

MONTHLY GATESHEAD HEALTH STAFF ADVICE BULLETIN

ISSUE 21: Flight and Train Cancellations/Delays

Due to recent unexpected travel disruptions, and more rail strikes to come, we will take a break from our housing advice series to bring you information on what steps to take if you have experienced flight or train cancellations. Flight cancellations have increased recently, due to air traffic control issues and extreme weather. This year has also seen a high number of train cancellations and delays. National rail data shows that as many as 13% of trains through one station – Huddersfield – have been cancelled, and Newcastle and York, Newcastle are close behind, with 9% of trains withdrawn.

If you or someone you know has experienced transport cancellations or delays, the following information could help get some money back.

Delayed & Cancelled Flights

Airports can be stressful places at the best of times, unfortunately this experience can be made worse through extensive delays and dreaded cancellations. When this happens, there are measures your airline must take to accommodate.

Claiming compensation

What you'll be entitled to will depend on the airline, and the countries you left from and arrived in. You might be able to get compensation if your flight was:

- Leaving from the UK – it doesn't matter which airline it was with
- Leaving from the EU, Iceland, Norway or Switzerland - it doesn't matter which airline it was with
- Arriving in the UK and was with a UK or EU airline
- Arriving in the EU and was with a UK airline

If these options don't apply to you, contact your airline. What you'll be entitled to will depend on the airline, and the countries you left from and arrived in.

What airlines should give you if your flight's delayed

If your flight experiences a significant delay, the airline is obligated to provide you with essential services such as food and drinks, access to communication (phone calls and emails), and accommodation, particularly if the delay extends overnight. They must also arrange transportation between the airport and the hotel in such cases.

The distance of your flight directly influences the length of delay time allowed until the airline are required to provide forms of compensation. You can check the [flight distance](#) on the WebFlyer website.

Flight Distance	How Long The Delay Has To Be
Less than 1,500km	2 hours
Between 1,500km and 3,500km	3 hours
More than 3,500km	4 hours

Compensation for a cancelled flight

You're legally entitled to get compensation if the cancellation is the airline's responsibility and both the following apply:

- The replacement flight delays your arrival by 2 or more hours
- Your flight was cancelled less than 14 days before departure

The amount you are entitled to depends on when the flight was cancelled and the distance of the flight. For a full list of flight distances, departure times, and compensation amounts, you can look at our [website](#).

Claim from the airline

Contact the airline, ensuring it is the one responsible for operating the flight, even if your booking was made through a different airline. Normally, the airline's customer service department can help you. Prepare to provide flight details and booking reference numbers.

Make your claim, outlining the specific issues that occurred and detailing your requests from the airline. Remember to include duplicates (not originals) of your tickets and any relevant receipts.

Maintain thorough records, retaining copies of your claim submission and any responses received from the airline. It's also advisable to take notes during any interactions with airline personnel, as this information could prove valuable if you opt to escalate your claim further.

For more information, check out the [Civil Aviation Authorities website](#)

Delayed & Cancelled Trains

If your train journey gets cancelled, you are eligible for a complete reimbursement if you are unable to board the next train or choose not to proceed with your journey.

- In the event that this delay results in your arrival at the destination more than 30 minutes late, you typically qualify for partial reimbursement. Additionally, certain train operators may offer compensation for delays exceeding 15 minutes.
- To claim a refund, it is necessary to keep your train tickets.
- Submitting your claim within 28 days is recommended, although some train companies may extend this timeframe.
- For those with a season ticket, the best thing to do is ask at your ticket office or check the train company's website. You'll usually be able to get some money back for a delay or cancellation.

How much you can get for a cancellation?

If your train gets cancelled and you are unable to board the next one or chose not to travel, you have the right to receive a complete refund. This applies for any ticket type, even if you didn't use it, you can request a fee-free refund.

How much you can get for a delay?

You may be eligible for compensation for train delays, and the amount you can claim depends on the train company responsible for the delay. If your train company participates in the 'Delay Repay' scheme, you can receive compensation regardless of the reason for the delay. Compensation varies:

- 50% of your ticket price for delays of 30 minutes to 1 hour.
- A full refund for delays exceeding 1 hour.

Some train companies have an additional scheme called 'Delay Repay 15,' offering 25% compensation for delays of 15 to 29 minutes. Check your specific train company's website for details.

If your train company doesn't offer 'Delay Repay,' you can still claim compensation under the 'National Rail Conditions of Carriage,' but the amount may be less. You won't receive compensation if the delay was not the train company's fault, such as due to bad weather.

For delays exceeding 1 hour:

- 50% compensation for single ticket holders.
- 25% compensation for return ticket holders.
- 50% compensation for return ticket holders who experienced delays on both journeys for over 1 hour.

To claim, visit the train company's website and use their online forms, usually requiring a picture of your ticket. Alternatively, you can send a letter with journey details and original tickets, making copies in case of loss. Refunds are typically processed within a month. While some companies offer vouchers for future journeys, you have the option to insist on a cash refund if preferred.

Remember: The Tyne and Wear Metro also operate the [Delay Repay](#) scheme!

For further cancellation and delay advice you can visit Citizens Advice website for [Flights](#) and [Trains](#)

Remember you can get in touch with your Citizens Advice Gateshead team for impartial advice, information, and guidance.

Email qestaffswa@citizensadvicegateshead.org.uk or call 0191 490 4231 and we'll be back in touch with you within 1 working day Monday to Friday.