

Admin fees removed for COVID disrupted rail travel on Advance tickets

October 26, 2020



Rail passengers will have extra protections to ensure they are not left out of pocket from COVID related local restrictions. Passengers who have bought an **Advance ticket** which they can subsequently no longer use as a result of COVID restrictions changing will not have to pay the administration cost of rearranging travel for a ticket purchased prior to any announcement.

As new travel restrictions come into force in different parts of the country, passengers are more at risk of having to change travel plans. The government has worked closely with train operators to build consumer confidence and support the industry.

The new temporary measures enable passengers to claim discretionary rail travel vouchers or credit notes for unused advance tickets that are valid for up to a year, offering more flexibility than the current arrangements.

The government is also allowing independent rail retailers to temporarily waive the usual change of journey admin fee for Advance tickets.

This decision follows extensive support provided to the rail industry throughout the COVID pandemic, to protect jobs and keep services running for passengers. The announcement ensures that support continues as people return to the railways.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said: “COVID has seen massive disruption to our way of life, and passengers buying Advance tickets should not be penalised for cancelling their travel plans to follow advice that can save lives.

“By temporarily scrapping these admin fees on Advance tickets, and extending the time people have to re-book their journeys, we are ensuring that large numbers of rail passengers will not be left out of pocket.”

The government previously stepped in to permit Advance ticket refunds at the outset of the pandemic, as well as removing administrative refund or change of journey charges from Advance, Off-Peak, Super Off-Peak or Anytime tickets. These new measures offer further support for customers across the rail network.

Jacqueline Starr, Chief Operating Officer at the Rail Delivery Group, said: “When people take the train we want them to travel with confidence.

“As well as extra cleaning and more trains, that means people knowing that if things change and they can no longer use their Advance ticket due to COVID restrictions, they won’t be unfairly penalised, so this announcement is good news for our passengers.”

Photo credit: Rail Delivery Group

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