

Standby and call out policy

Author: Helen Ginty

Contact: x8294

Version: 2.7 (published)

Last updated: August 2025

Document History

Version	Date	Notes	Prepared by
1.0	2010		
2.0	September 2016	Changes to 5.1, 9.4, and 9.2 hours	S Martin
2.1	July 2021	Format change to fit accessibility standards	H Ginty
2.2	December 2021	Standby rates updated (section 5)	H Ginty
2.3	May 2022	Standby rates updated (section 5) wef 1.4.21	K Williams
2.4	January 2023	Standby rates updated (section 5) wef 1.4.22	H Ginty
2.5	January 2024	Standby rates updated (section 5) wef 1.4.23	H Ginty
2.6	October 2024	Standby rates updated (section 5) wef 1.4.24	K Williams
2.7	August 2025	Standby rates updated (section 5) wef 1.4.25	H Ginty

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Purpose of the policy	3
3.	Scope of the policy	3
4.	Definition of standby	3
5.	Payment of standby	3
6.	Operational requirements - standby	4
7.	Standby eligibility	4
8.	Definition of call out	4
9.	Payment of call out	4
10.	Compensatory rest	5
11.	Mileage claims	5
12.	Telephone call /online claims	6
13.	Managers responsibilities	6
14.	Employee's responsibilities	6

1. Introduction

We aim at all times to treat our employees fairly and consistently. This policy has therefore been written in order to ensure that all employees required to take part in standby rotas as part of their role, and respond to call out duties, are treated consistently across the council.

2. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of the policy is to inform all employees of:

- the current rates of pay for standby duties
- the current rates of pay for call out duties
- who is eligible

3. Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all employees, except those employees in schools on delegated budgets or staff employed on teachers' conditions of service for whom there are alternative procedures. Also excluded are JNCC graded officers. This policy supersedes any existing or previous local agreements relating to standby and call out payments.

4. Definition of standby

Standby exists when there is a planned regular rota for employees, which exists to deal with out of hours emergencies. Standby refers to the provision of services outside of normal office hours. In order to deal with emergency telephone calls outside normal working hours, we require certain employees or groups of employees to either remain:

- at home
- in close proximity to a mobile phone or laptop

Departments should ensure that there is a sufficient number of employees with a standby clause in their contract to ensure an effective service is provided. Employees who form part of a standby rota must be able to arrive within timescales as specified by their manager to meet services' requirements.

5. Payment of standby

5.1 Standby rates, with effect from 1 April 2025, are as follows:

Whole week (normal)	£151.57
Monday to Fridays	£17.57 per day
Saturdays	£27.27
Sundays	£36.38
Public Holidays*	£86.50

*Public Holidays will include Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day when they occur on a Saturday or Sunday. However, it will not be possible for an employee to claim these days and the recognised substitute public holidays should they be covering the whole Christmas and New Year period. Therefore, only a total of three public holidays could be claimed in total.

5.2 The standby payments shall be updated in accordance with the annual pay award (Administration Committee 7 July 2008) and schedules amended accordingly. Standby payments are normally contractual, see paragraph 7. Standby payments are pensionable.

- 5.3 Contractual rostered standby payments will not be taken into account for the purpose of calculation of payments for sickness and holidays, except when sickness or holiday would have corresponded with the period of standby.

6. Operational requirements - standby

- 6.1 When taking annual leave which coincides with their rostered standby staff must:
- arrange cover
 - alert their manager to the need to adjust their standby payment or agree to cover a colleague's standby period
- 6.2 The standby period will start at normal finishing time on one day and end at the normal starting time on the next day. Standby on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays will run from the equivalent of normal starting time on each day for a period of 24 hours.
- 6.3 Standby allowances applicable to any lesser periods of standby than those previously stated may be required by the council in limited cases. Where this occurs, the standby allowances should be calculated pro-rata to reflect the different working arrangements.

7. Standby eligibility

When there is a perceived need for a standby rota to operate, wherever possible this arrangement will be contractual. However, in exceptional circumstances and in emergencies standby can be paid as a casual one off arrangement, and this should be claimed on the standby and call out payment form. Casual standby payments are also pensionable.

8. Definition of call out

If an individual who is on standby is required to attend a site to deal with an emergency, this is defined as being on call out and they are entitled to a call out payment in addition to a standby payment.

9. Payment of call out

- 9.1 Payment for call out (as opposed to standby) will be paid at the employees current spinal column point.
- 9.2 In each 24 hours the first call out and the second call out (if the gap between calls is long enough for the employee to return to their home address or place they were located when first called out) are paid for a minimum period of two hours. Any further call out(s) in the same 24 hour period are paid at actual time worked.
- 9.3 Examples

Example 1

1. First call out – 1 hour worked and paid 2 hours call out
2. Employee returns home
3. Second call out – 1 hour worked and paid 2 hours call out
4. Employee returns home
5. Third call out - 1 hours worked and paid 1 hour call out

Example 2

1. First call out - 2 ½ hours worked and paid 2 ½ hours call out
2. Employee returns home

3. Second call out – 1 hour worked and paid 2 hours call out
4. Employee returns home
5. Third call out – 1 hour worked and paid 1 hour call out

Example 3

1. First call out – employee works for one hour, goes straight to another call and works a further 2 hours, total 3 hours worked and paid 3 hours call out
 2. Employee returns home
 3. Second call out from home – works 1 hour and paid 2 hours call out
- 9.4 Payment is made at time and half for hours worked Monday to Saturday and double time on a Sunday. Payment for call out on a bank/public holiday will usually be paid at double time. However an employee has the option of claiming plain time and time off in lieu as an alternative based on the actual hours worked up to a maximum of one full day.
- 9.5 Payment for call out will only differ from the employee's spinal column point (at time and a half or double time) where the work done on call out has been evaluated by the job evaluation panel at a different rate. In these circumstances the payment will be made at the base point of the evaluated grade (at time and a half or double time).
- 9.6 Payment for call out will include travel time to and from site. Travelling time is payable up to a maximum of 30 minutes.
- 9.7 All claims for call out will be made on the call out payment form – this payment is pensionable. Employees are required to keep a record of when contacted, reason for contact and duration of work undertaken, in accordance with the standby and call out payment form, for audit purposes.

10. Compensatory rest

- 10.1 In accordance with the [Working Time Regulations](#) employees are entitled to:
- 11 hours uninterrupted rest daily
 - one full 24 hours rest period per week
- 10.2 However standby and call out duties are exempted from this requirement.
- 10.3 Rest can be interrupted under the daily exemptions. If either the 11 hours rest period or the 24 hour weekly rest period is not achieved then compensatory rest applies. A compensatory rest period must be provided as soon as reasonably possible. Further advice must be sought from Human Resources to ensure compensatory rest requirements are complied with.

11. Mileage claims

Where employees are required to use their own vehicles to make additional journeys associated with their on call commitments, these will be reimbursed at the normal mileage rate.

Payment will be made from the employee's home address to the site and back again. Employees who may be required to use their personal vehicles for these purposes must have appropriate business use on their personal car insurance.

12. Telephone call /online claims

12.1 In some circumstances employees will receive a phone call or an online call or message whilst on standby and may then be required to resolve the emergency without actually going out to site. In these instances employees cannot claim the call out rate for the time spent dealing with an emergency by phone or online.

However employees will be able to claim for the time spent dealing with the emergency at their normal hourly rate. Employees will be expected to show evidence of the phone call/s/online activity if called upon to do so.

12.2 Where employees are not in receipt of a work provided phone the cost of the calls made associated with their on call commitments, will be reimbursed. Employees will be expected to show evidence of the phone call on an itemised phone bill. There is no minimum time period.

13. Managers responsibilities

- To ensure that there is a sufficient number of employees with a standby clause in their contract to ensure an effective service is provided.
- To check that claims are accurate.
- To ensure employees get compensatory rest.

14. Employee's responsibilities

- When on standby, be available with a phone/laptop.
- To ensure that you are in a fit state to carry out your duties.
- Be responsible for your own health and safety and ensure that you request appropriate compensatory rest.