

Duplicate Claims Protocol

Employee Service Centre

Version 1

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Document control			
Title	Duplicate Claims Protocol		
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Governance Group	Business Management Team (BMT)		
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1	Linda Cullen	February 2025	Introduction of document

Document Approvals			
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1	BMT	16 May 2025	Approved
2	F&R Committee	21 May 2025	Approved

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All priorities of the Council and all programmes of work.

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Review Date	Formally on an annual basis and informally throughout the year as necessary to ensure compliance with policies and procedures of the Council in regard to additional salary payments.

Introduction

Following the introduction of the Overtime and Expenses module on iTrent that allows employees to submit their own hours, overtime and other expenses claims through the system directly, there have been a number of duplicate claims identified which can and should have been avoided. Duplicate claims cause unnecessary overpayments for employees and create an additional administrative burden for those involved in the processing and repayment of the claims.

In addition, duplicate claims cause delays to the processing of salary, reputational issues for all involved and can result in a serious fraud investigation.

In order to prevent duplicate claims, the following document has been developed to ensure that all managers and employees understand the current process and protocol that must be followed when duplicate claims are identified.

What is a Duplicate Claim?

Duplicate claims for the purpose of this document are ones which have been submitted more than once via iTrent for the payment of hours worked, overtime or expenses and are identical in every aspect such as the employee making the claim, the hours/expenses claimed, period of time the claim is for and the reason for the claim. Claims that exhibit similarities but may not be identical, will also be covered by this protocol.

Authorisation of Claims on iTrent

Once an employee has submitted their claim via Myself, the line manager is responsible for authorising the claim. Instructions on how to submit and authorise a claim through Myself can be found [here](#).

When submitting a claim, the employee is responsible for ensuring that the information provided is accurate and truthful, however it is the responsibility of the authorising manager to confirm that this is the case. Managers should not authorise any claims until they are satisfied that the information provided has been checked and is accurate and has not previously been submitted.

Please note: iTrent will flag up on the screen when there is a suspected duplicate claim, managers should not authorise until they are satisfied that a previous claim has not already been submitted and authorised.

Avoiding a Duplicate Claim

Duplicate claims are generally caused by human error and the lack of checking by both employees and managers. Reducing duplicate claims enhances compliance and minimises the time and resources spent on correcting claims.

Causes of Duplicate Claims

- **Manual entry errors** - Duplicate claims mainly result from human error, with claims being accidentally submitted twice or more, because of the lack of cross-checking
- **Authorising without due diligence** – Managers regularly ignore the warning sign on iTrent advising that the claim looks like a duplicate. Managers should ensure that when iTrent flags up the possibility of a duplicate that this is fully investigated before authorising.
- **Not understanding payrun deadlines** - Often employees re-submit their claim as they do not see the payment in their first available wage. It is important to know that there are strict payrun deadlines that must be adhered to and where these are missed, the payment will be made in the next available salary which might be several weeks away. Payrun deadlines for all employee types can be accessed [here](#).
- **Confusion over coding** – it is important that managers ensure that employees are trained appropriately in order to complete the necessary fields on iTrent correctly, including the correct cost code and that these are checked by the manager before authorising.

How to Prevent Duplicate Claims

Understand the process and follow instructions – managers must ensure that all employees who are required to submit claims via iTrent are fully trained on how to do so and fully understand the process and consequences of submitting unnecessary duplicate claims. This includes ensuring that their employees are confident in the use of iTrent for the purpose of submitting claims and where necessary arrange for training to be provided. The ESC is available to provide training to any member of staff who is struggling with any aspect of this process.

Know the payrun deadlines – it is imperative that both managers and employees know when their payrun deadline is so that all claims can be submitted before the deadline date. Anything received after the deadline, will not be processed until the next pay.

Take note and read the alerts – when an alert shows on the screen, it is important that employees and managers read this and take the appropriate action which is to check whether or not it is duplicate claim. If it is a duplicate claim, it should be deleted and not authorised.

Check if the previous claim has been processed – if a duplicate claim has been submitted, check with the ESC to see if they are in receipt of the previous claim and ask when the payment will be made and ensure that the employee is advised of this.

Understand the consequences – where there is evidence of continual duplicate claims from the same employee and/or manager, it could lead to a fraud investigation which could ultimately result in disciplinary action being taken against one or all parties involved in the processing and authorising of the claim(s).

Audit of Duplicate Claims

The ESC Audit and Compliance Team will continually analyse and review the number of duplicate claims received. Where possible, duplicate claims that are identified before payment will not be paid, however the number of duplicate submissions by either the employee or manager will continue to be recorded and where necessary action will be taken against either or both parties.

Addressing Repeated Duplicate Claims (Employee)

Where it has been identified that an employee has submitted a duplicate claim, the employee will be emailed by the ESC and advised that the duplicate claim will not be processed, or the overpayment will be deducted from the next available salary. The authorising manager will also be copied into this email. It is anticipated that on receipt of such an email both the employee and manager will ensure that no further duplicate claims will be submitted.

If a further duplicate claim is received, another email will be issued to the employee and again the authorising manager will be copied in. This email will also advise that if there is a third occurrence of a duplicate claim, the matter will be raised with the Employment and Policy Manager for consideration.

If there is a third occurrence of a duplicate claim, the employee will be emailed again with the authorising manager copied in, advising that the matter is being referred to the Employment and Policy Manager for consideration under the Council's Disciplinary Policies.

It should be noted that where there is evidence of any type of fraudulent activity, a disciplinary investigation will be undertaken and dismissal considered.

Addressing Repeated Duplicate Claims (Manager)

Similar to the above, where a manager has authorised a duplicate claim, they will be alerted to this by the ESC by email in the first instance. At this point, the manager should ensure that they have an appropriate system in place to prevent further duplicate claims being submitted.

Authorising managers will be copied into all emails where their employees have submitted a duplicate claim, and therefore the process as detailed above for employees will apply to the manager. This includes the matter being referred to the Employment and Policy Manager following the third occurrence of a duplicate claim for consideration and possible action under the Council's Disciplinary Policies.

Addressing Multiple Duplicate Claims Authorised by the Same Manager

The ESC Audit and Compliance team will review after each pay period the details of all duplicate claims received during that period and where it has been identified that a manager has authorised duplicate claims for more than one employee for that period or over a period of time, this will be brought to the attention of the Chief Officer (People Resources).

Where there is evidence of authorising duplicate claims for more than one employee in a pay period, the manager will be issued with an email from the Chief Officer (People Resources) reminding them of their responsibilities under the Council's Financial Regulations and instructing them to ensure that measures are put in place to prevent future duplicate claims being made. The relevant Chief Officer will also receive a copy of the email issued to the authorising manager.

If a further duplicate claim is identified following the issuing of the email, the Chief Officer (People Resources) will contact the relevant Chief Officer to highlight the issue and discuss remedial action, which may include further investigation of the matter.

Where the Chief Officer (People Resources) has serious concerns, the matter may also be referred to the Chief Officer (Audit & Risk) for formal investigation.

Disciplinary Action

When it has been determined that the matter requires to be considered under the Council's Disciplinary Policies, the relevant Chief Officer will be asked to nominate a Lead Investigating Officer. Due to the serious nature of these investigations, a member of the Employment and Policy Team will also form part of the investigation panel.

Remedial Action

Managers must ensure that they are fully compliant with the Council's Financial Regulations, and their statutory duties within this, and only authorise payments that are valid, accurate and genuine. Proper compliance around the submission and authorisation of claims is key to minimising duplicate claims, over and underpayments and unnecessary administrative work.

It is important to note that where employees or managers continue to submit or approve duplicate claims unnecessarily, the appropriate remedial action will require to be taken, and this could involve disciplinary action that may result in the termination of employment.