

Travel and Accommodation

Travel

How do I book travel?

All travel and accommodation must be booked through the Travel and Accommodation team by completing the online Travel Request form which will have been provided to you by the Inspection Planning Coordinator or the Flexible Workforce Office.

CQC wants to ensure that individuals travel in sufficient comfort to allow them to make good use of travel time to include reading time. Tickets should always be procured as economically as possible taking advantage of cheaper fares available through advance booking and by travelling standard class at all times.

Flexible Workers should be guided by the Associate Inspectors General Expenses, Travel and Subsistence Policy and Procedures.

What is the cut off time for travel and/or accommodation?

The deadline is 4:30pm on the day prior to travel. Please follow up urgent requests with a phone call to 0191 556 2289.

I haven't been informed of the inspection location yet, can I submit a request for travel and/or accommodation?

Please do not submit a travel request until you have been informed of the inspection location, this information will be communicated to you via either Cygnum, Flexible Workforce Office, or the Inspection Planning Coordinator.

Can I book my own travel and accommodation?

Flexible Workers are not permitted to submit claims for the reimbursement of rail travel or accommodation. The Travel and Accommodation team must receive all travel booking requests prior to 4:30pm on the day before travel. For short notice accommodation bookings, the team can be contacted up to and including the date of stay.

What is the difference between an underground ticket (London Zone) and a travel card?

When an underground ticket (London zone 1 etc) is issued with your rail ticket this means that you can only make two journeys on the tube, i.e. Kings Cross to Victoria and return.

If you request a travel card this means that you can travel as much as you like on bus, tube, tram, DLR, London Overground and National Rail services in London in the zones that you have paid for.

There are different types of travel card which are valid as below:

Anytime Day travel card which can be used for travel at any time on the day of validity and for travel for any journey starting before 4:30am the following day.

Off-Peak Day travel card which can be used on the day of validity from 9:30am Monday to Friday, all day Saturday, Sunday and on public holidays. It is also valid for use for any journey starting before 4:30am the following day.

7 Day travel card which can be used at any time during the 7 day period of validity and for any journey starting before 4:30am the day after the expiry date.

Why have I been issued a Ticket on Departure reference?

Tickets valued over £100 and/or booked with less than 5 days to date of travel are arranged via Ticket on Departure (TOD) at a train station. TOD was introduced after significant amounts of tickets were not arriving in time or being reported as lost/not delivered and CQC were unable to arrange refunds without the original tickets. Tickets can be collected from any station with a ticket collection facility, and at any time, once you have received the reference number from the team.

How do I collect my Ticket on Departure?

You can collect your Ticket on Departure from any train station with this facility.

To collect your tickets you need:

1. Your 8-digit ticket collection reference number (this will be on the confirmation that has been emailed to you).
2. A credit or debit card (this will not be charged; it is just used as identification).

You may collect your tickets from a self-service ticket machine or at the ticket office. We recommend that you collect your tickets at least 20 minutes before your departure time. If you experience problems collecting your tickets from the self-service ticket machine, please go the station booking office. Upon production of your booking confirmation print out station staff should be able to issue your tickets. If the station is unattended, please call Trainline on 0871 244 1545.

What do I do if I have an urgent travel request?

You should complete the online travel form and follow this up with a phone call to the Travel and Accommodation team (0191 556 2289) who will process your request.

Any requests sent after 4:30pm may not be processed until the following day.

What should I do if I have an urgent booking or an emergency out of office hours?

Please contact the relevant provider:

Hotels - Hogg Robinson (HRG) 0203 912 6573

Rail - Trainline - no out of hours service provided

Flights - Diversity - 0161 235 5406

What should I do if I no longer require my ticket?

All unused tickets should be returned, together with seat reservation coupons, direct to the address below.

Inspection Support
4th Floor
Care Quality Commission
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA

All tickets (except Advance) are refundable if submitted wholly unused within 28 days of the expiry date, subject to admin fee. Please note that tickets are not refundable unless they are accompanied by the associated seat reservation coupon.

If you have been issued Tickets on Departure (TOD) and if they are no longer required, please do not collect them from the ticket machine as they will automatically void on their expiry date and the cost will be refunded, please email the Travel and Accommodation Team travelandaccommodation@cqc.org.uk to make them aware so that they can process the refund online.

Am I able to change my ticket if the inspection finishes early?

If you have an Advance ticket, please do the following:

Between the hours of 8:30am and 5:30pm contact the Travel and Accommodation team on 0191 556 2289 who will arrange new travel and issue you with a Ticket on Departure reference number to allow you to obtain tickets from a self-service ticket machine.

If you have an Off-Peak ticket, please check on the National Rail website to see which trains the ticket is valid on.

If you have an Anytime ticket you can travel on any train.

Why have you not booked the ticket type I requested e.g. Anytime Return?

The team are obliged to purchase the most cost-effective tickets, as per the Associate Inspectors General Expenses, Travel and Subsistence Policy and Procedures.

Can I upgrade to first class?

CQC are not able to book first class tickets. However, should you wish to upgrade when on the train you may do so but we would not reimburse you for this.

Can I use my ticket on any train?

There are four different ticket types and depending on the date/time of travel the most cost effective option will be booked. Ticket conditions are below:

Advance tickets can be booked up to 12 weeks in advance, and must be booked before the date of travel.

Valid: only on the date and time shown on the ticket. If the date of travel is to be changed then the booking will need to be cancelled and rebooked for the correct date.

Off-Peak and Super Off-Peak single and return tickets can be booked before or on the day of travel.

Valid: outward or single are restricted to off-peak or super off-peak trains, times and routes on the date shown on ticket. Returns are restricted to off-peak and super off-peak trains, times and routes, validity may vary but generally valid for one calendar month of the outward. Off Peak tickets may be valid on an alternative train; National Rail Enquiries can advise which alternative trains can be used. If the date of travel is to be changed then cancel the ticket and re-book. Refund claims must be raised within 28 days of the date on the ticket for a single or the original return date for return tickets.

Anytime single and return tickets can be booked before or on the day of travel.

Valid: Outward or Single: Valid any time on the date shown on ticket or including up to five days later or for one month. Return: Valid any time on the date shown on ticket or up to one month of the outward. Anytime tickets are valid on any train, however if the date of travel is to be changed then the ticket will need to be cancelled and re-booked.

Can you book flights and ferries?

Yes, please use the travel request form to submit a request.

Can you book me a taxi?

Unfortunately, we are not able to book taxis. However, should you need to travel by taxi; the reimbursement of fares can be claimed via expenses.

When attending Hospital inspections, please request taxis via the Inspection Planning Coordinator (IPC).

Can I travel by car?

CQC discourages travel by car because of the environmental impact, the higher risk to the individual and the lack of opportunity for other activity associated with driving (i.e. preparation or reading time). You should not use your own car for long journeys where the reimbursement of mileage costs would exceed the cost of a rail journey. In such instances, public transport should be used instead.

Can you book car parking?

The team are not able to book parking. Car parking expenses and charges for tolls and ferries will be reimbursed if receipted and if an individual incurs the charge on CQC business. All receipts for car parking must be provided when expenses claims are submitted. Any claim submitted without car parking receipts will not be approved.

How long will it take to process my bookings?

The Travel and Accommodation team work to a 24-hour service level agreement for pre-approved accommodation requests and travel, however during busy periods requests are prioritised by date of travel/stay.

Accommodation

How do I request accommodation?

Accommodation for most Hospitals inspections is arranged by the Inspection Planning Coordinators (IPCs); please ensure that you inform the relevant IPC of your requirements for travel and accommodation.

If you have been invited to attend an inspection which involves excessive travel, or you will not be able to arrive in time for the start of the inspection, you should inform the Flexible Workforce Office team. The team will approach the budget holder to request accommodation on your behalf, you will then be notified if the request has been approved and provided with the link to the travel and accommodation request form. You must ensure that you submit your request as soon as possible to ensure your requirements are fulfilled within the allocated budget.

Please do not submit a request for accommodation without prior to receiving approval as unapproved requests cannot be processed.

Why haven't you booked the hotel I requested?

The hotel is either unavailable on the requested dates or the cost exceeds the budget allowance.

What should I do if the hotel says I do not have a booking or that my booking has not been paid for?

Please ensure that you take a copy of the hotel booking confirmation with you, in case of difficulties this should be presented to the hotel receptionist. The hotel should contact HRG directly to resolve the issue. Please note: you are not required to pay the hotel.

Why is my hotel so far away from the inspection location?

HRG are restricted to booking within the CQC budget for hotels, they always book the nearest available hotel within budget.

Why haven't you booked me an evening meal in the hotel?

Most hotels in the HRG system do not offer evening meal within the package. On these occasions, you would need to purchase your own meal and claim the costs back via expenses.

For Hospital inspections, the Inspection Planning Coordinators usually make a block hotel booking which includes evening meal.

Why haven't I got breakfast with my booking?

Occasionally hotels booked through our booking agent do not offer breakfast as a package. When this happens, please pay for your breakfast and claim the costs back via expenses.

What is the allowance for subsistence?

The total amount for breakfast, lunch and dinner (over 24 hours) cannot exceed £27.50. This should be claimed through your usual route for expenses, all claims must be approved by the lead inspector or Inspection Planning Coordinator (IPC).

Where can I find the online request form?

Please complete this form to request your travel and accommodation requirements:
<https://webdataforms.cgc.org.uk/Checkbox/SPATravelandAccommodation.aspx>

Please do not submit a request for accommodation without prior to receiving approval as unapproved requests cannot be processed.

The team can be contact via email TravelandAccommodation@cgc.org.uk or telephone on 0191 556 2289.