

TRAVEL CREDIT SCHEME GUIDANCE

- effective from 1 July 2023

1. Introduction

The Falkland Islands Government (FIG) is committed to improving the quality of life of Falkland Islanders. The 2018-2022 Islands Plan included a commitment to introduce a Travel Credit Scheme, and the first credits were accrued from 1 July 2018.

It is acknowledged that holidays and access to travel bring about improvements in individuals' and families' physical and mental health and other advantages. The aim of the Travel Credit Scheme is to offset some of the costs associated with travel, by allowing eligible individuals to accumulate travel credits which can be redeemed against specific domestic and international travel costs, and the costs of tourism accommodation within the Falklands Islands. As a result, it will be easier for Falkland Islanders to travel both within the Islands and further afield.

This guidance is issued under section 24 of the Travel Credit Scheme Ordinance 2019

2. General description of scheme

- The Travel Credit Scheme administrator will be the Financial Secretary, and any queries in relation to the Scheme should be addressed to email travelcreditscheme@sec.gov.fk).
- The Travel Credit Scheme is only open to Falkland Island Status holders who meet the requirements for registration. The Scheme is not open to Falkland Island Permanent Resident Permit holders
- To join the Travel Credit Scheme, an application to be registered must be made (see section 3 below).
- On successful registration, persons will accrue travel credits which can be used for travel and domestic tourism accommodation (see section 4 below)
- Accumulated travel credits may be redeemed either by reimbursement for costs for travel already undertaken, reimbursement for travel booked independently and paid for, or by the use of vouchers to be redeemed by a designated travel provider (see section 5 below).

- Accumulated travel credits may be also redeemed either by reimbursement for costs for domestic tourism accommodation already occupied, reimbursement for domestic tourism accommodation booked independently and paid for, or by the use of vouchers to be redeemed by a designated tourism accommodation provider (see section 6 below).
- The Scheme Administrator will cancel a person's registration if the person no longer meets any of the requirements for registration as paraphrased above (in this guidance (see section 7).

3. Registration

3.1 Who can register?

- Individuals with Falkland Islands status aged 18 years and over -
Applies on their own behalf. Must be on the register of electors.
- Individuals with Falkland Islands Status aged 16 to 18 years.
May apply on their own behalf, or parents may apply for them. Must be resident in the Falkland Islands at the time of application (see note 1).
- Individuals with Falkland Islands Status aged 16 years and under
Parent or guardian of child applies on their behalf. Must be resident in the Falkland Islands at the time of application (see note 1).

3.2 How to register:

- To apply to join the Travel Credit Scheme, please send in a completed registration form (see Appendix A) to the scheme administrator by email to travelcreditscheme@sec.gov.fk or by post to The Treasury, Travel Credit Scheme, Stanley. Forms can be obtained from the Scheme Administrator by calling 28400.
- The application should be supported by the documents listed on the Registration form if applicable.
- Application forms will be assessed by the Scheme Administrator within 10 working days. If an application is successful confirmation will be sent using your preferred method of contact as stated on your form, applicants will also be notified if an application is unsuccessful. Travel credits will accrue from the date of registration.

4. Accruing of Travel Credits

- Registered persons will accumulate travel credits at £1 per day if aged 16 years or over and 50p per day if aged under 16 years.
- A person's account can reach a maximum of £1,826 for those who are 16 years and over and £913 for the under 16s. These amounts equate to 5 years' worth of travel credits. Please note that children's travel credits are accumulated in their own name and not the name of parents or guardians.

5. Redeeming Travel Credits for domestic and international travel fares

Individuals have been able to draw down travel credits from 1st July 2019 for domestic and international travel fares. Redemption of travel credits can occur in three ways by application to the Scheme Administrator (email to travelcreditscheme@sec.gov.fk).

- **Reimbursement for costs for travel already undertaken:** Making a claim to the Scheme Administrator with the necessary documents including proof of travel either by email (see above) or by submitting the documents by post to The Treasury, Travel Credit Scheme, Stanley.
- **Reimbursement for costs for travel booked independently and paid for:** Making a claim to the Scheme Administrator with the necessary documents including proof of payment. The travel date must not be more than two years in advance of the date of the claim being made. Claims can be made either by email (see above) or by submitting the documents by post to The Treasury, Travel Credit Scheme, Stanley.

If travel is cancelled after a claim has been made from the Travel Credit Scheme, the registered person must obtain a refund from the travel provider. The amount refunded must be reimbursed to the scheme within 60 days of the date when travel was originally booked to be undertaken. 'Cancelling' in this context means failure to travel to the same destination within 14 days of the date originally booked for the travel in the claim.

- **Use of vouchers for travel to be undertaken:** A registered person would obtain a quote for travel from a designated travel provider (note 2) and would request a voucher for the appropriate amount from the Scheme Administrator. The voucher would be presented to the designated travel provider by email from the Scheme Administrator within 5 working days of the application, in advance of travel for use by the registered person. If a registered person fails to travel for any reason, any cancellation charges incurred by the travel provider will be

recovered through the deduction of travel credits from the registered person's account.

Please note the following rules in relation to claims

- Travel Credits accrued may not be paid as cash other than as reimbursement for costs paid in respect of travel booked or travel taken
- Travel Credits accumulated by a registered person are not transferable and may only be used for the benefit of that person
- Any claim must relate to travel originating in the Falkland Islands (a claim for a journey to the Falkland Islands will be valid if it is the return leg of an outward journey made within the preceding 12 months)
- Note 4 provides a list of items that cannot be claimed for.
- Any claim must be for a minimum of £50 per registered person. Claims for lower costs from different occasions can be grouped together to reach the minimum level.
- Any claim must be for travel of at least 10 miles
- Any claim on behalf of a child by an adult can only be made in respect of travel by the child. If claims are made by different persons in respect of the same child, the claims will be processed in order of the date on which they are received.

6. Redeeming Travel Credits for domestic tourism accommodation

Individuals will be able to draw down travel credits from 1 July 2023 for domestic tourism accommodation. Claims must relate to a stay in domestic tourism accommodation undertaken after this date. Redemption of travel credits can occur in three ways by application to the Scheme Administrator (email to travelcreditscheme@sec.gov.fk).

- **Reimbursement for costs for domestic tourism accommodation stays already undertaken:** Making a claim to the Scheme Administrator with the necessary documents including proof of stay in domestic tourism accommodation either by email (see above) or by submitting the documents by post to The Treasury, Travel Credit Scheme, Stanley.
- **Reimbursement for costs for domestic tourism accommodation booked independently and paid for:** Making a claim to the Scheme Administrator with the necessary documents including proof of payment. The dates of the stay in domestic tourism accommodation must be within two years of the claim being made. Claims can be made either by email (see above) or by submitting the documents by post to The Treasury, Travel Credit Scheme, Stanley.

If the stay is cancelled after a claim has been made from the Travel Credit Scheme, the registered person must obtain a refund from the accommodation provider. The amount refunded must be reimbursed to the scheme within 60 days of the date when the stay was originally booked to be undertaken. 'Cancelling' in this context means failure to commence a stay at the same domestic tourism accommodation within 14 days of the date originally booked to commence the stay, as set out in the claim.

- **Use of vouchers for domestic tourism accommodation to be undertaken:** A registered person would obtain a quote for accommodation from a designated tourism accommodation provider (note 3) and would request a voucher for the appropriate amount from the Scheme Administrator. The voucher would be presented to the designated accommodation provider by email from the Scheme Administrator within 5 working days of the application, in advance of the registered person commencing their stay. If a registered person fails to make use of the accommodation for any reason, any cancellation charges incurred by the accommodation provider will be recovered through the deduction of travel credits from the registered person's account.

Please note the following rules in relation to claims:

- Travel Credits accrued may not be paid as cash other than as reimbursement for costs paid in respect of accommodation booked or accommodation stay undertaken
- Travel Credits accumulated by a registered person are not transferable and may only be used for the benefit of that person
- Any claim must relate to tourism accommodation within the Falkland Islands (note 4 provides a list of items that cannot be claimed for)
- Any claim must be for a minimum of £50 per registered person. Claims for lower costs from different occasions can be grouped together to reach the minimum level.
- A claim for accommodation costs may only relate to charges for that individual. Most accommodation in the Falkland Islands is charged per person, but if a charge is made on a per room or per property basis, the maximum claim is the full charge divided by the number of adults using that room or property
- Any claim on behalf of a child by an adult can only be made in respect of accommodation stayed in by the child. If claims are made by different persons in respect of the same child, the claims will be processed in order of the date on which they are received

7. Cancellation or Suspension of Registration

- The Scheme Administrator must cancel a person's registration if the person no longer meets any of the requirements for registration as paraphrased in this guidance. This would include for example an adult no longer being registered on the electoral register, or a child ceasing to be resident in the Falkland Islands. If a registered child is leaving the Falkland Islands to take up residence in another country, a parent or guardian, should contact the Scheme Administrator (email to travelcreditscheme@sec.gov.fk) to explain the situation. In some circumstances a child may be considered to be resident in the Falkland Islands even if they are no longer physically living in the Islands (for example if the absence is for the purpose of education).

A person whose registration is cancelled for any reason other than abuse of the Scheme, must claim any accumulated travel credits within 6 months of cancellation. Failure to redeem travel credits within 6 months of cancellation results in forfeiture of the remaining travel credits. Any remaining travel credits cannot be claimed as cash.

- The Scheme Administrator may suspend a person's registration if the person is serving a custodial sentence. Suspension is for the period of the custody. During the sentence period, a registered person does not accrue travel credits and any accumulated travel credits are frozen until the suspension is lifted. The registered person should contact the Scheme Administrator on release from custody, in order for the suspension to be lifted.

Registration may also be suspended to give the Scheme Administrator time to investigate whether a person remains eligible to be registered under the Scheme. If suspension is to facilitate an investigation, the registered person continues to accrue travel credits during the period of suspension (but may not claim them until the suspension is lifted).

- The Scheme Administrator may permanently terminate a person's registration on the Scheme if they are found to have abused the Scheme with any remaining travel credits being forfeited. 'Abuse of Scheme' means to obtain unintended financial benefits from the Scheme by engaging in conduct as prescribed. The prescribed conduct entails claiming travel credits by the registered person and failure by that person to refund the Scheme when travel is cancelled for any reason. 'Cancelling' means when a person fails to travel to the same destination within 14 days of the date originally booked for travel to take place, or fails to stay at the same domestic tourism accommodation within 14 days of the date originally booked.

8. Other

- A registered person who is aggrieved by a decision of the Scheme Administrator

- (a) to suspend their registration;
- (b) to cancel their registration; or
- (c) related to such suspension or cancellation

may appeal within 10 working days of the date of the notice of suspension or cancellation by making representations in writing to the Governor.

- A person who, in an application for registration or for the purpose of claiming travel credits knowingly or recklessly for a material issue or particular
 - (a) makes a false statement or representation; or
 - (b) provides an incorrect document or false information; or
 - (c) withholds any information,

commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale (level 2 is a maximum of £500).

Supplementary Notes

Note 1 Qualification for Registration

- The test whether a child is resident in the Falkland Islands is based on the residency requirements for eligibility for registration on the Register of Electors (as detailed in the Electoral Ordinance 1988 <https://www.legislation.gov.fk/view/html/inforce/2019-03-19/fiord-1988-21>)
- A child must also meet the relevant requirements of section 32 of the Constitution (https://www.legislation.gov.fk/view/html/2019-03-19/uksi-2008-2846#qualifications_of_electors) concerning qualification for registration as an elector (i.e. as if the child were 18 years or older)
- It should be noted that these criteria are automatically adhered to by an adult through their registration on the Register of Electors

Note 2 List of designated travel providers

- Falkland Islands Company Ltd
- International Tours and Travel Ltd
- Workboat Services Ltd
- Falkland Islands Government Air Service

To qualify for inclusion as a designated travel provider a company must submit an application to the Scheme Administrator demonstrating that the company meets the following criteria:

- It is a limited company or partnership registered with the Registry Service in the Falkland Islands (company registration number must be provided on the application)

- Or it is a Falkland Islands Government department.
- It must have been actively trading for more than six months at the time of the application

Note 3 List of designated domestic tourism accommodation providers

- Malvina House Hotel
- Waterfront Hotel
- Little Creek Farm
- Pebble Island Lodge
- Johnson’s Harbour Self Catering

To qualify for inclusion as designated domestic tourism accommodation provider, a person or company must submit an application to the Scheme Administrator confirming: and demonstrating that:

- they offer accommodation to domestic tourists
- they have been actively trading for more than three months at the time of the application

Note 4 Costs that cannot be funded by travel credits

Travel credits will not be redeemed for cash other than as reimbursement for the fare or accommodation;

Travel credits may not be used to pay for the following items:

1. Embarkation tax (please note that fares for the Airbridge will be paid for the amount less the value of embarkation tax included in the ticket price)
2. Shipping and/or cargo costs
3. Transfers (Transfers include charges for transport between an airport and a hotel or place of residence)
4. Excess baggage charges
5. Travel insurance
6. Travel fares for distances less than 10 miles
7. ‘Round trips’ on FIGAS, which involve returning to the starting destination on the same day
8. Activities, tours or trips – including ‘round robin’ or whale watching helicopter & FIGAS trips
9. Car hire
10. Alcoholic drinks provided by accommodation providers, which should be charged separately and may not be claimed for.

It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list of excluded items

Issued by:
Tracey Prior, Financial Secretary
Scheme Administrator
01 July 2023

Approved by Executive Council on 30 May 2023