

## Volunteer expenses policy

As a Parkinson's UK volunteer, we want to make sure you aren't out of pocket, and therefore reimburse all reasonable expenses incurred while carrying out volunteering activities.

Our funding comes from voluntary donations, so we all have a responsibility to keep our expenses to reasonable levels and use donations in the most effective ways possible. We have set levels of reimbursement, in line with UK standards of good practice, and our staff expenses policy, both which are described below.

We have also developed a *Volunteer Expenses FAQ sheet* to answer any questions you may have about claiming your expenses. And, if you have any questions that aren't answered here, don't forget you can talk to your staff contact.

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## 1. Travel

All travel costs incurred as part of your volunteer role will be reimbursed. Please talk to your staff contact before travelling if a journey will be more than 100 miles in total.

### Public transport

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

If you are using a pre-pay scheme such as Oyster Card in London, please submit a printout of the individual journeys made, highlighting which journeys you are claiming for. We are unable to reimburse Oyster Card 'top-ups' 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). That's because these can be used for other journeys so are classed as a taxable benefit by HMRC.

If you would like to travel first class, we would ask you to pay the additional costs.

### Taxis

We want to ensure the charity's money is used as effectively as possible, so we ask all our staff, volunteers and supporters to only use taxis when necessary.

### Driving private vehicles

When using your own vehicle, you will be reimbursed in accordance with 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	Car 25p per mile
Motorcycle 24p per mile	Motorcycle 24p per mile
Bicycle 20p per mile	Bicycle 20p per mile

The above rates are set by HMRC and are current at time of writing. These rates are reviewed annually by HMRC and any changes are at the discretion of Parkinson's UK. Mileage rates are clearly printed on the volunteer expenses claim form and we will ensure this is kept up to date to reflect any changes.

### Parking

Please provide receipts when claiming parking costs.

### Toll and congestion charges

Where relevant, you will be reimbursed for toll and congestion charges.

### Penalties and fines

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We cannot reimburse parking or congestion fines, speeding tickets or other driving offences.

## 2. Subsistence

Parkinson's UK will reimburse your subsistence up to the following rates detailed below. Please make sure you submit receipts with your claims.

### Breakfast

If you stay overnight as part of your volunteering, and breakfast is not included with the accommodation, you can claim up to a maximum of £10.

### Lunch

When volunteering for five hours or more or over lunchtime, and lunch is not provided, you can claim the cost of lunch up to the value of £10.

### Snacks

We understand that if you volunteer for a particularly long day, or during the evening, you may need additional food and drink. In these circumstances you can claim additional food and soft drinks up to the value of £10.

### Evening meal

If you stay overnight as part of your volunteering, the cost of an evening meal can be claimed up to a maximum of £20.

### Alcoholic drinks

Please note that alcohol is not an allowable expense.

## 3. Accommodation

Occasionally you may need to stay overnight to attend training, a meeting or an event related to your volunteer role.

If staying inside the M25, up to £150 a night may be claimed. Outside the M25, £100 a night may be claimed.

Rooms must be booked on a single occupancy basis. If you book a double occupancy room, we would ask you to pay the additional amount. However, if you require your carer to share your room, the charity will cover the full cost.

If you require accommodation for training, meetings or events at the UK office, please talk to your staff contact first as it may be possible to book and pay for a hotel room centrally using an account we have with a local hotel.

## 4. Childcare, carer, professional support and administration

### Childcare costs

We are unable to reimburse the costs of care for children during regular, agreed volunteering hours. However, you will be reimbursed for expenses incurred when you are asked to attend training or events outside of your normal volunteering hours. We will reimburse the actual costs of care provided by a registered childminder to a maximum of £8 an hour. Please talk to your staff contact or local group before booking childcare.

### **Informal carer costs**

An informal carer may be a relative, friend or partner who provides unpaid support to a person who, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, cannot manage without their support. When a volunteer would be unable to participate in training, a meeting or event without their support, the costs of subsistence, travel and accommodation for the carer will be covered. The maximum amounts that can be claimed are set out in the subsistence and accommodation section above.

### **Professional carer costs**

Parkinson's UK is unable to meet the costs of professional carers standing in during your volunteering hours. However, you can claim for costs incurred when a training, meeting or event falls outside the hours you would have normally volunteered. 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. Where necessary, we will meet the costs of a carer's fee up to a maximum of £20 an hour, when agreed in advance with your staff contact or local group.

### **Professional support**

We recognise that some volunteers may have additional needs and may require professional support to enable them to volunteer. In these instances, you will be reimbursed for the costs incurred. The type of support required will depend on your individual needs but may include:

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

Please discuss your additional needs with your staff contact or local group before purchasing or arranging support.

### **Administration costs**

These may include:

- cost of phone calls
- postage
- stationery
- printing materials

When claiming for stationery or postage, please provide the relevant receipts. When claiming for phone calls, please highlight the relevant calls on the bill where possible. We understand the potential challenges of getting an itemised bill so you can claim call charges

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up to £5 where an itemised bill isn't available. Under certain circumstances, you may also be reimbursed for the costs of portable equipment, such as lockable case boxes or paper shredders. Please talk to your staff contact for more information.

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 delivering or supporting group activities).

## 5. Family volunteering

The out-of-pocket expenses of children volunteering with their parents, guardians or carers, as part of our family volunteering initiative, may be claimed for in line with this policy.

## 6. How to claim expenses

Depending on the volunteer role you are undertaking, you can claim your expenses back through either:

- your local group's funds
- your staff contact and the Finance Department at the Parkinson's UK office

For all local group roles, the first option should be used. For all other volunteer roles, including trustees, please use the second option. If you undertake two separate volunteering roles, expenses relating to the two roles must be claimed separately through the appropriate channels.

Whatever process is being used to claim expenses, a *volunteer expense claim form* must be used, except under occasional circumstances. Detailed proof of purchase must always be provided. The *Volunteer Expenses FAQ sheet* contains more information on how to claim expenses. All volunteers will be given a copy of the expenses form as part of their induction.

The Parkinson's UK Finance team aims to process all volunteer expense claims within three weeks of the date they receive the completed form. If information is incorrect or missing, a member of the team will get in touch to resolve the issue. Any forms submitted with incomplete information could result in a delay to payment. Claims made through a local group may take longer to be processed depending on how regularly your group meets.

We encourage you to claim back expenses incurred while volunteering for Parkinson's UK. However, we understand that not everyone will wish to do this. If this is the case, we would still encourage you to make a claim but to donate it back to the charity. We recognise this may be more time-consuming, but it gives volunteers who are able to claim Gift Aid the opportunity to help raise extra funds for the charity and enables us to assess the true costs of involving volunteers in our work. Details on how to do this can be found in the *Volunteer Expenses FAQ sheet*.

## **7. How we handle your information**

By making a volunteer expenses claim, you will be asked to supply certain details, including address, contact information and bank details. We collect this information only to process your expenses claim. We keep details on record within our central finance database for statutory accounting reasons and to be able to expedite any subsequent claims in line with current data protection regulations. No details from the finance database are ever used for any purpose other than to make payment and are never passed to any third party.

## **8. Have any questions?**

If you have questions about expenses that are not covered in this policy, look at our *Frequently asked questions*. If your question isn't answered there, please get in touch with your staff contact or the Parkinson's UK Volunteering team on **020 7963 9328** or [volunteering@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@parkinsons.org.uk).