

# Volunteer Expenses Policy

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## Policy history

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0.1	Emma Connolly	18/01/2016	
0.2	Emma Connolly	25/02/2016	From feedback from Engagement committee and others.
1.0	Emma Connolly	17/03/2016	From further feedback by the Engagement committee followed by final agreement
1.1	Emma Connolly	03/05/2016	From further feedback from Trustees / Finance Director
1.2	Emma Connolly	06/06/2016	From further clarification about mobile phone claims

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## 1. Purpose and scope of the policy

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### 1.1 Expectation and compliance

This policy is intended to provide a clear set of rules for all volunteers within the MND Association; to ensure what can and can't be reimbursed is known.

This policy covers travel, subsistence and other expenditure which has been incurred whilst volunteering for the MND Association. As a charity the Association ask all volunteers to ensure their expenses are appropriate and proportionate.

Expenses incurred by an individual must be reclaimed via an expense claim form.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Volunteers are treated fairly, reimbursed promptly, and in full for any legitimate cost they have incurred. Only actual costs incurred may be reimbursed.
- Any expenditure gives the Association best value for money and that the administration costs are kept to a minimum by streamlined processes.

Expenses do not represent a reward or compensation for loss of time

### 1.2 Importance of claiming expenses

Volunteers play a crucial role in the Association. Volunteers help to ensure that people living with, and affected by, MND receive the support and services they need.

It is important that volunteers claim their expenses. The Association wants to ensure that as many people as possible are able to volunteer, and the Association are keen to ensure that no one is disadvantaged financially by volunteering for us.

Expenses information would be valuable if the Association were to be approached by external funders for a project, as it allows the Association to show the sum of the costs of supporting people living with and affected by MND.

Reimbursement of expenses is also important from an equal opportunities perspective. Volunteers who may be reliant on benefits or on a lower income should not be excluded because they cannot afford the cost of travel to a volunteer event or training course.

Not reimbursing expenses may become a barrier to people giving their time to the Association.

Therefore it is essential that all volunteer expenses are claimed and reimbursed accurately, swiftly and regularly.

The Association are aware that some volunteers may not wish to receive reimbursement, despite the reasons above. Whilst recognising a volunteer's wishes there is still the opportunity to process the expense claim (therefore giving full knowledge of volunteering costs); should a volunteer wish to make a donation independent of this expense that is of course always the welcomed.

Please contact the Volunteering Team if you have any problems claiming your expenses.

## 2. Receipts

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### 2.1 Volunteer responsibility

When claiming expenses, volunteers must provide an explanation of why the expense has been incurred and be clear that it is appropriate expenditure on Association business.

With the exception of mileage claims all expenses must be supported by a receipt, invoice or other proof of expenditure. This verifies that an expense has been incurred, not only to the expenses approver but also for HMRC, should the Association be subject to an inspection.

Credit card receipts are not appropriate on their own unless they contain details of items purchased.

Named staff contacts and branch treasurers have a responsibility to check that the expenses being claimed comply with the requirements of this policy before approving a reimbursement.

### 2.2 Lost or missing receipts

The Association accepts that it is not always possible to obtain receipts when volunteers are undertaking their volunteering role.

If volunteers fail to produce receipts for a claim they can provide a declaration of “no receipt” for items totalling £10 or less (noted on the claim form) without question. Authorisation of items valued at more than £10 but less than £100 may be paid at the named staff contact or branch treasurer’s discretion after explanation by the volunteer. Above £100, a Regional Delivery Manager or Head of Volunteering will be required to approve the reimbursement. However, persistent failure to produce valid receipts may result in subsequent claims not being approved unless supported by valid receipts.

## 3. Travel and accommodation

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### 3.1 Private vehicle usage and mileage re-imburement

Prior to journeys being undertaken volunteers must ensure that they have read and fully understood the Association's [vehicle use guidelines](#). Volunteers must only use a taxed vehicle which is roadworthy with a current MOT. Volunteers must inform their insurance company that they will be using the vehicle for volunteering purposes. Please note that neither staff nor volunteers may assist individuals into and out of vehicles, as they are not insured for moving and handling of people.

The rate per mile which may be claimed for the use of private vehicles is:

- For the first 10,000 miles per annum (tax year) 45p/mile, but this may be amended by the Board of Trustees at any time.
- Thereafter 25p/mile, however as above this may be subject to potential changes by the Board of Trustees.
- An additional allowance of 5p per mile is claimable by the driver, for each additional volunteer or staff member that is travelling in the vehicle as a passenger (this should not exceed the maximum capacity of a vehicle).

Please note it is often considerably cheaper to travel by public transport than by car. For longer distances it is also sometimes more cost-effective to hire a car, but please agree this in advance with those who sign off the expenses. Please try to use the cheapest means of transport where it is safe and practical to do so.

### 3.2 Other forms of travel (including train, aeroplane and other public transport)

Travel on public transport should always be considered (if cost effective) and booked as far in advance as possible / practical in order to take advantage of the full range of discounts.

If a volunteer is required to travel long distances or overseas whilst volunteering, please contact your named staff contact and branch treasurer to obtain agreement prior to booking. Aeroplane, train, coach, bus or taxi fares should be reclaimed at the amount incurred, where accompanied by a valid receipt and, where possible, agreement has been sought prior to booking. When volunteers are required to make last minute travel arrangements where no prior agreement has been made they will be expected to ensure that they have utilised the most cost-effective means available to them (exceptions for this include the need for specific travel due to disability). Where this is not the case the Association reserves the right to provide only partial reimbursement.

Volunteers are expected to travel in standard / second class or by the most economical means. Any volunteer wishing to travel business / first class may do so as long as they pay the balance between the most economical fare available and the actual expenditure.

When travel is required in major cities, volunteers are asked to utilise contactless reimbursement or oyster card facilities where possible as in most cities this will reduce the cost of travel to the Association. A print out of the individual journey made should be submitted with the claim form; highlighting which journey is being claimed.

*Please do not pay for journeys using contactless credit or debit cards as no receipts will be issued for this payment method.*

The Association are unable to reimburse the purchase of any form of season ticket or railcard (such as young person, senior or disability railcard). Due to the nature of these cards they can also be used for personal journeys so are classed as a taxable benefit by HMRC.

Taxis should only be used when considered essential, and where public transport is not practical, accessible, safe, or in case of emergency.

### **3.3 Accommodation and subsistence**

#### **3.3.1 Accommodation**

Agreement should be obtained prior to booking from the volunteer's named staff contact, the relevant branch treasurer, and budget holder (where these differ, such as External Affairs / Fundraising Teams for national roles / events).

Overnight en-suite accommodation in a hotel (including breakfast): up to a maximum of £110 per night (£150 in London) will be reimbursed. Accommodation costs over and above this amount may in exceptional circumstances be permitted when staying at an Association organised events such as the national AGM and regional conferences, but this must be agreed in advance by the budget holder.

The Association is aware that in certain situations (such as national / regional conferences or training events) it is cost-effective and preferable to receive overnight accommodation from a family member or friend. In these situations and with prior agreement from the volunteer's named staff contact or relevant branch or group, a gift is permissible up to a maximum value of £20 total.

Proof of purchase of gifts is required, and an explanation as for any other expense; however the Association gifts of alcohol or money will not be reimbursed.

#### **3.3.2 Subsistence**

Subsistence costs should only be claimed where necessary for the task

If a volunteer is attending a conference or training event where refreshments and meals are provided, additional subsistence may not be claimed. However, when volunteering for a full day (over 4 hours and at scheduled mealtimes) and refreshments and lunch are not provided, it would be expected that this will be reimbursed at the agreed rate.

Current rates are:

- Breakfast / lunch / refreshments: up to a maximum of £10 in total per day
- Evening meal: up to a maximum of £20 per day (No alcohol will be reimbursed)

Detailed receipts to support expenses incurred for subsistence should be included with the claim form. Please provide a VAT / itemised receipt rather than a credit card receipt. Any amount in excess of the current rates will not be reimbursed.

## 4. Other expenses

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### 4.1 Car parking charges, penalties, fines and accidents

The cost of parking whilst volunteering with the Association will be reimbursed as long as the claim is accompanied by a receipt totalling the amount; however, on occasion the Association is aware that receipts are not given. In this case please refer to section 2.2 of this policy.

Where practical the Association may reimburse toll charges incurred whilst travelling for the Association. Volunteers are asked to avoid toll charges where it is practical to do so. Please ensure a receipt is presented as proof of the charge.

Fines and charges incurred whilst driving on Association business will NOT be reimbursed and should be paid by the driver of the vehicle. Fines and charges include, but are not limited to: penalties for failure to pay congestion charges, parking fines and motoring offences including speeding.

### 4.2 Other organisations

#### 4.2.1 Donations to other voluntary organisations in lieu of services or goods

Reimbursements to other charities would mean the Association failing its duty to its donors who have given to the cause of the MND Association. This does not; however apply to reimbursements to other charitable organisations for genuine Association purposes such as rent of a meeting room etc. Whilst it may not always be possible these should be invoiced to the Association rather than direct reimbursement by an individual volunteer.

### 4.3 Telephone and 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 the Association. The Association can reimburse the costs of phone calls, stationery and postage when supported by receipts or an itemised bill, or pre agreed arrangement for mobile phone usage / contract. If an itemised bill is not available, volunteers can claim 30p per 10 minutes of call, up to a value of £10 per month.

The Association recommend that if a volunteering role is dependent upon the use of a mobile device this may (with agreement of named staff contact or relevant branch or group) be provided or one is purchased.

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



## **4.4 Childcare and carer support**

### **4.4.1 Childcare**

Where it is not desirable, practicable or appropriate to bring the young person to an event the association may contribute to the cost of child care. In this instance, the actual costs of care provided by a registered childminder will be reimbursed up to a maximum of £7 per hour where agreed with the volunteer's named staff contact and relevant branch or group in advance.

### **4.4.2 Carer support**

The Association recognises that many of our volunteers are carers for people with MND (amongst others). Whilst the Association cannot allow volunteers to bring the person they care for along to volunteering events or trainings outside of their regular volunteering hours, it is understood that alternative arrangements may need to be made. Where a volunteer is the main carer for a person the Association will reimburse actual costs of care provided, by a professional carer, up to a maximum of £20 per hour where agreed in advance with the volunteer's named staff contact and relevant branch or group.

## 5. How to claim

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### **5.1 Timescales for submission and reimbursement of expense claims and identifying expenses approvers.**

Expenses incurred should be reclaimed using the claim form, available on the Volunteer Zone. All volunteers are responsible for complying with this policy and correctly completing and submitting their own claim forms. The form must be completed in full with explanations of all expenses.

All expenditure should be appropriately allocated to either local or national expenditure.

As a general rule claims should be submitted monthly. The Association reserves the right to not reimburse any expenses which are claimed more than six months after they were incurred.

#### **5.1.1 Branch volunteers, Association Visitors, and other care volunteers connected to a branch**

Volunteers for a branch will claim expenses (using the expense claim form, with receipts attached) from their branch treasurer. The treasurer will then arrange for a review of the requested expenses and approval is required by two branch authorised signatories. The reimbursement of claims should be made primarily by cheque reimbursement.

#### **5.1.2 Group volunteers, Association Visitors and other care volunteers connected to a group and national roles**

Volunteers for a group will claim expenses (utilising the expense claim form, with receipts attached) directly from the central Finance Team at David Niven House. It will then be processed and reimbursed within two weeks. Reimbursement can be made electronically directly to the volunteer's bank account, or by cheque reimbursement depending upon individual preference.

#### **5.1.3 Trustees**

Trustees will claim expenses (utilising the expense claim form, with receipts attached) from the central Governance and Legacy Officer at David Niven House. It will then be processed, signed by the Chair of Board of Trustees (or Honorary Treasurer in absence of the Chair) and the Director of Finance , these will be reimbursed within two weeks. Reimbursement can be made electronically directly to the Trustees bank account, or by cheque reimbursement depending upon individual preference.