

VOLUNTEER EXPENSES POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The Volunteer Expenses Policy is designed to clarify what expenses volunteers can claim and how to seek reimbursement. It helps ensure that volunteers aren't out-of-pocket for necessary costs they incur while helping Newlife. The policy promotes transparency and fairness, making it clear which expenses are eligible, the procedures for submitting claims, and the required documentation.

2. PURPOSE

The Newlife Volunteer Expenses Policy provides guidance on which expenses are to be claimed for and aims to promote a reimbursement procedure that is fair and consistent across the whole organisation.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

Newlife greatly appreciates and values all volunteers donation of time and skill. We are committed to ensuring that no volunteer is out of pocket because of expenses incurred whilst carrying out their role.

Newlife needs to ensure that any expenditure is relevant to our charitable objectives and can be fully justified, therefore all expenses should be reasonable and kept to a minimum.

It is also important that there is transparency with all payments and therefore all claims must always be supported by the relevant receipts for auditing purposes. Wherever it is possible we will ask for a valid VAT receipt to be submitted along with any expenses claim made.

4. DEFINITION

A volunteer is anyone who freely chooses to undertake supporting Newlife the Charity for Disabled Children through the giving of their time, skills and experience without financial remuneration beyond out of pocket expenses. It is support undertaken by choice and is unpaid.

5. SCOPE

This policy applies to all volunteers who carry out their role within the whole Newlife organisation.

Voluntary work experience placements, such as people on government funded work experience programmes organised through Job Centre Plus or on traineeships, are not covered by this policy. In most cases people taking part in such programmes can claim their expenses from their work experience placement provider.

The reimbursement of expenses to volunteers are only given to cover any out of pocket costs that have been incurred and do not represent any financial reward or any compensation for loss of time. Payment of expenses does not change the recipient's status as a volunteer.

6. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Newlife the Charity for Disabled Children will value and recognise the contribution of our volunteers, and ensure there is reimbursement of agreed out of pocket expenses.

Volunteers are expected to act honestly and responsibly and to submit fair and reasonable agreed out of pocket expenses in accordance with this policy.

The relevant Newlife the Charity for Disabled Children employees are expected to check that claims comply with this policy, deal with them promptly and ensure they are claimed in accordance with the correct process.

7. WHAT CAN BE CLAIMED FOR

7.1 Before a claim is made, consideration needs to be given to the following;

- The expenses that are being claimed are reasonable and only cover any out of pocket expenditure and;
- Prior approval and agreement has been sought in advance with the appropriate Manager of the department where the volunteering activity is taking place. If it is unclear to a volunteer or staff who would be the appropriate manager they can clarify by emailing volunteer@newlifecharity.co.uk

- There is not a central budget for volunteer expenses so all claims must be charged to the cost centre for the team or department wherein the volunteer performs their role.

8. TRAVEL EXPENSES

8.1 Reasonable travel costs will be reimbursed in accordance with the following guidelines;

- Wherever possible the cheapest mode of transport should be used.
- If a volunteer is entitled to any kind of travel concession such as senior citizen pass or student pass, this must be used to help minimise costs to the Newlife the Charity for Disabled Children.
- Volunteers must have volunteered for a minimum of three hours to claim the travel expenses for that day.
- Weekly or monthly bus or train tickets are only to be paid for if they are the cheaper option and has been agreed in advance with the relevant Manager.
- Monthly bus or train tickets can only be reimbursed after the ticket or pass has been used and may not be paid for in advance. In order for the cost of a monthly ticket or pass to be reimbursed, the volunteer must have volunteered for a minimum of 16 hours per week.
- If a volunteer uses their own car to get to and from their site of volunteering, contribution towards car parking may be claimed for, up to a maximum of £10 per day. Payment must only be paid to cover the duration of the time volunteering and wherever possible volunteers must use the cheapest car park available.
- A volunteer using their own car must provide the Volunteer Team with a copy of a valid insurance certificates on an annual basis which will be kept securely with their volunteer file.
- A volunteer using their own car may also claim a contribution towards their mileage for the journey at the official HMRC rate, which is currently set at 45 pence per mile, but may be subject to change.
- Mileage will be capped at 15 miles each way for volunteers claiming for travel to and from a Newlife shop ,office or Opportunities Centre.

- Any cap on mileage for other volunteering activity such as within community fundraising or volunteering at a Newlife the Charity for Disabled Children fundraising event, must be agreed in advance with the Volunteer Manager.
- As a rule, taxi costs may not be claimed for unless in exceptional circumstances and must be with prior authorisation of the Volunteer Manager. Exceptional circumstances may include but are not limited to situations where it is cheaper for a number of volunteers to share a taxi, if a volunteer has particular health or mobility restrictions or where it would be unsafe for a volunteer to take another form of transport. The mileage cap still applies to this form of transport.
- Expenses must be claimed for on a monthly basis within payment being made within the following 4 weeks.
- We will not be able to back date any expense claims that are submitted more than 3 months after the date being claimed for.
- Any travel expenses to be claimed that are not covered by the above guidelines must always be agreed in advance with the Volunteer Manager.
- Newlife the Charity for Disabled Children will not be liable for payment of a parking or speeding fine incurred for any reason.

9. LUNCH EXPENSES

As a rule lunch cannot be claimed for, save where there is an exceptional circumstance, such as when a volunteer works away from their normal site of volunteering, or is volunteering all day at a Newlife Event. Where such circumstances exist, prior agreement with the Volunteer Manager, must be reached.

If lunch expenses are claimed, a limit on how much can be claimed must be agreed in advance. Volunteers may not claim for the cost of alcohol.

10. HOW TO CLAIM EXPENSES

- All expenses are to be claimed for by submitting a volunteer expenses form, which can be obtained from the Volunteer Team. All claims must be accompanied by the appropriate receipts.

- Expenses must be adequately described on the expenses form and failure to do so may result in non-payment. Expense claims should be submitted promptly and should only include expenditure that has occurred within the last three months.
- Travel using all other contactless payments must be accompanied by a valid receipt.
- Expense claims forms must be authorised by the relevant Newlife Manager before being sent to the Finance Department for payment.
- Payment will be made by BACS transfer so volunteers making a claim must provide all the necessary bank details. Managers should authorise payment as quickly as possible to avoid volunteers being left out of pocket for any length of time.

11. COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING

The implementation of this policy will be communicated to all teams and individuals who are volunteers or Newlife staff who works with volunteers. It is not anticipated that formal training on this policy will be necessary.

12. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POLICY

Overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of policy lies with the Board of Trustees and on a day to day basis with the Director of Marketing, Fundraising & Volunteering who will report to the Board on a regular basis.

13. CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information on this policy please contact the Volunteering Team.