

Volunteer Expenses Policy

This **Volunteer Expenses Policy** sets out:

Section 1: General Information

Section 2: Guidance on Travel Expenses

Section 3: Guidance on Other Expenses

Section 4: Guidance on Conference Attendance

Section 5 : Complaints

Appendix: Expenses Claim Form

Section 1 – General Information

1.	Introduction
	<p>This paper sets out how tenant representatives will be recompensed as volunteers for out of pocket expenses which they incur in Tenant Participation activities.</p> <p>Separate guidance on Grants for Tenant Groups is also available.</p>
2	Our Commitment to Supporting Tenant Representatives
	<p>We recognise that tenant representatives actively contribute their time, experience and energy to assisting effective participation across Highland. It is our intention to make sure that they are reimbursed appropriately and promptly for expenses which they incur when doing this.</p> <p>Where we refer to an agreement or arrangement with The Council we mean that an agreement or arrangement is made with the appropriate Tenant Participation Officer, or the Principal Tenant and Customer Engagement Officer. We will ensure that every volunteer is aware of the officer responsible for determining and administrating their expenses claims.</p> <p>Through this policy we aim to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The payment of expenses is fair, accountable and easily reviewed and scrutinised by the council and its tenants.• Tenant representatives and officers have a clear set of procedures to refer to and correct information is made known about expenses claims before tenants incur costs• There is consistency across the Council area in relation to the payment of expenses for volunteers• There is a straightforward and prompt process for the claiming and paying of expenses

3	<p>Expenses which can be claimed by a volunteer</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Travel Expenses ✓ Subsistence Allowances ✓ Carer and Childcare Allowances ✓ Support/Advocacy/Interpretation/Translation Allowances ✓ Incidental expenses - for example, relating to use of IT equipment at home where this has been agreed as part of the tenant representative's role.
4	<p>Costs which cannot be claimed</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of earnings for attending a tenant participation event or activity • Expenses which have already been paid, or should more appropriately be paid, from another budget, or to another person.
5	<p>How to claim volunteer expenses</p>
	<p>Prior agreement with the area Tenant Participation Officer must always be obtained for attendance to events when expenses are to be claimed.</p> <p>Claims for volunteer expenses must be made using the Volunteer Expenses Claim Form attached to this guidance.</p> <p>Claims should be submitted to your area Tenant Participation Officer who is responsible for authorising payment.</p>

Section 2 - Guidance on Travel Expenses

1.	Travel Expenses
	<p>The travel costs to attend meetings, training sessions, conferences, and other events in support of Tenant Participation can be met where these have been pre-arranged and agreed by a Tenant Participation Officer.</p> <p>Volunteers are required to use the most cost-effective method of transport unless there is a good reason.</p> <p>Where disability or health issues makes travelling by public transport difficult the council will do its best to find suitable alternative transport or venue arrangements.</p> <p>Where public transport is not an option volunteers may travel by car and claim mileage allowances and are expected to car share where possible.</p> <p>Car drivers must ensure that they have appropriate insurance cover.</p>
2.	Payment of Travel Expenses
	<p>Payment can be made as follows where prior agreement has been obtained from the Tenant Participation Officer and an Expenses Claim Form submitted.</p> <p><u>Bus/Train/Ferry/Air/Taxis</u> Actual Costs can be paid.</p> <p><u>Personal Transport</u> Mileage rates will be paid at the Inland Revenue recommended rate of: Cars: 45p per mile for first 10 000 miles, and 25p per mile thereafter Motorcycles: 24p per mile</p> <p><u>Bicycles</u> Mileage rates will be paid at the Inland Revenue recommended rate of 20p per mile</p> <p><u>Car Parking</u> Actual Costs can be paid.</p>
3.	Payment Timescales
	<p>Payments will normally be paid through the Council's Financial System and will be paid directly into the tenant's bank account within 10 days of submission of the expenses claim form.</p> <p>Where expenses are required in advance of the meeting / event, this will be paid in cash. Subsequent non-attendance at the meeting / event will require the cash advance to be returned to the Council.</p>

Section 3 - Guidance on other expenses

1.	Subsistence Allowances
	<p>Subsistence Allowances cover food and accommodation. Accommodation costs will generally be covered directly by the council and otherwise must be with prior arrangement. Allowances for food are set against those payable to staff. Allowances for incidental subsistence when attending events may be paid in advance where there is prior agreement by the TPO. Receipts of any expenditure against this advance payment must be provided and any balances repaid.</p>
2.	Carers & Childcare Allowances
	<p>Carers & Childcare Allowances cover the cost of professional care where a volunteer with caring responsibilities has required this support to take part in Tenant Participation activities.</p>
3.	Support/Advocacy/Interpretation/Translation
	<p>An allowance can be paid for reimbursing any reasonable professional fees required to support a volunteer to take part in Tenant Participation activities where these services cannot be provided through any existing contracting arrangement in place with Highland Council.</p>
4.	Other expenses
	<p>Volunteers may incur other incidental expenses such as costs for Printer paper, Printer cartridges, internet access, postage, stationary or mobile phones for which reasonable costs can be reimbursed where there has been prior agreement with the Tenant Participation Officer.</p>
5.	Payment of Other Expenses
	<p>Payment can be made as follows where prior agreement has been obtained from the Tenant Participation Officer and an Expenses Claim Form submitted.</p> <p><u>Subsistence Allowances</u> Allowances will be set against costs payable for Highland Council staff.</p> <p><u>Carers & Childcare Allowances</u> Allowances will be set against the hourly costs payable for registered child-minding or registered respite care.</p> <p><u>Support/Advocacy/Interpretation/Translation</u> Allowances will be set against the hourly costs for appropriate registered services.</p>

	<p><u>Incidental expenses</u> Actual Costs can be paid.</p>
6.	<p>Payment Timescales</p> <p>Payments will normally be paid through the Council's Financial System and will be paid directly into the tenant's bank account within 10 days of submission of the expenses claim form.</p> <p>Where expenses are required in advance of the meeting / event, this will be paid in cash. Subsequent non-attendance at the meeting / event will require the cash advance to be returned to the Council.</p>
<p>Section 4 - Guidance on Conference Attendance</p>	
	<p>Expenses will be available from the council for up to 8 delegate places from the Highland Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs) network for conference attendance or events out with Highland hosted by the following organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tenant Participation Service Scotland (TPAS) ✓ Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) ✓ Registered Social Landlords(RSLs) in Highland
<p>Section 5 – Complaints</p>	
	<p>Complaints about the management or administration of expenses claims should be made to the Area Housing & Property Manager in the first instance in terms of the Highland Council's complaints procedure.</p> <p>You can get a copy of the Complaints Procedure from any Highland Council Service Point or from the council's web-site at www.highland.gov.uk</p>
June 2020	<p>This policy will be subject to review recommendations through the Highland Council's Tenant Participation Strategy 'Action Plan and Monitoring Group' which consists of tenant representatives and staff.</p>

Highland Council – Tenant Participation CLAIM FOR VOLUNTEERING EXPENSES

PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS. FOR REIMBURSEMENT ALL ACTIVITIES MUST BE AGREED IN ADVANCE.
RECEIPTS MUST BE PROVIDED AND BE ATTACHED TO THIS FORM, WHERE APPLICABLE.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone No: _____ Email _____

Tenant Participation Officer : _____ Contact Tel. No: _____

Date	Details of Volunteering activity	Car Mileage	Travel Fares	Other Expenses (please list)	Cost of Other Expenses	TOTAL
			£			
			£			
			£		£	
	Sub Totals	(miles x rate) £	£		£	

I declare that the above travelling and subsistence expenses claimed have been incurred by me. I further declare that no other claim for reimbursement from public or charitable funds has been nor will be made in respect of this claim.

Signature of volunteer: _____ Date: _____

Payment Agreed by:

Name _____ Date: _____

Designation _____