

LINK South Gloucestershire Volunteer Expenses Policy

It is LINK South Gloucestershire's aim that volunteers are not out of pocket by undertaking work for LINK South Gloucestershire and that in ensuring this, we stress the value and respect we place on volunteers and their contribution to the service of LINK South Gloucestershire. All reasonable expenses for travel, childcare, postage, telephone and access requirements (such as accessible transport and personal assistants) will be paid as far as budget restrictions allow.

If a volunteer is claiming state benefits they must inform their benefits office that they are undertaking voluntary work. LINK South Gloucestershire is under no duty to inform the benefits office on behalf of a volunteer. The reimbursement of expenses incurred during voluntary work should not affect any benefit entitlement.

If a volunteer is seeking employment and claiming job seekers allowance, they must inform the job centre that they are undertaking voluntary work. In this instance, a volunteer must be seen to still be available to seek jobs, attend interviews and take on work as agreed with their personal advisor at the job centre. There are various conditions that may affect a volunteer's job seekers allowance. Volunteers can seek support and further information from the LINK South Gloucestershire staff and their personal advisor at the job centre.

Travel

- **Own Car**

Mileage is paid at an agreed rate per mile within the 'Avon' area (Bristol, Bath & NE Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire). Public transport rates are paid for journeys undertaken outside the 'Avon' area. It is the volunteer's responsibility to keep an accurate record of their mileage during voluntary work.

Volunteers using their own car must have told their insurance company that they intend to use their car in a voluntary capacity and include the 'occasional business use' clause in their policy. Premiums should not be increased if the company is informed that the volunteer's driving is not for profit and that only expenses will be paid. Volunteers should include and maintain in their policy of insurance a clause indemnifying LINK South Gloucestershire against all third party claims, including those concerning passengers. The present mileage allowance paid by LINK South Gloucestershire for authorised travel in a private vehicle has been set to include any charge for the clause 'occasional business use' insurance cover.

- **Public transport**

2nd class travel rates are paid to volunteers, who should take advantage of any cheap fares where possible. Volunteers must submit tickets with their claims.

- **Taxis**

The use of taxis will be authorised when the volunteer has specific access requirements and is disabled, temporarily or permanently, in a way that makes public transport difficult to use. Volunteers may also use taxis in the following circumstances:

- 1) When travelling late at night.
- 2) In situations where no public transport is available.
- 3) When several people are travelling together and the cost would be cheaper than using other reasonable means of transport.
- 4) When volunteers need to carry heavy or bulky items.

Volunteers should check with the appropriate staff member beforehand for clarification. Volunteers must submit a receipt with their claim.

- **Bicycle**

If a volunteer uses a bicycle on LINK business, an agreed rate is payable.

- If a volunteer uses a motorcycle on LINK business, an agreed rate is payable.

- **Travel outside the 'Avon' area**

All journeys outside of the 'Avon' area must first be authorised.

Access requirements

LINK South Gloucestershire will meet access costs, which enable volunteers to participate in LINK South Gloucestershire business and advocacy work. These include:

- **Personal assistance**

Reasonable costs for Volunteers needing personal assistants whilst on LINK South Gloucestershire business will be reimbursed on provision of a receipt.

- **Carers**

Volunteers with caring responsibilities will be reimbursed when an alternative carer needs to be used to cover their time whilst on LINK South Gloucestershire business. This will be on provision of a receipt.

- **Childcare**

Reasonable rates for childcare required whilst on LINK South Gloucestershire business will be reimbursed on provision of a receipt. Volunteers need to sign a childcare expenses form to state that the childcare had no educational benefit for the child (for instance, LINK South Gloucestershire could not reimburse the cost of a piano lesson).

All rates for any of access requirements will be paid at a rate agreed with the relevant Project Co-ordinator beforehand and should be recorded on the '**Access**' section of the expenses claim form with receipts attached for authorisation.

Use of Telephone/ E-mails

At times volunteers may have to use their own telephone to make calls and send or receive E-mails related to LINK work. LINK South Gloucestershire will reimburse the cost of calls dependent on whether the call has been made from a landline or a mobile phone. This rate includes reimbursement for any minimum connection charge to the service provider.

The use of mobile phones is sometimes necessary to contact complainants; volunteers must ensure that they only use a mobile phone to landline or landline to mobile phone when no other option is available.

Administration costs

- Postage

Volunteers should use 2nd class postage as much as possible.

Email

If you receive paperwork via email, please inform the LINK office if you require paper copies sent on to you, or papers are required at the meetings.

- Photocopying

Volunteers are requested to use LINK office for photocopying as much as possible. If volunteers need to use alternative photocopying facilities, costs will be reimbursed on provision of an expenses form and receipts.

- Stationery

Co-ordinators based at LINK may provide headed notepaper and other items of stationery for volunteer use. This may be collected from LINK South Gloucestershire and can be sent by post unless the cost is more than that of purchasing the particular stationery for which volunteers can be reimbursed. All administration costs incurred must be submitted in the '**Post and Stationery**' section of the claim form with receipts.

Subsistence Allowance

An allowance will be paid for meals taken away from home, for a period of 4 or more consecutive hours. The maximum reimbursement will be dependant on the time of day and mealtime covered. A completed '**Subsistence**' section on the expenses claim form must be submitted with details and receipts attached. Money can only be reimbursed for receipted refreshments.

Training participation

You may be asked to take part in training events. Expenses incurred during your involvement will be discussed prior to the event with yourself and the event co-ordinator and reimbursement made accordingly.

Submission of claims

Systems are in place to ensure efficient and speedy payment. Claims need to be submitted to the LINK Host for authorisation. These are then passed to the Finance Administrator. Cheques will normally reach you between 2 – 4 weeks later.

The Volunteer Expenses Claim Form has sections for telephone, travel, access, subsistence and stationery. The form should be submitted monthly

(unless there are exceptional circumstances), within two weeks of the last date covered and need to be authorised by an appropriate LINK member or a member of the Host organisation. Payment will be by cheque issued by the Care Forum and posted to the volunteers home address. In the event that the volunteer does not have a bank account, arrangements will be made to pay cash, which will be handed to the volunteer in person and not posted.

On occasion, payments can be raised through petty cash if a payment is urgent or if cash is needed in advance for a larger purchase. Please negotiate this with the LINK Host if this is necessary.

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LINK South Gloucestershire Reimbursement of Expenses

Car mileage	0.40p per mile
Motorcycles	0.24p per mile
Bicycle allowance	0.20p per mile
Passengers	0.05p per mile
Telephone landline	0.04p per minute
Mobile telephone	0.35p per minute

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