

## Volunteer expenses policy

Parkinson's UK was founded in 1969 by volunteers. More than 40 years on, volunteers are central to everything we do. Much of our work wouldn't be possible without their enthusiasm and commitment.

Volunteers must not be disadvantaged in any way by volunteering for Parkinson's UK, including financially. We will reimburse all reasonable and necessary out-of-pocket expenses incurred through carrying out volunteering activities, in line with this policy.

Parkinson's UK has set appropriate levels of reimbursement in line with national standards of good practice and our staff expenses policy. We must all remember that our funding comes from voluntary donations and make every effort to keep expenses to a minimum required to achieve our goals. The payment of expenses does not create any form of contract between Parkinson's UK and volunteers. Any out-of-pocket expenses reimbursed in line with this policy are not considered as income by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Please read this policy in conjunction with the [Volunteer expenses FAQs](#).

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## **1. Who is a Parkinson's UK volunteer?**

A Parkinson's UK volunteer is someone who has a formal relationship with the charity and gives their time, experience and skills unpaid to undertake a defined volunteer role to deliver the work of Parkinson's UK.

This policy covers ALL Parkinson's UK volunteers including Trustees. It does not cover expenses for people carrying out activities in other capacities such as user involvement or someone running a marathon.

## **2. Before making an expense claim**

Before making an expenses claim, volunteers must check that:

- the expenses were a necessary expense incurred as a result of undertaking their Parkinson's UK volunteer role
- the expenses are reasonable and were made using the most cost effective method available, taking into account personal safety and wellbeing
- where applicable, prior approval had been sought in advance for expenses such as taxi journeys and overnight accommodation
- all expenses being claimed for occurred within the last 30 days
- they have proof of purchase, where available

## **3. Travel**

Parkinson's UK will reimburse volunteers for travel to and from their regular place of volunteering up to a maximum of 50 miles each way as well as any travel undertaken as part of their volunteer role, including travel to different locations, meetings, trainings and events. For example, a volunteer who usually volunteers in Edinburgh but travels to Manchester for an event can claim the cost of their return journey to Manchester.

### **Public transport**

Standard class public transport must be used when travelling on behalf of Parkinson's UK. Volunteers must book tickets as far in advance as possible, making use of any concessions, special offers or discounts. This includes bus, coach, train, tram, ferry and, where appropriate, air travel. Tickets purchased must be for journeys made on behalf of Parkinson's UK only.

If you are using a pre-pay scheme such as Oyster Card in London, a print-out of the individual journeys made must be submitted, highlighting which journeys are being claimed for. Oyster Card 'top ups' will not be reimbursed as expenses claimed must be for the actual cost of travel.

We are unable to reimburse the purchase of any form of season ticket or railcard (such as young persons, senior or disability railcards) as these can be used for other journeys so are classed as a taxable benefit by HMRC.

Any volunteers wishing to travel first class can pay the supplementary amount themselves if they are happy to but this will not be reimbursed.

### **Taxis**

Taxis must only be used when considered essential and where public transport is not practical, accessible, safe, or in the event of an emergency. When planning to use a taxi, we advise volunteers to provide a quote or estimation to their staff contact or their Local Group in advance for approval.

### **Driving private vehicles**

If public transport is impractical or more expensive than the cost of using a private vehicle, we will reimburse the cost of travel at the following set mileage rates:

<u>The first 10,000 miles in the tax year</u>	<u>Over 10,000 miles in the tax year</u>
Car 45p per mile Motorcycle 24p per mile Bicycle 20p per mile	Car 25p per mile Motorcycle 24p per mile Bicycle 20p per mile

*The above rates are set by HMRC and are current at time of writing. Volunteers and staff must be aware that these rates are reviewed annually by HMRC and any changes are at the discretion of Parkinson's UK. The current rates will be clearly printed on the volunteer expenses claim form and Parkinson's UK will ensure this is kept up-to-date to reflect any changes to the mileage rates.*

We have produced guidance for volunteers using their own vehicle which can be requested from your staff contact.

### **Parking**

Parking costs can be claimed for, if they are necessarily incurred and are supported by receipts.

### **Toll and congestion charges**

Toll and congestion charges can be claimed where necessary.

Fines for non-payment of congestion charges will not be reimbursed.

### **Penalties**

We do not reimburse parking fines, speeding tickets or other driving offences under any circumstances.

#### **4. Subsistence**

Please note that the amounts set out in this policy are the maximum amounts that can be claimed for actual expenses incurred for food and drink and are not an allowance or a target. It is important that receipts are submitted with all claims.

##### **Breakfast**

If people stay overnight as part of their volunteering and breakfast is not included with the accommodation, volunteers can claim up to a maximum of £5 for breakfast.

##### **Lunch**

When volunteering for a full day (over 5 hours) and lunch is not provided, we will reimburse the cost of lunch up to the value of £10.

##### **Snacks**

We understand that if someone volunteers for a particularly long day or during the evening they may need additional subsistence. In these circumstances the cost of additional subsistence up to the value of £10 may be claimed.

##### **Evening meal**

If people stay overnight as part of their volunteering, an evening meal can be claimed up to a maximum of £20.

##### **Drinks**

Please note that under no circumstances is alcohol an allowable expense.

#### **5. Accommodation**

Very occasionally volunteers may need to stay overnight in order to attend training, a meeting or an event related to their volunteer role.

If staying inside the M25 up to £140 per night may be reimbursed; outside the M25 £90 per night may be reimbursed.

Rooms must be booked on a single occupancy basis. Any volunteers wishing to book a double occupancy room may pay the supplementary amounts themselves but this will not be reimbursed. However exceptions will be made when a volunteer requires their carer to share their room.

Volunteers who require accommodation for training, meetings or events at the UK Office must consult their staff contact as it may be possible to book and pay for a hotel room centrally using an account we have with a local hotel.

## **6. Childcare, professional support and administration**

### **Childcare costs**

We are unable to reimburse the costs of care for children during regular, agreed volunteering hours. However, occasionally volunteers may be expected to attend training or events outside of their normal volunteering hours. In this instance, the actual costs of care provided by a registered child-minder will be reimbursed up to a maximum of £5 per hour where agreed with their staff contact or Local Group in advance.

### **Professional carer costs**

Parkinson's UK is unable to meet the costs of professional carers to stand in during a volunteer's regular volunteering hours. However, we will cover costs when a training, meeting or event falls outside of your regular volunteering hours. In these instances, we will meet the costs of subsistence and travel for professional carers in line with the agreed limits set out in this policy and, where necessary, the cost of a carer's fee up to a maximum of £20 per hour where agreed in advance with the volunteer's staff contact or local group.

### **Professional support**

We recognise that some volunteers may have additional support needs and will require professional support to enable them to volunteer. In these instances Parkinson's UK will meet the costs of this. The type of support required will depend on the volunteer's individual needs but may include:

- assistance during travel
- a sign language interpreter
- translator
- a hearing loop.

Volunteers must discuss their additional support needs with their staff contact or Local Group before purchasing or arranging support.

### **Administration costs**

There may be times when volunteers incur administration costs undertaking their role, for example when making phone calls, printing materials or sending letters on behalf of Parkinson's UK.

We will reimburse the costs of phone calls, stationery and postage when supported by receipts or an itemised bill. When claiming for phone calls the relevant calls must be highlighted on the bill. Under certain circumstances we will also reimburse the costs of portable equipment that remains the property of Parkinson's UK such as lockable case boxes.

We are unable to reimburse the costs of furniture, utilities including gas, electricity, broadband/phone line installation and rental costs or computer equipment (except when computer equipment is purchased with Local Group funds solely for the purpose of delivering group activities).

## **7. How to claim expenses**

Depending on the role the volunteer is undertaking, expenses will either be claimed back:

- a) Through the relevant Local Group's funds
- b) Through the volunteer's staff contact and the Finance Department at the Parkinson's UK Office.

For all Local Group activities option a) must be used. For all other volunteers, including Trustees, option b) must be used. If volunteers undertake two separate volunteering roles then expenses relating to the two roles must be claimed separately through the appropriate channels.

Whichever process is being used to claim expenses a **volunteer expense claim form** must be used, except under occasional circumstances, and detailed proof of purchase must always be provided. There is also a **Volunteer Expenses FAQ sheet** which contains more information on how to claim expenses. Volunteers will be provided with a copy of the form as part of their induction.

In order to avoid being out-of-pocket for long periods of time, volunteers are asked to make regular claims and ensure they claim back within 30 days from the date of expenditure.

The Parkinson's UK Finance Department are committed to processing all volunteer expense claims submitted to them within four weeks from the date they receive the form. If information is incorrect or missing, a member of the team will make contact with the volunteer as quickly as possible to resolve the issue. Claims made through a Local Group may take longer to be processed.

We strongly encourage volunteers to claim back 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, we would still encourage volunteers to make a claim but to donate it back to the charity. We recognise this may be more time-consuming, but it gives any volunteers who are able to claim Gift Aid the opportunity to help to raise extra funds for the charity and enables us to understand the true costs of involving volunteers in our work. More details on how to do this can be found in the **Volunteer Expenses FAQ sheet**.

## **8. Further information**

Volunteers who have questions about expenses that are not covered in this policy can speak to their staff contact or contact the Parkinson's UK Volunteering team on 020 7963 9328 or [volunteering@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@parkinsons.org.uk) for further information.