

Delay Repay changes will make rail travel easier under Great British Railways

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These changes allow passengers to claim Delay Repay compensation faster and the rail industry to invest in improvements across the UK.

- under Great British Railways, it will be quicker and easier to claim for Delay Repay compensation
- passengers will be able to claim compensation more directly through third-party retailers like Trainline for the first time
- revenue protection measures are introduced for industry, helping to restore trust in the railway

For the first time, rail passengers will be able to claim Delay Repay directly from wherever they buy their ticket, making it quicker and easier to apply for compensation.

Currently, passengers have to contend with a complex system across 14 different train companies, which creates confusion and frustration.

As part of the government's plans to simplify our railways and ensure passengers are treated fairly when travelling, compensation claim systems for delayed trains will be merged into one easy-to-use service under Great British Railways (GBR).

Customers will also be able to apply through third-party retailers like Trainline.

It comes as the government responds to the recommendations of the Office of Rail and Road's (ORR) review into revenue protection practices, outlining new measures such as making ticket terms and conditions clearer.

Every year, at least £350 million of taxpayers' money is lost from fare-dodging on the rail network, which negatively impacts passenger experiences across the country and means money that could be spent improving services is being lost to fraud.

Transport Secretary, Heidi Alexander, said:

Using the railway will be simpler and more reliable under Great British Railways. When services are delayed, passengers should be able to easily claim the compensation they're owed.

These necessary changes will ensure people can claim Delay Repay compensation more quickly and the industry can invest taxpayers' money in the things that really matter for passengers; freezing fares and delivering train and station upgrades, rather than losing out to fare dodgers and fraud.

Cracking down on fare-dodging and stamping out fraud will protect honest passengers and taxpayers and fund improvements like essential network upgrades and maintenance.

To do this, the government's response to the ORR's review sets out new measures to tackle fare dodging, protect honest customers and stop money being lost to fraud.

Trials for a new scheme are also beginning later in the year to check railcards are being used properly. If the trial proves successful, railcard users will need to complete a simple validation check, saving taxpayers around £20 million a year.

From 1 April 2026, unused tickets will only be eligible for a refund up to 23:59 on the day they become valid for travel, preventing fraud where people ask for their money back even though they have used a service – a change that will save around £40 million annually. With all these changes, those who make genuine mistakes can feel confident they will be treated fairly.

Jacqueline Starr, Executive Chair and CEO of Rail Delivery Group, said:

It's important that customers can claim compensation when their journey is disrupted, and Delay Repay is there to make sure customers can receive money back when delays happen. The government's plan to develop a consolidated Delay Repay service will make it easier for all customers to request compensation, regardless of where they bought their ticket, with a more consistent process for reviewing and processing all claims.

Jody Ford, CEO of Trainline, said:

Making compensation easier when you need it is a win for passengers. Wherever you buy your ticket, the focus must be on getting more people to choose rail. These future changes to Delay Repay have real potential to support that ambition and will be welcomed by millions.

Ben Plowden, CEO, Campaign for Better Transport, said:

The establishment of Great British Railways offers a generational opportunity to get more people travelling by train, more affordably, more often, to more places.

We know that cost is the biggest barrier to rail travel, but the confusing and fragmented fares and ticketing system also urgently needs reform, so this is welcome news for passengers and potential passengers.

Independent retailers such as Trainline have often led the way on innovation, so successful rail reform has to be collaborative, learning the best lessons from across the industry. Enabling access to delay repay through all retailers is a good example of the sort of cross-sector collaboration which will be key to GBR's potential success.

This is another important step in delivering services that are affordable and reliable, putting passengers at the heart of GBR after fares were frozen for the first time in 30 years.

Step by step, the government is rebuilding a railway that passengers can be proud of and rely on. Action is also being taken to tackle the root causes of poor performance, moving more train operating companies into public ownership and delivering the Railways Bill to ensure passengers can benefit from a railway that gets it right first time.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/delay-repay-changes-will-make-rail-travel-easier-under-great-british-railways>