

Healthwatch Hillingdon Volunteers Expenses and Benefits Policy

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Volunteers Expenses and Benefits Policy

Individuals Expenses can be accrued for:

- Traveling and subsistence
- Subsistence costs
- telephone call, internet, stationary and fax costs for Healthwatch Hillingdon (HWH) business
- Carer's costs
- Any other items to be cleared with HWH Volunteer Coordinator.

HWH will pay volunteer expenses only and does not treat members as staff. It should be noted Board members are also volunteers

If you have any special needs related to making arrangements for carer support, transport, incidental and subsistence expenses please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

It is important that you formally agree with the Volunteer Coordinator that your expenses are reimbursable before they are incurred.

The Board will agree expense budgets with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and have the power to give individual members the right to accrue expenses, from the above list to an agreed ceiling per month without seeking prior sanction for each item. This is to facilitate the workload of members on big projects and those with special needs.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Organisations' expenses

HWH reserves the right to sometimes pay expenses to enable the participation of the community and voluntary groups in initiatives they would otherwise be excluded from. This will allow HWH to fulfil its remit to extend inclusiveness and amplify the community's voice. Expenditure of this nature is to be sanctioned in advance by the HWH Board. Any expenses paid will be for work undertaken on behalf of HWH, not to support organisational costs.

Where there is potential for another organisation to pay expenses HWH will enter dialogue with that organisation at the earliest possible stage to establish who will pay for what.

Detailed Policy for Reimbursement of Expenses

You may have a special need meaning a carer or personal assistant has to travel with you. You can claim travel and associated costs for them in line with this policy if you have informed HWH of this in advance and provide details to support your claim.

There are some simple rules that we have to follow when deciding whether money can be reimbursed. These are:

- Provide receipts/proof of expenditures claimed
- The money must really have been spent - or you have incurred a real cost
- The spending must have taken place only because you are going to a HWH meeting or are carrying out HWH business.
- If you have attended a meeting or event on behalf of HWH, you must have provided a report for HWH or show that someone else representing HWH has provided a report.
- Your claim for repayment is in line with this Expenses policy and you fully complete an Expenses Claim Form.

The administrator will examine expense claims to make sure these rules are being followed.

Rail

You may claim the cost of a standard class ticket. You should seek to use the cheapest standard class ticket available.

Bus

You may claim the cost of the fare, Oyster card rates will be assumed unless a ticket is provided.

Underground

You may claim the cost of the fare, please note on your Expense Claim Form which stations you visited. Oyster card rates will be assumed unless stated otherwise on the claim form.

Taxi

Wherever possible you should use public transport. If this is not possible, or if you have a special need that means you are not able to use public transport, you may use a taxi. Please ask for a receipt and attach it to your Expense Claim Form.

Private Cars, Motorcycles and Bicycles

If you use your own car or motorcycle on HWH business you should check with your insurer to ensure your motor insurance covers voluntary work. The Expense Claim Form will ask you to confirm that:

- your motor insurance covers HWH activity;
- you have a valid driving licence;
- you have a valid tax disc on your car or motorcycle and;
- your car or motorcycle has an MOT certificate (if required).

The HWH will not pay the cost of fines or other penalties that you may face for breaking motoring laws, nor will it pay parking fines or clamping charges.

If you use your own car, motorcycle or bicycle, you may claim mileage to attend a HWH meeting and to take part in HWH business. Claims will be repaid at the Inland Revenue's approved mileage rates, currently 40p for cars. Where possible, please consider car sharing.

The Expense Claim Form will need to include the details and mileage of the journey and the names of any HWH members you take as passengers.

Subsistence and Incidental Expenses

Meals and Refreshments

Lunch expenses are provided for those who volunteer for longer than four hours at one stretch. You may claim the actual cost of meals and/or refreshments up to a limit of £10 when you:

- attend HWH related meetings and/or visitations made relating to HWH business and where no refreshments or subsistence has been provided by the meeting organiser or venue.

Telephone Calls and Internet Usage

You may claim the costs of voice or internet access telephone calls you are not already paying for which you make for HWH business. We cannot reimburse costs you are already paying, (for example telephone line rental or flat rate internet connection charges), as these costs are not increased by HWH work.

You should attach a photocopy of your telephone bill to an Expense Claim Form with the calls you wish to claim for highlighted (and your other calls hidden if desired).

Other Incidental Expenses

Other incidental expenses that may be claimed include for example stamps, paper, envelopes, ink cartridges and other stationery you incur for HWH activity.

Invoices or receipts are required to support your claim.

If you cannot provide an invoice or a receipt, you should include a note with your Expense Claim Form giving the reason for your claim and the amount of your claim. Should you wish, for example, to claim for a computer printer cartridge, you should include the receipt, list the HWH activities the cartridge was used for and the proportion of the cartridge you consider was used on these activities.

Carer's costs

You may claim repayment for a carer's costs to enable you to attend a HWH meeting or undertake HWH business for:

- children aged 16 or under;
- other dependants - where there is medical or social services proof that care is required.

You may claim for repayment for a carer (or payment can be made direct to the carer if required) for the duration of the HWH activity in which you are participating. In addition, you can claim for travel time to and from the activity for the maximum period of:

- one hour before the start of the meeting or HWH business; and
- one hour after the end of the meeting or HWH business.

The maximum allowance that can be paid is £10.00 per hour.

You cannot claim for care that is provided by a member of your household or:

- provided by a person who is under 16; or
- provided by, or available from, another organisation (for example social services).

To claim carer support your Expense Claim Form should include:

- the reason for the claim;
- the start and end times of HWH activity and the travelling time you are claiming;

- medical or social services evidence that care is needed (if the claim is not for a child aged 16 or under);
- an invoice or a receipt to support the claim.

When repaying claims for carer expenses, HWH wishes to avoid payments being seen by the Inland Revenue as taxable income, or by Social Security or Social Services as income that could affect any benefits being paid to you.

If as a result of receiving payments for carer expenses you face a demand to pay extra tax or have a benefit reduced or withdrawn, you will be responsible for paying the tax bill, or appealing against the reduced or withdrawn benefit.

If you have any special needs, or have questions about making arrangements for carer support, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

Completing the Expense Claim Form

Expenses are to be claimed within 30 days. HWH reserves the right not to repay the costs after 30 days.

HWH will pay claims within 30 days.

Members who accrue expenses at a rate less than £5.00 per month may claim up to every 90 days and the 30 day rule will be waived.

You can claim after each journey or activity or make one claim every 30 days for several different journeys or activities.

Claims should be supported by an invoice or receipt that provides details of what you are claiming for.

If you cannot provide an invoice or a receipt due to the nature of the item you are claiming for, you should include a note with your Expense Claim Form giving the reason for your claim and the amount of your claim.

If you could have provided an invoice or a receipt but have lost or misplaced it, HWH cannot repay the cost involved.

In signing and dating the Expense Claim Form you are confirming as true that:

- the expense claim is a legitimate claim form for HWH related activities and/or business
- you have participated in a HWH activity with the agreement of the board/steering group/working group and are entitled to claim expenses;

- you actually spent the money or faced the cost only because you were working on HWH activities;
- it was reasonable for you to spend the money, and the expenditure was needed to carry out your HWH's work;
- the journeys listed on the form relate to HWH activities and/or duties;
- the spending and claim for payment meets the rules in this Expenses Guidance;
- you have not been paid by anyone else or any other organisation for the spending or costs that you are claiming.

Please make sure you provide the information needed for each claim and that you fully and carefully fill in the Expenses Claim Form. If you do not do this, expense claim approval might be delayed or declined.

Submission and Authorisation of Expense Claims

In approving payment, HWH is confirming that:

- it has checked the accuracy of the entries and the calculation of the claim form, and that they meet the rules set out in this Expenses Guidance;
- to the best of their knowledge, the journeys and items for which repayment is claimed were needed only for HWH business and were arranged to provide value for money.

HWH may ask Participants to provide valid reason for their expense claim. If HWH decides that the spending or cost was not reasonable, or did not meet the rules as per the Expenses Guidance, HWH may:

- refuse to authorise/approve the claim;
- only approve part of the claim;
- replace the claim with the cost of what would have been a reasonable claim for the circumstances;
- ask for repayment of any money that has already been paid;
- ask for some of the money to be repaid; or
- take away the same amount from any future claims.

HWH will clarify the reason why a claim is not approved or if different amount is paid instead of the amount claimed.

Appeals for non-payment of expenses should be made in writing to the Board Member responsible for financial affairs and budgets, stating the reasons for appeal and submitted within 7 days of notification of non-payment.

Payment of Expense Claims

Payment for approved expense claims will be made by cheque and posted to your designated postal address or by bank transfer to your bank account.

Appendix 1

Healthwatch Hillingdon Expenses Claims Form

Name _____

Month/Year _____

CAR

Mileage Rate £0.40

	Date	From	To	Purpose of Journey	Miles	Total £
1						0.00
2						0.00
3						0.00
4						0.00
5						0.00
SUB TOTAL CAR MILEAGE					-	-

EXPENDITURE

	Date	Description	Code	Total £	VAT £	Net £		
1				0.00	0.00	0.00		
2				0.00	0.00	0.00		
3				0.00	0.00	0.00		
4				0.00	0.00	0.00		
5				0.00	0.00	0.00		
6				0.00	0.00	0.00		
7				0.00	0.00	0.00		
8				0.00	0.00	0.00		
9				0.00	0.00	0.00		
Expenses claimed in accordance with Healthwatch Hillingdon expenses policy. Signed:				Sub total expenditure		0.00	0.00	0.00
				Sub total mileage		-		-
				GRAND TOTAL TO BE PAID		-	-	-

Return to:- Graham Hawkes, Healthwatch Hillingdon, 25 Market Square ,The Mall Pavilions, Uxbridge, UB8 1LH