



Standby and Callout Policy and Procedure

August 2025



Human Resources

Governance		
Approved by	Approved date	Date of next review
Human Resources		

Our values

COLLABORATE
PROACTIVELY

LEAD INCLUSIVELY

EMBRACE
CHANGE

BE BOLD
AND CURIOUS

CELEBRATE AND
SHARE OUR
SUCCESS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this policy is to provide managers and staff with a framework to ensure a consistent approach to the implementation of standby and call-out arrangements and to ensure staff who are required to provide standby and call-out to respond to service needs and operational requirements are rewarded in a consistent, fair and equitable way.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all Council staff, except for staff on Hay grades, teachers and school-based non-teaching staff where the schools have separately agreed processes. It does not apply to agency workers, contractors or casual workers.

3.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 3.1. Standby exists when there is a planned regular rota for staff to deal with out of hours emergencies.
- 3.2. Standby refers to the provision of services outside of normal office hours.
- 3.3. Staff are expected to be readily available outside of core service hours to work and to physically attend, as required, to deal with emergencies or urgent matters which cannot wait until the core service hours.
- 3.4. 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.
- 3.5. The standby period will normally be for one week from Monday evening to the following Monday morning, although, exceptionally, it can be paid as a daily rate for a shorter period.
- 3.6. No employee should be required to work more than one week in three on a standby rota unless there are exceptional circumstances that require more frequent cover for a temporary period.
- 3.7. Staff who are not expected to perform normal work outside of working hours but get called upon occasionally, e.g., to attend to an alarm or a one off emergency, will not be entitled to a standby payment. In these circumstances they will receive the appropriate compensation for this work (i.e. overtime/TOIL).
- 3.8. Standby is different to shift allowance where staff are paid to attend work at a scheduled time.
- 3.9. Call out is where staff are required to attend on site or deal with urgent matters from home. Up to date risk assessments must be carried out in those areas that are subject to call outs. These will include a lone working risk assessment.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Managers' Responsibilities

Managers must ensure that:

- They identify roles where standby duty is required and consider if participation in the standby rota will be contractual.
- There is enough staff on a standby rota to ensure an effective service is provided.
- They keep standby rotas under review with reference to Working Time Regulations and health, safety and welfare considerations.
- Records are kept of call out time and that Payroll are informed that it is call-out overtime, not ordinary overtime.
- To ensure staff get compensatory rest.

4.2 Employee Responsibilities

Employees must ensure that:

- They keep themselves available for work if required. There is no expectation that staff must remain at home whilst on standby, provided they are contactable by phone and remain in an area with good mobile phone reception to deal with urgent matters within the agreed time period.
- They can arrive on site within the timescales as specified by their manager to meet service requirements.
- They remain capable of carrying out the required duties.
- They take responsibility for their own health and safety and ensure that they take appropriate compensatory rest.

5.0 STANDBY PAYMENTS

There are three levels of standby payment. These rates will be reviewed annually and increased in line with national pay awards.

5.1 Level One

For emergency response teams or service areas that carry out a statutory function and there is a duty to have staff on standby to provide emergency cover 24/7. There is usually a requirement to attend on site.

Payment is £20 per day, Monday to Friday and £40 per day on Saturday and Sunday. Payment for a full week of standby will be £180. If the standby period covers a public holiday, payment will be enhanced to £60 per day.

5.2. Level Two

For emergency response that requires 24/7 cover either because of service need or a service agreement but can often be dealt with remotely and will not always require attendance on site.

Payment is £15 per day, Monday to Friday and £30 per day on Saturday and Sunday. Payment for a full week of standby will be £135. If the standby period covers a public holiday, payment will be enhanced to £45 per day.

5.3. Level Three

For services that need to be contactable in the event of an emergency. Standby is voluntary and matters can usually be resolved remotely and if this is not possible the issue could wait until the next working day for resolution.

Payment is £10 per day, Monday to Friday and £20 per day on Saturday and Sunday. Payment for a full week of standby will be £90. If the standby period covers a public holiday, payment will be enhanced to £30 per day.

6.0 CALL OUT PAYMENTS

- 6.1. The appropriate overtime rate will be paid if staff are called out and required to work.
- 6.2. The first 15 minutes of call out are included in the standby payment and no additional payment will be made.
- 6.3. A minimum of one hour's overtime will be paid for time worked of more than 15 minutes.
- 6.4. If staff are called out on a public holiday they will be paid the appropriate rate and receive time off in lieu for the time they have worked (not the whole day).
- 6.5. If staff are required to attend on site, they can claim payment for travelling time to and from site and travelling expenses, including mileage at the appropriate rate if they use their own vehicle.
- 6.6. All claims for call out will be authorised on the claim for overtime form and submitted for payment through Oracle. The payment is pensionable. Staff must keep a record of when they are contacted, the reason for contact and duration of work undertaken for audit purposes.

7.0 COMPENSATORY REST

- 7.1. In accordance with the Working Time Regulations employees are entitled to:
 - 11 hours uninterrupted rest daily
 - one full 24 hours rest period per week
- 7.2. However standby and call out duties are exempted from this requirement.
- 7.3. 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.

8.0 FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE

If further advice or guidance is needed on the application of this policy, please contact your HR Business Partner.