

## Volunteer Expenses

At GoVolHerts, we believe in fostering an inclusive volunteering environment where financial barriers do not hinder participation. So, it's good practice to have a simple system to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses.

Here is our guidance on how to manage volunteer expenses in the best way.

### **Have a volunteer expenses policy**

It's imperative to have a volunteer expenses policy in place to outline reimbursement procedures clearly.

#### *What expenses should be reimbursed?*

Any reasonable expense incurred as a part of volunteering for your organisation such as:

- Travel costs
- Food
- Care of dependents
- Special equipment not provided by the organisation

Actual expenses should be reimbursed – don't play a flat rate allowance. This may be simpler to administer but may cause problems for your organisation and for the volunteer in terms of taxation and/or employment rights!

Provide a simple system for volunteers to claim their expenses and ask for claims to be submitted within a reasonable time-limit.

Consider how and how often you reimburse volunteers. For those on low incomes, a cash reimbursement on the day may make a huge difference. Other volunteers may be happy to receive a monthly bank transfer.

### **Reimbursing in advance**

This may be another option to encourage those on lower incomes who may struggle. You should still check receipts for expenses, and any payments over the allowance would have to be claimed back. This may work well for regular volunteers with consistent expenses.

### **Mileage Expenses**

HM Revenue & Customs set a rate for this – payments over this could impact of the tax status of volunteers or those on benefits. For the latest rates, check: [Rates and allowances: travel — mileage and fuel allowances - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rates-and-allowances-travel-mileage-and-fuel-allowances)

### **Reimbursing for care of dependants**

Your organisation should decide on whether you will reimburse for formal childcare costs (such as attending a creche) or for informal (babysitting, which may be provided by a friend or family member). Remember, this should be only for reimbursing out-of-pocket expenses that have been

actually incurred and you will need a receipt/invoice for cover any claim. The same consideration would need to be given if your volunteer is the primary carer for another adult who required some form of respite care to enable them to volunteer.

**What to do when volunteers don't wish to claim expenses**

You can have an expenses policy and make it as simple as possible, but some people may feel that they don't need to claim expenses or that, as you are a charity, they shouldn't. It's good practice to encourage every volunteer to claim their expenses – you don't want those who really need to claim to feel stigmatised. If some volunteers feel that they really don't need their expenses covered, maybe suggest that they claim and then donate this back to your organisation or another charity. This way, everyone is happy, and you still have a clear picture of volunteer expenses for any reporting that may be required.