

Volunteer expenses FAQs

As a Parkinson's UK volunteer, you are entitled to claim reasonable, actual out-of pocket expenses incurred whilst volunteering, in line with the [Volunteer expenses policy](#). This document answers the most commonly asked questions about making a claim and how to solve problems with a claim you have made.

1. Who do I contact if I have a question about expenses?

If you have any queries or questions about expenses that are not answered on this sheet, please contact the Volunteering team by phone on 0207 963 9328 or by email at volunteering@parkinsons.org.uk.

2. What if I don't want/need to claim my expenses?

We strongly recommend that volunteers do claim any expenses incurred whilst volunteering for Parkinson's UK. However, we understand that not all volunteers will wish to claim their expenses. If this is the case, you can make a claim and donate the amount back to Parkinson's UK. This can raise further funds for the charity if you are a UK taxpayer (an extra 25p per £1 donated) when the donation is Gift Aided, so please complete a **Gift Aid Declaration Form** and send this in along with your donation to Parkinson's UK or in the case of Local Group volunteers, your Local Group.

3. What can I claim for?

Details of what we will reimburse are outlined in the [Volunteer expenses policy](#). Some items, such as professional support, need to be agreed in advance with your staff contact or Local Group.

4. What do you mean by an *actual* expense?

This means that we reimburse only the exact amount you have spent rather than using a flat amount to cover your volunteer expenses per day. If volunteers receive more than the actual amount that they were out of pocket in the first place, then it could be interpreted by HM Revenue and Customs that they are making a profit which can affect benefits or imply that a volunteer is employed and should therefore be taxed.

5. What do I need to make a claim?

To make a claim you will need the following things:

- full detailed proof of purchase e.g. receipts or an itemised bill highlighting the items you are claiming for
- a **volunteer expenses form**
- your bank details - if you claim through Parkinson's UK Office we can pay your expenses directly into your bank account if you provide details on the form

6. What if I didn't get a receipt for something I have purchased or I have an expense incurred over 30 days ago?

Wherever possible you should obtain a detailed receipt for items purchased. However, we understand that this may not always be possible - for example when claiming for items such as road toll charges. In these cases you should clearly state on the expenses form that no receipt was

available. Where a receipt was issued and is not provided, we will be unable to reimburse you. Please note that we can not accept credit or debit card receipts as proof of purchase.

Volunteer expense claims should be submitted as soon as possible after they have been incurred. They must be submitted within 30 days to ensure you are not left out-of-pocket for long periods of time and that our finance records are kept as up to date as possible. If a claim is submitted after 30 days without a valid reason, we will be unable to reimburse you.

7. How long will it take to process my claim?

We don't want you to be out-of-pocket for long periods of time. So, when you claim through the UK Office, we aim to process all volunteer expense claims within 4 weeks from the date the form was submitted. If information is incorrect or missing we will make contact with you as quickly as possible to resolve the issue. If you are claiming expenses back through your Local Group this process may take longer depending on how regularly your group meets.

8. How will the money be reimbursed to me?

We know people prefer to receive their expenses in different ways. That's why we offer two different options (for claims processed through the UK Office):

- **BACS** - This is a transfer of money directly into your bank account. We prefer to reimburse your expenses directly into your bank account as this is quicker for you and saves the charity money. The first time you claim expenses by BACS you will also need to complete the bank details section on the volunteer expense claim form.
- **Cheque** - We can issue a cheque for the amount which is sent to your home address which you would need to pay into the bank yourself.

Volunteer expenses claimed through Local Groups will usually be reimbursed by cheque but occasionally with petty cash. For amounts under £10 per month - e.g. milk for refreshments at a meeting - volunteers may be reimbursed if they provide proof of purchase with the following attached:

- their printed name and signature
- the first line of their address
- a few words explaining the reason for the spend.

Volunteers must sign a receipt to confirm that they have received the cash or cheque. These receipts must then be kept in the Local Group's financial records.

9. What should I do if I don't receive reimbursement within four weeks?

If you have not received your expenses after four weeks of submitting a claim through your staff contact, you should contact the Volunteering team on volunteering@parkinsons.org.uk or on 020 7963 9328.

Claiming expenses through a Local Group may take longer than four weeks as groups don't always meet regularly. However if you have any queries about a claim you have submitted please contact your Treasurer or Support Group contact.

10. What is the process for claiming expenses through my staff contact?

To claim expenses back for any volunteer role not linked to a Local Group you will need to complete a **volunteer expenses form**, ensuring all items of expenditure claimed for occurred within the last 30 days, and attach or scan and insert all receipts to the form. This should then be given or sent to your staff contact.

11. What is the process for claiming expenses through my Local Group?

To claim back expenses incurred whilst volunteering for your Local Group you should complete a **volunteer expenses form**, ensuring all items of expenditure being claimed for occurred within the last 30 days. You must then attach or scan and insert all receipts to the form. This should then be given or sent to the designated person within your group who processes expenses. This is usually the Treasurer or Support Group contact.

For very small expenses (expenses under £10 in a one month period) a **volunteer expenses form** is not necessary and volunteers can claim back from their Local Group by providing detailed proof of purchase as detailed in section 8. Treasurers or Support Group contacts must keep records of all reimbursed claims as outlined in the Treasurers' guide.

If you are told you cannot claim expenses by your group but believe you should be able to claim, then please contact the Volunteering team.

12. I volunteer for my Local Group and for other roles within the charity, how do I claim my expenses?

You will need to complete a separate expense form for each volunteer role that you undertake. This is because they need to be approved and processed in different ways. Your Local Group is responsible for approving expenses incurred as part of any group activity, and each of your other roles within the charity will have a staff contact responsible for approving expenses incurred as part of those roles.

13. I've purchased an item on behalf of my Local Group, can I include this in my expenses?

Yes, items of expenditure related to the delivery of group activities which have been agreed in advance by the group/committee can be claimed back through group funds. More information on what group funds can be spent on can be found in the Local Group Directory.

14. I am the main carer for a person with Parkinson's, can I make a claim for a professional carer to stand in during my regular volunteering hours?

No, unfortunately we are only able to cover the costs for a professional carer where a training, meeting or event falls outside of your regular volunteering hours. As a charity we must be mindful of costs and we expect volunteers to be able to commit to the regular volunteering hours of the role as outlined in the volunteer role description.

15. I am currently claiming state benefits, can I claim expenses?

Volunteers are able to claim benefits and expenses whilst volunteering their time at Parkinson's UK.

It's important you tell your benefits advisor that you are volunteering and that you will be having your actual, out-of-pocket expenses reimbursed. You may need to provide proof of expenses, including photocopies of the original receipts. If your benefits advisor asks you to provide a letter confirming your volunteering status, please contact the Volunteering team who will be able to provide you with one. For more information on volunteering whilst claiming state benefits please contact your benefits advisor or visit www.direct.gov.uk.