

# Revenue Protection Policy

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VALID FROM 8 DECEMBER 2019

AVANTI  
WEST COAST



# Why is Revenue Protection Important?

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## Protecting fare paying customers

The vast majority of customers pay the correct fare for their travel. However, fare evasion still costs the rail industry an estimated £240 million a year. Not only is fare evasion unfair on customers who pay the correct fare, but this money could also be reinvested into the network - making your journey, and our service, better.

The purpose of revenue protection is to provide value for money for our customers through identifying fare evaders and tackling ticketless travel in a fair but firm manner. Our aim is to ensure that everyone pays the correct fare for their journey.

If you are unsure about what ticket to purchase, the validity of your ticket or have any other questions, please speak to our station staff before boarding a train - they will be happy to provide guidance and support.

## Customer responsibilities

### Before you travel

It is your responsibility to ensure you have a valid ticket before boarding a train.

If ticket buying facilities are available at the station where you start your journey and you are unable to produce a valid ticket, you will have to purchase a ticket on board.

Only full price Anytime tickets with no discount can be purchased on board our trains. However, we understand that sometimes you may be forced to board one of our services without a valid ticket - such as delays resulting in your inability to make your intended connecting train. Our staff have been trained to manage each customers' individual case fairly and sensitively.

If ticket buying facilities are not available at the station that you start your journey from, you must, as soon as reasonably possible, buy a valid ticket to complete your journey. Due to on board limitations, the ticket you purchase may not be the same price as a ticket purchased at your departure station.

# Revenue Protection Policy

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## Our common sense approach to revenue protection

### Treating our customers fairly

We believe all customers should be treated sensitively, after all, anybody can make a mistake. We understand that sometimes customers may forget or misplace a ticket or railcard. Our staff have been trained to deliver a fair and flexible approach to enforcing our revenue protection policy. We trust our colleagues to make the right decisions, drawing on their experience when engaging with customers at any point of their journey.

### Purpose

It is important to us to protect our fare paying customers. We endeavour to ensure that everyone pays the correct, applicable fare for their journey. If you are unable to produce a valid ticket whilst travelling on one of our services, you may need to purchase a full price Anytime ticket with no discount, be issued with an Unpaid Fare Notice, or you may be reported for the consideration of prosecution. It is also important to us to make sure that passengers are not unfairly treated when unintentionally paying an incorrect fare. In this case, you may be asked to pay the amount you still owe for the correct ticket, this is known as the excess.

### The excess fare

We may charge an excess on tickets that are being used incorrectly, bringing the cost of the ticket to that of a valid fare. This procedure allows us to ensure passengers are not unduly penalised in the case of a genuine mistake.

# What are the different ways I can buy my ticket?

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## Online

You can check train times and search for tickets on our website. Please visit: [avantiwestcoast.co.uk](https://avantiwestcoast.co.uk)

Depending on the delivery method you choose, please ensure you leave enough time before the train departs to either;

- Collect them at the station - ensure you have the card used to purchase the tickets when using a ticket machine to collect them
- M-ticket - ensure they have been downloaded to your Avanti West Coast app on the device you will be travelling with and you have activated them before you board the train
- E-ticket mobile barcode - ensure you have received the email with the PDF attachments which are your tickets so that you can open and show the PDF on your device
- E-ticket self-print - ensure you have received the email with the PDF attachments and printed the tickets before you get to the station

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## Avanti West Coast App

You can avoid queues by buying your ticket at any time using the Avanti West Coast app.

You can purchase tickets by downloading the Avanti West Coast app on your smartphone or device. Ensure they have been downloaded to the device you will be travelling with and you have activated them before you board the train.

## At the Station

You can buy tickets using ticket machines at our stations and other principal rail stations with a debit or credit card, or cash. If you would like to purchase your ticket in person, please visit one of our ticket offices.

## By Phone

To book tickets through our travel agents, please contact us on: **0345 528 0253**

# Railcard discounts

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## Railcard Discounts

Discounts are available on lots of fares with a valid 16-25, 26-30, Senior, Family & Friends, HM Forces, Disabled or Two Together Railcard. If you book with a Railcard please keep it with you when you travel. If you don't have it with you then you will need to pay the excess fare up to the valid available fare without the railcard discount.

## Forgotten railcard policy

Customer travelling without their valid railcard

**At stations** - If customer already holds an original discounted ticket. Give opportunity to buy a new railcard\* or issue excess for difference if they can produce the in date railcard (in their name), original ticket and excess ticket along with the receipt, at any Avanti Trains Tickets office. \*Advise customer, should they opt to buy a new railcard, that no refund will be paid against this

**On board** - If customer already holds an original discounted ticket. If the customer is travelling on the correct train, Issue an excess\* for the railcard discounted ticket to the appropriate ticket for the journey. Always issue a receipt with this. Advise customer that a full refund (no refund fee) of the excess\* ticket(s) is available from a AWC Ticket Office if, within 28 days of travel, they can produce a valid railcard (valid for the date of travel), the original discounted ticket(s) and new excess\* ticket(s) bought (along with receipt) and any photo proof of ID Also remind customer that they must carry the valid railcard with them when travelling. Note: You are no longer required to endorse the ticket \*Full refund on excess tickets only when a valid railcard matching the customers ID, the original ticket and the excess ticket

(along with receipt) can be produced. Refunds SHOULD NOT be given for anything other than an Excess ticket.

# How do you protect fare paying passengers?

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## Travelling without a valid ticket

We take fare evasion very seriously and will prosecute offenders who have deliberately tried to avoid paying a fare. If we prosecute, we will seek full compensation and costs.

If you can't produce a valid ticket, we may issue an Unpaid Fare Notice at our discretion.

If you try to avoid paying we will ask for your contact details and you may be cautioned and interviewed in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE). You will be advised of any actions that follow this.

If you give us false details we will assume you are making a deliberate attempt to avoid paying your fare and you may be prosecuted under railway byelaws. Please don't leave your

destination station without having purchased a valid ticket for the journey as failure to do so may be taken as intent to avoid payment.

You need to have a valid ticket for the train you plan to use and the journey you are going to make before you travel - we can't accept proof of purchase, such as a receipt, on its own.

Our revenue protection activities are extensive. This helps us to protect fare paying passengers across the entirety of our network through identifying and preventing fare evasion.

## Ticket checking at stations

Many of our stations have ticket barriers in operation. We undertake pre-departure ticket checks at London Euston and other stations

across our network. In some cases, our Revenue Protection Inspectors (RPIs) carry out ticket checks at stations in plain clothes and you may be stopped upon exiting the station and asked to present a valid ticket.

## Ticket checking onboard

Our Train Managers and RPIs carry out regular ticket checks onboard our services to make sure customers are travelling on the correct train and in the right part of it.

## Onboard Fares

If you are found to be travelling without a valid ticket anywhere on our network, you will have to purchase a new ticket. Only full price Anytime tickets with no discount can be purchased on board our trains (Standard or First Class as appropriate).

## Unpaid Fare Notices

An Unpaid Fare Notice (UFN) may be

# What are the implications



## of fare evasion?

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issued if you're travelling without a valid ticket and can't pay for a ticket when asked. You must pay a UFN within 21 days from the date of issue.

A UFN is a legal document and will be used as evidence if a case is taken to court due to the fare not being paid.

**There are three options for payment of a UFN:**

- Online - Please visit: [IRCAS.co.uk](https://www.ircas.co.uk) (all major credit cards and debit cards, including Electron, are accepted, and the handling fee is £0.25)
- By Phone - Contact IRCAS on: **0870 067 1303**
- By cheque or postal order - Made payable to Independent Revenue Collection and Support (IRCAS) with the UFN reference number written on the reverse. Send your payment to: **IRCAS PO Box 212, Petersfield, GU32 9BQ**

Please allow enough time, including postage, for your payment to reach IRCAS within 21 days or you may incur a non-refundable administration fee. If you haven't paid within this time, and appropriate reminder letters have been sent, the matter may be put forward for prosecution.

## What should I do if I am not happy?

### Appeals

If you wish to dispute an obligation to pay a UFN, you should outline your reasons in writing within 21 days of receiving it.

**There are two ways for a UFN appeal to be made:**

- Online - Please visit: [IRCAS.co.uk](https://www.ircas.co.uk)
- By Post - Send to: **Independent Appeals Service, PO Box 212,**

**Petersfield, GU32 9BQ**

Your reasons for disputing the UFN will be considered independently of Avanti West Coast. If you're not happy with the decision made by IRCAS and wish to seek arbitration, you can contact Transport Focus, the independent rail ombudsman:

- By Email - [advice@transportfocus.org.uk](mailto:advice@transportfocus.org.uk)
- By Phone - **0300 123 2350**
- By Post - Send to: **Transport Focus, Freepost RTEH-XAGE-BYKZ, PO Box 5594, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 9PZ**

### Prosecutions

#### Types of offences:

- Fare evasion in contravention of the Regulations of Railways Act 1889

- Contraventions of the National Railways Byelaws 2005
- Unpaid Fare Notices issued by Avanti West Coast employees as part of their duties where the passenger has failed to pay the fare due in the specified time scales

#### Offences will normally be prosecuted by:

- Avanti West Coast Prosecution Agents



- The Crown Prosecution Service (cases passed on by our agents or the British Transport Police)

## Decision to prosecute

**The decision to prosecute is an important and serious one. We will only prosecute if:**

- The evidence shows that there is a realistic prospect of conviction
- It would be in the public interest and in the interest of justice to prosecute.

**If a conviction is likely the prosecutors will take into account the following:**


- The relevance and admissibility of available evidence
- The reliability of evidence relating to the identity of the alleged offender
- The reliability of any admission and confession including comments as recorded in the Inspector's notebook.


Visit us at

 [avantiwestcoast.co.uk](http://avantiwestcoast.co.uk)


## Customer Resolutions

 [customer.resolutions@avantiwestcoast.co.uk](mailto:customer.resolutions@avantiwestcoast.co.uk)

 0345 528 0253

 FREEPOST Avanti West Coast,  
Victoria Square House, 81 New Street,  
Birmingham, B2 4BA.

## Social Media

 [twitter.com/avantiwestcoast](https://twitter.com/avantiwestcoast)

 [facebook.com/avantiwestcoast](https://facebook.com/avantiwestcoast)

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