

# STANDBY AND CALLOUT PROCEDURES

OCTOBER 2011



Version 2.0

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1.0) Introduction.....	2
2.0) Scope .....	3
3.0) Related Policies and Procedures.....	3
4.0) Document Owner.....	3
5.0) Procedure Effective Date.....	3
6.0) Procedure Review Date.....	3
7.0) Standby .....	3
7.1) Regular Standby .....	3
7.2) Emergency Standby.....	4
7.3) Ad Hoc Standby .....	4
7.4) Standby Approvals .....	4
7.5) Standby Payments .....	4
7.6) Employee Responsibilities.....	4
7.7) Manager Responsibilities.....	5
8.0) Call Out Payments.....	5
9.0) Payment Arrangements for Standby and Callout .....	6
9.1) Mileage Claims .....	6
10.0) Key Holders .....	6
11.0) Working Time .....	6
12.0) Risk Assessments .....	7
13.0) Equipment and Tools etc .....	7

### 1.0) INTRODUCTION

For some of the Council's services it is necessary to ensure that the capacity exists to deal with emergencies for example:-

- situations which must be dealt with at short notice due to significant and immediate health and safety considerations,
- responding to a civil emergency when the Council's Emergency plan is activated.

There are other requirements where the Council needs to respond to situations and events outside of normal hours.

The Council recognises that a structured standby and call out arrangement must be in place in order to respond as part of the Council's statutory duties, and for the Council to respond effectively in dealing with emergencies that arise within the District.

## 2.0) SCOPE

These procedures apply to all Down District Council employees up to but not including Chief Officers.

These procedures cover those periods when an employee, either as part of their contract of employment, or because they have volunteered to be available, attend work outside of normal working hours.

It also covers employees who within the key tasks of their job description are required to assist with the implementation of the Council's Emergency Plan.

## 3.0) RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This procedure and the Standby and Call Out Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:-

- Non Standard Working (02-2011)
- Single Status Agreement (11-2010)
- Travel and Subsistence Policy (06-2011)
- Procedure for Claiming Travel or Mileage (05-2011)
- Policy Statement: Working Time Regulations issued 27 October 2010

## 4.0) DOCUMENT OWNER

Human Resources, telephone contact number 028 4461 0805

## 5.0) PROCEDURE EFFECTIVE DATE

1 December 2011

## 6.0) PROCEDURE REVIEW DATE

2 years from date of implementation or sooner if required

## 7.0) STANDBY

There are 3 categories of standby arrangements:-

- **Regular Standby** – for providing cover outside of normal working hours to meet the Council's legislative requirements within specific Directorates.
- **Emergency Standby** – to ensure employees are available to respond to the Council's Emergency or Business Continuity plans in the event of either of these plans being invoked by the Council's Crisis Management Team.
- **Ad Hoc Standby** – to provide cover at specific times, for example supporting a Council event, additional cover during Bank Holidays etc.

### 7.1) REGULAR STANDBY

A regular standby system will only operate where there is a consistent and sustained requirement to provide services outside of core hours.

The standby rota should be prepared as far as possible in advance to enable participants to make the necessary arrangements and to ensure that roles and responsibilities are known and understood. Contact numbers for employees on the rota and the procedures for accessing tools, vehicles, entry into buildings etc should be well established and known in advance.

If you are on standby you are required to ensure your availability; this may impact on your social arrangements which will need to be considered at the time of agreeing to undertake standby work. The Operation of a regular standby system is determined by the needs of the service and as such may cease from time to time. Payments made to you for being on standby are non-contractual and should not be relied upon as guaranteed earnings.

## 7.2) EMERGENCY STANDBY

There may be a requirement, at short notice, for employees to be available, for example in response to severe weather conditions or to assist following a civil emergency within the district. The unpredictable nature of the incident may require a rota to be drawn up at short notice and it is important that contact numbers for everyone expected to be working are up to date and available.

## 7.3) AD HOC STANDBY

In supporting events, functions or being available during Bank Holidays it should be possible for rotas to be drawn up in advance and for discussions to have taken place to ensure that roles and responsibilities are known and understood.

The standby rota should be prepared as far as possible in advance to enable participants to make the necessary arrangements. Contact numbers for employees on the rota and procedures for accessing tools, vehicles, entry into buildings etc should be well established in advance.

If you are on standby you are required to ensure your availability; this may impact on your social arrangements which will need to be considered at the time of agreeing to undertake standby work. Often rotas will be drawn up several weeks in advance and it is important to remember you have made yourself available to work.

## 7.4) STANDBY APPROVALS

Regular and ad hoc arrangements must be approved, in writing/via email (copied to Payroll Section) in advance of the standby period or arrangement. Emergency standby should also be approved in advance, however if this was not possible at the time the approval should be given in writing/via email as soon as possible thereafter. Standby payments will not be paid without this approval.

Type of Standby	Approval Required
Regular	Director of the Service
Emergency	Director on Duty
Ad Hoc	Director of the Service

## 7.5) STANDBY PAYMENTS

Payments are based on a period of 8 hours for example 4:00pm until 12 midnight or 12 midnight to 8:00pm. For each period of standby you would receive a payment equivalent to 2 hours basic pay; this figure is reduced pro rata for periods of standby that are less than 8 hours.

## 7.6) EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Whilst on standby you must not consume alcohol or take medication/drugs which could impact on your ability to respond to a callout or perform your work in the event of a call out.

You can only be included on a standby rota if you live within a reasonable travel time to where you may be required to attend any call outs, it would be expected that you should be able to arrive at work within a reasonable time of being called out.

A condition of accepting a standby payment is that you must agree to remain within a reasonable traveling distance throughout the standby period, you may leave your home but must still remain contactable and have transport available to return to work within the prescribed period.

If you become unwell or are unable to comply with your responsibilities during a period of standby for example due to an unexpected change in personal circumstances you must contact your manager as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made. Any standby payment made would not apply from the time you become unavailable.

If you are on standby you do so on the basis that you will be expected to deal with incidents that may arise.

## 7.7) MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

As a line manager you must ensure that standby rotas are covered by employees at the appropriate level and with the appropriate skills and knowledge to respond to the situation. For example it would not be appropriate for a senior manager to be on standby when the work required could be undertaken by a more junior employee. Likewise it would not be appropriate for an employee who is unlikely to have the knowledge or skills to respond to the majority of situations that may arise to be on a standby rota.

You should ensure that:-

- the necessary approval has been given in line with section 7.4,
- standby rotas are drawn up as appropriate in advance of any period of standby,
- the necessary contact details are available,
- standby claims and payments are authorised in accordance with this procedure.
- other than in exceptional circumstances hours worked are in accordance with section 11 (Working Time),
- risk assessments for the duties being covered are up to date and available for inspection.

## 8.0) CALL OUT PAYMENTS

Call out payments will be made to employees who:-

- are required to return to work as a consequence of being on a standby duty rota, **or**
- have been called out on an adhoc basis because they are available, for example in assisting with the Council's Emergency or Business Continuity plans or in responding to an alarm call.

If called out you will receive a minimum payment of three hours at the appropriate additional hours rate. For hours worked between midnight and your usual start time (8:00am for employees within the flexi scheme) the additional hours payment will be at double time.

For all other hours worked during a single call out payments will be in accordance with the additional hours rates as detailed at section 7.1 of the Single Status Agreement (November 2010).

Where the call out occurs within 3 hours of your normal starting time (8:00am for employees within the flexi scheme) you will receive a minimum payment of 3 hours at the appropriate additional hours rate and, if you remain at the workplace/incident thereafter you will revert to single time at your normal start time.

Travel to work time, up to a maximum of 30 minutes, will be included in any pay calculations.

For employees at scales SO1-PO1 (scp 29-36) call out time is not included in the 10 hours additional hours calculation as detailed at section 7.1.1 of the Single Status Agreement (November 2010).

## 9.0) PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR STANDBY AND CALLOUT

Claims for standby and call out should be made on either an overtime claim form or time sheet as appropriate and following authorisation by your line manager should be submitted to Payroll Section for payment.

It should be clearly indicated on the form that the payment(s) relate specifically to standby and/or call out rather than normal overtime arrangements.

Claims for payment cannot be processed without approval as detailed at section 7.4.

Allowances paid out under this procedure shall not be taken into account for the purposes of calculation of holiday or sick pay and are non superannuable.

### 9.1) MILEAGE CLAIMS

Mileage incurred in traveling to work following a call out should be claimed in accordance with the Procedure for Claiming Travel or Mileage. If after the call out you return directly home you would be entitled to claim mileage for this journey. If the call out occurs within 3 hours of your normal starting time and as a result you remain at the place of work and enter your normal working hours you would not be entitled to claim mileage for your return journey home.

#### Example 1

An employee who lives in Saintfield and whose normal place of work is the Ballynahinch Centre is called out to an incident at the Centre. The call out occurs outside of their normal working hours and following the incident which takes 2 hours to resolve they return home. In this example, mileage to and from their home to Ballynahinch could be claimed along with the standard payment of 3 hours at the appropriate additional hours rate for the call out.

#### Example 2

The same employee is called out to an incident in the Ballynahinch Centre at 7:00am, they remain at the Centre dealing with the incident which is concluded by 8:50am. At 9:00am (their normal start time) they would revert to their usual hourly rate and would commence their normal duties. In this example the employee would claim 3 hours at the appropriate additional hours rate and mileage to the call out; they could not claim mileage home at the end of their working day as this is a journey they would have made regardless of the call out earlier in the day.

#### Note:

If you have use of a Down District Council vehicle, and use this vehicle to get to and from a call out you are not eligible to claim mileage.

## 10.0) KEY HOLDERS

If you are a key holder you are not entitled to standby payments but will be eligible to call out payments if and when you are called out; for further information refer to Key Holding Policy and Procedure.

## 11.0) WORKING TIME

In accordance with the Working Time Regulations, it is necessary for an employee to have an uninterrupted break of 11 hours between periods of work. Standby time is not 'working time' within the definition of Working Time Regulations, therefore only time for call-out (and travelling to and from the location) applies for this purpose. Exceptions can be made for emergencies (emergency call-outs would fall into this category) as long as the rest period can be taken at a later date (a weekend would count for this purpose).

Line managers who operate a call out system in their area should regularly review:-

- the frequency and length of call-outs,
- the extent of planned and unplanned out of hours worked

to ensure that no employee is being required to undertake additional work which may be detrimental to their health and wellbeing.

## **12.0) RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Where Directorates operate standby and call out systems it is important that employees are made aware of the potential risks and hazards they may face while dealing with a call out. For example an employee being called out to respond to a burst pipe, even where they are not expected to make a repair to the burst, but simply to shut off the water supply and prevent further damage to the building could be at risk from:-

- slips or falls due to wet floor surfaces
- personal injury due to a ceiling collapse
- electrocution from water damaged electrical circuits/distribution boards.

Likewise responding to an intruder alarm could be as simple as noticing a door or window which was not properly secured resulting in the alarm being activated or upon arrival at the building observing evidence of forced entry. Whilst the reason for the call out is the same (an alarm call) the response expected by the employee on arrival at the building should be different.

For call outs where an employee is asked to carry out their substantive duties it would be expected that risk assessments would already be in place for such activities.

Whilst the nature of some call outs may be unpredictable, for the majority of situations it should be possible to identify and have in place up to date risk assessments; copies of which should be available to employees on request.

## **13.0) EQUIPMENT AND TOOLS ETC**

The Council will ensure that the relevant equipment and tools are available for collection in the event of a call out.