



Expenses Guidance for Volunteers

Introduction

This guidance outlines what you can claim back as reasonable out of pocket expenses while volunteering for us.

It's important you claim your expenses even if you're happy not to claim, as it helps us establish the real cost of our activities. If everyone claims their expenses, no one will feel they can't volunteer because they can't afford it. You can always give the expense payment back to the MS Society as a donation. We'll claim Gift Aid on all eligible donations.

You'll need to discuss your expenses with someone who will know whether they're reasonable before you incur them.

- For group volunteers: a member of your Coordinating Team
- For volunteers supported by MS Society staff: the budget holder or a person designated by the budget holder

You can only claim expenses for costs you've incurred while volunteering for the MS Society – also referred to as 'MS Society business'.

Expenses should be kept to a minimum. However, your safety and wellbeing will be taken into account when determining what's reasonable.

You'll find more details about how we reimburse expenses in the [Expenses Policy](#).

To claim your expenses you'll need to complete an [Expenses Claim Form](#). If you're submitting your expense claim to one of our national offices, you'll also need to complete a [Bank Details Request Form](#) as you'll be reimbursed by bank transfer.

For top tips on how to fill in your form, have a look at our [Example Expenses Claim Form](#).

What can I claim?

Travel


You can claim expenses for travel but you must use the most cost effective and practical means of travel.

For all journeys you need to give the following details:

- why the journey was undertaken
- where it was to and from (for mileage include the postcodes)

A journey includes the trip there and back. If a diversion was taken during the journey then please state this on the claim form.

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Cost of using your vehicle including the cost of fuel

A mileage rate of 45p per mile is reimbursed, for the first 150 miles and 25p thereafter for each journey. The mileage rate covers all the costs of running a vehicle including repairs, servicing, insurance and fuel.

Example:

For a 280 mile round trip journey – 150 miles would be reimbursed at 45p per mile and 130 miles at 25p per mile).

You can't reclaim your actual fuel costs, costs of additional insurance, or excess on an insurance policy if you're involved in an accident or other costs related to the running of your vehicle.

Other Motoring costs

You're responsible for ensuring you have the correct insurance to use your vehicle on MS Society business and that the vehicle is roadworthy – you may be asked for evidence that this is the case.

We can't reimburse parking fines and fines for late payment of congestion charges and similar fines.

The following motoring costs can be reimbursed:

- Parking fees (not fines)
- Road, bridge and tunnel tolls
- Congestion charges (but not late payment fines)

Using public transport

Public transport costs booked and claimed should be the cheapest available at standard class fares.

To reclaim the cost of journeys on transport systems which allow the use of a contactless payment card, you'll need to provide a statement from the transport provider which includes details of the journey. Make sure you've registered your contactless payment card with the transport provider prior to your journey, so that you can obtain this statement.

The following expenses will **not** be reimbursed:

- a top-up of a transport provider payment card
- the cost of railcards

Using taxis

You can reclaim the cost of a taxi in the following instances:

- Where there is limited disability access on the public transport route
- Where a location has only limited public transport
- Where the journey is not considered safe to undertake on public transport
- Where you need to carry equipment or other luggage
- The cost is cheaper than using public transport (which might be the case if there are a number of people using the taxi)

You must include the reason why a taxi was used instead of public transport on your claim form.

Subsistence (e.g. Food, drink and accommodation)

Subsistence can only be reimbursed if incurred during a journey on MS Society business. The food and drink must be purchased during your journey and not beforehand (or afterwards).

Food and drink

You can reclaim up to the following amounts (limits as at 1 January 2017):

- Breakfast up to £7.00
- Lunch up to £12.70
- Evening meal up to £31.75

For other non-alcoholic drinks & snacks purchased there is a limit of £5 per day.

Claims for alcohol will **not** be reimbursed without the authorisation of a MS Society director.

To be reimbursed for food or drink paid for other volunteers, add the following additional information on your claim form:

- The purpose of the meeting.
- Name of the volunteer(s) and their role(s)

Accommodation

Overnight accommodation should not exceed £100 per night (£110 per night where breakfast is included).

You can only claim overnight accommodation when it is part of a journey e.g. you cannot claim the cost of overnight accommodation which is close to your home.

Incidental expenses while staying at overnight accommodation must not amount to more than £5. These include food and drink not part of the evening meal, internet access and similar expenses.

Telephone, mobile costs (and similar devices)

When using your personal phone, only the cost of telephone or mobile calls on MS Society business and on a detailed bill can be claimed.

The following will **not** be reimbursed:

- Rental charges on telephones/mobiles
- Pay as you go top ups
- Calls where there is not an itemised bill

Where a telephone/mobile is used exclusively on MS Society business then the telephone bill must be in the name of the MS Society and not the individual. Pay as you go top ups will only be reimbursed if the mobile is used exclusively for MS Society business.

Where a telephone/mobile has been issued to an individual for MS Society business they must reimburse the MS Society for any private calls made on the phone.

False claims

The [Resolving Volunteer Issues](#) policy should be used for any instances where a volunteer has made a false claim.