

Volunteer Mentor Expenses Policy

1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to provide ReachOut volunteer mentors with clear guidance on the organisations position on the validity of expenses, the procedures for making and expense claim, the controls around the process and the proper authorisation required. ReachOut has a duty to its donors and beneficiaries to ensure that resources are used efficiently and as effectively as set out in the organisations finance policy.
- 1.2. For the purpose of this policy a volunteer mentor is someone who has applied and been accepted for a volunteer mentor role advertised through the ReachOut's Volunteering recruitment process and who has a designated Volunteer Officer or has followed a volunteer recruitment process. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Volunteer Policy for Volunteers.
- 1.3. This policy establishes guidelines for the reimbursement of legitimate business expenses incurred by volunteers of ReachOut in the course of their duties. This policy aims to ensure efficient and responsible use of the organisation's funds.
- 1.4. This policy outlines the most common business-related expenses and provide guidance on what can and cannot be claimed. The primary aim is to provide a fair system of compensation for employees and volunteers who incur personal expenses for business reasons.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all volunteers incurring out of pocket expenses wholly, necessarily, and exclusively in connection with ReachOut's business.
- 2.2. The terms 'business use', 'business cost' and 'ReachOut's business' refer to activities carried out by the volunteers on behalf of the charity unless otherwise stated.
- 2.3. Refer to this policy before incurring and claiming out of pocket expenses.

3. Travel

3.1. Travel General

Travel arrangements must be made in the most cost-effective manner, taking into consideration the budgetary limits. Please refer to your Operations Officer if you have any queries on this point. You can email them at hr@reachoutuk.org.

- 3.1.1. Volunteers should, as far as possible, travel standard class. Other arrangements are subject to prior agreement from the Operations Officer.
- 3.1.2. ReachOut will reimburse volunteers reasonable expenses necessarily incurred for travelling in the performance of duties of their placement. For example, to and from your project.

3.1.3. Volunteer mentor travel expenses are capped at £4.00 per day across all modes of travel.

3.1.4. ReachOut will not reimburse the following

- Travel that is primarily for business purposes, but which falls outside of normal travel to and/or from project placements cannot be claimed.

3.2. Travel by Public transport

3.2.1. Volunteer travel expenses are capped at £4.00 per day. This cap applies to both public transport in London (using an Oyster card or Travelcard) and other forms of transport in Manchester.

3.2.2. Use of Oyster cards, contactless credit or debit cards must be evidenced by a Transport for London (TFL) printout (available from www.tfl.gov.uk/oyster) or bank card statements clearly showing the date of travel. ReachOut will reimburse "hopper" fare in London whereby payment is made once for multiple journeys within one hour provided the first journey was on ReachOut business.

3.3. Cycle hire

The cost of hiring a bike up to the daily cap for business travel will be reimbursed. Continuous hire periods of weekly, monthly, or annual periods will not be reimbursed unless the bike is required for business travel daily and the cost remains to maximum of £4.00 per day. Cost of equipment required to use a cycle hire facility, for example access keys, will not be reimbursed. Only actual costs incurred will be reimbursed. A receipt or statement must be provided with the claim.

3.4. Taxis

3.4.1. Public transport must be used where possible. Taxis (preferably pre-booked mini cabs rather than "on demand" hire) may be used where either no public transport is available or the journey time by public transport is unreasonably long (particularly where the journey involves multiple changes) up to the daily cap for business travel.

3.4.2. The use of taxis will be reimbursed in the following circumstances:

- i. Public transport is not suitable e.g. heavy or bulky equipment is being transported or the passenger has restricted mobility,
- ii. Public transport is not available e.g. late at night or general strike action,
- iii. A shared taxi is cheaper than public transport,
- iv. Limited public transport alternatives,
- v. Emergencies,
- vi. Health & safety reasons

3.4.3. Taxi expenses must be supported by a receipt and a full explanation. Handwritten receipts are acceptable for taxi claims provided they are on taxi company's stationery (e.g. a receipt card).

3.5. Private car

Volunteers may use their own car and claim for reimbursement up to the daily limit for volunteer travel expenses provided that:

- i. The driver holds a current driving license,
- ii. The vehicle is roadworthy and has valid motor insurance policy that provides cover for driving on ReachOut's business,
- iii. The vehicle is in a clean condition and reflects ReachOut's public image.

ReachOut will not reimburse motor losses, however incurred and irrespective of blame. ReachOut uses HMRC advisory rate to reimburse mileage cost for use of private cars. The current rates are published on www.gov.uk. All mileage claims must include start and end points of each journey and the business reason for the journey capped within the daily limit for volunteer mentors.

3.6. Parking

Parking costs necessarily incurred will be reimbursed up to the daily limit for volunteer mentor travel expenses when supported by receipts. Parking meter charges will also be reimbursed if details of date, times and location, and reason for travel are provided with the claim.

3.7. Penalties, congestion, and toll charges

Speeding and other driving offences and parking infringement fines will not be reimbursed. Congestion or toll charges will not be reimbursed. Fines for non-payment of the congestion charge or any other penalty will not be reimbursed.

4. Eligible Expenses

4.1. Expenses must be directly related to the activities and objectives of ReachOut.

4.2. Eligible expenses include travel, accommodation, communication, supplies and other necessary costs incurred for official charity business.

4.3. Shared Expenses

4.3.1. Where expenses are paid for a group of employees / volunteers including taxi while on ReachOut business, the most senior employee present should pay and make the expense claim. The claim should note the names of all employees / volunteers in attendance.

5. Approval Process

5.1. Expenses may only be incurred, and subsequently reimbursed by ReachOut, in respect of activities which are part of the ReachOut's agreed and budgeted programme of charitable activities.

5.2. Prior authorisation is required for all expenses with the relevant budget holder, except in cases of emergency.

5.3. Volunteers must seek approval from their Operations Officer before incurring any expenses which will invariably be associated with an organisational activity undertaken away from the schools.

5.4. The approval process will involve submitting a detailed expense report outlining the purpose, date, amount, and supporting documentation (receipts, invoices, etc.) to the Operations Officer at hr@reachoutuk.org.

5.5. Documentation:

5.5.1. All expenses must be documented with original, itemised receipts, showing the vendor name, date, description, and amount.

5.6. Reimbursement Process:

5.6.1. In the normal course of events, expense claims must be completed, signed, and approved using the volunteer expense sheet. These should be submitted via email to the Operations Officer by the end of the school term.

5.6.2. Please note that ReachOut reserves the right to refuse payment of expenses for claims older than 4 months.

5.7. Telephones, data, office supplies and equipment

5.7.1. ReachOut will reimburse only those costs, which are incurred wholly, necessarily, and exclusively in connection with the business. The following applies:

5.7.2. Data and phone costs incurred as part of personal contract for mobile devices will not be reimbursed. Volunteers should check in advance with their Volunteer Officer.

5.7.3. Volunteers should speak to their Volunteer Officer if they require any stationery to carry out their role.

6. Non-Reimbursable Expenses

6.1. Personal or non-business-related expenses are not eligible for reimbursement.

6.2. Expenses related to alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal activities are strictly prohibited.

6.3. If you have a question about a category of spend that is not covered by this Policy, or have any queries of the above please email hr@reachoutuk.org

7. Expense Fraud and Consequences

7.1. Any attempts to defraud the charity through false or inflated expenses will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may involve legal consequences.

If you have any concerns or believe that this policy may be breached, please contact Head of Operations & Finance.

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Signed | Alice Cleary |
| Name | Alice Cleary |
| Title | Head of Programmes and Impact |
| Date | 7/10/2025 |
| Updated | 7/10/2025 |
| Next Review | August 2026 |