim for subsistence allowance.

Other costs

17. A person who thinks that they will incur, or have incurred, costs which are not covered in this Protocol, should contact the Independent Panel. The Independent Panel may request such further information as is considered necessary to assess any claim.

Submission of claims

18. To submit a claim, please complete the relevant form in Annex 1 and send it, along with supporting documents (such as receipts), by email to testimony@independentpanel.org.uk Alternatively, it can be sent by post to:

FAO Truth Recovery Independent Panel
4th Floor
Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast
BT2 7DP

Payment

19. All payments will be made by BACS transfer.

Point of contact

20. Any issue arising from, or query relating to, this Protocol should be addressed to the Independent Panel using the following email address:
testimony@independentpanel.org.uk

Annex 1 – Travel & Subsistence Claim Form

Section 1 – Applicant Information

| | |
|--|--|
| Applicant Name | |
| Address | |
| Phone Number | |
| Email Address | |
| BACS details (Sort Code and Bank Account and address of Bank) | |

Section 2 – Travel Expenses

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| Journey by motor vehicle | | |
| Date of testimony | Journey (from – to) | Miles |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Journey by public transport | | | | |
| Date of testimony | Mode of transport | Journey (from – to) | Amount Claimed | Receipt attached (Y/N) |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Section 3 – Subsistence Claims

| Date of testimony | Description of Expense | Amount Claimed | Receipt attached (Y/N) |
|-------------------|------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
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