

## Cancelled Holidays – UKPGE 2024

Previously, the Cabinet Office recognised that some core team electoral services personnel in local authorities had to cancel planned holidays at personal expense, following the announcement of unscheduled general elections. The Cabinet Office agreed to reimburse the cost of these cancelled holidays in certain circumstances to acknowledge that early elections were less likely to occur under the Fixed Term Parliament Act (FTPA) 2011. For the UK Parliamentary general election on 4 July 2024, we will consider reimbursement of core electoral services staff for losses incurred because of cancelling or rearranging their holiday plans as a result of the General Election being called at short notice.

### What can be considered?

We will consider costs for electoral services staff where their booking is affected as a result of the General Election being called at short notice. This would apply only to permanent members of a local authority's core electoral services team, and only when the costs were incurred directly as a result of short-notice cancellations or changes to holiday/flight/travel plans booked and paid in advance of the announcement for a snap election with travel due during the period of the election.

We will extend this provision to cover immediate family members of permanent local authority core electoral services staff who are on the same booking. This additional provision will not apply in the event of separate bookings.

In the event of a group booking the full costs will be divided by the total number of individuals (including children over the age of two, for infants only the relevant fees will be taken into account) named on the booking then pro-rated by the number of claimants. We also expect individuals to use their own insurance policies in the first instance to seek any refunds and to exhaust that route (if applicable) before seeking reimbursement via the RO. The costs of cancelling a holiday (should an insurance policy not cover this) would be claimable, as would any administration fees associated with changing existing bookings and any insurance excess payable for claiming through own travel insurance.

In the case of the holiday being rearranged this will only be considered for like-for-like bookings i.e. the same number of nights, board basis, accommodation type etc. Any reimbursement for rearranged holidays will be capped at the cost of the original holiday.

We will consider any such claim on the individual circumstances and all such reimbursements will need to be supported by evidence/receipts and a separate form will need to be completed by the relevant member of staff and signed by the Returning Officer before being submitted to the Elections Funding team with the relevant evidence (see list below).

Out of pocket expenses and other cancelled events are not claimable.

### Evidence likely to be required in support of a cancelled holiday claim

The following is a non-exhaustive list of evidence that may be required by the Elections Funding team to process cancelled holiday claims. For more information, please contact the funding team at [ROCH@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:ROCH@levellingup.gov.uk).

To avoid delays, please ensure that all documentation is submitted along with the claim.

- Original booking confirmation
- Proof of payment (receipts, bank statement, E-Tickets/original tickets)
- Cancellation email/invoice
- Evidence of any insurance excess paid
- Evidence of any travel insurance held and confirmation if this covers work-related cancellations
- Confirmation of new booking if the holiday has been rearranged
- New booking confirmation/invoice (including evidence of any admin fees paid and additional costs incurred in rearranging the holiday).

Note that other evidence may be required by the Elections Funding team if relevant to your claim.

It should not be presumed that any holiday or event which is impacted by a poll being called at short notice will result in cancelled costs being reimbursed by the Consolidated Fund. Where possible and in particular for by-elections, ROs should in the first instance look at alternatives such as sourcing staff from nearby elections teams or bringing in other experienced people so that a considered discussion can be had instead of requiring staff to cancel or rearrange their holidays.