

**DiABETES UK**  
KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.



# VOLUNTEER EXPENSES POLICY

# VOLUNTEER EXPENSES POLICY

In this policy

1. Why we have an expenses policy.....3
2. Reasonable expenses .....3
3. What is covered? .....3
4. How can volunteers claim and when will expenses be paid?.....5
5. Other volunteering policies and resources .....6

Policy Owner(s)	Head of Communities & Volunteering
Date approved:	December 2025
Approved by:	Executive Team
Date of last review and update:	December 2025
Date of next scheduled review:	December 2026, or sooner as required

## 1. Why we have an expenses policy

We want to make sure as many people as possible can volunteer for us. No one should miss out because they can't afford to volunteer. This policy makes sure that no one spends their own money volunteering for us.

It provides information and guidance about volunteer expenses for Diabetes UK staff, volunteers and local group treasurers. Local groups should use this policy when repaying volunteers from group funds. Staff members should refer to the full [Expense Policy](#) for more detail on allowable expenses for volunteers, and for their own expenses.

## 2. Reasonable expenses

It is important to Diabetes UK that no one is left out of pocket when supporting our activities, and that all of our spend is a good use of donor's money and helps us to achieve our aims. Therefore, we want our volunteers to claim expenses and ask everyone who claims expenses from Diabetes UK to ask themselves two questions:

- Are these expenses genuinely necessary for me to complete my role for Diabetes UK?
- Would these expenses still seem reasonable if everyone claimed for the same items?

We encourage everyone claiming expenses to find cost effective ways of carrying out activities while ensuring their own safety and wellbeing and considering our environmental impact (particularly when it comes to travel). To support this, we set some maximum limits for expenses.

We aim to pay expenses as soon as possible following submission of the expenses claim however, if you will struggle to cover the expenses and need to get an advance to cover larger costs then please get in contact with your volunteering team.

## 3. What is covered?

We cover travel, food and drink, and, where needed, accommodation costs for volunteers. We have set limits so that we are always being sensible with the money we spend. However, people should not be excluded from volunteering and if volunteers need to go above these limits or claim for expenses that do not fall into these categories, they should talk to their volunteering contact and get agreement in writing in advance. Other costs are addressed in section 3.5 below.

### Current rates

Item	Rate/limit	Notes
TRAVEL & MILEAGE		
Public transport	Agree in advance with your volunteering contact. We will reimburse or can book	We ask that you minimise the environmental impact of your journey by asking:

	train travel in advance. We will reimburse for standard class travel which is required for your role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Do you need to travel?</li><li>Is there a safe and reasonable public transport option which can be used instead of a car?</li></ul> <p>When travel is required, please book early to minimise costs where applicable. We reimburse for specific journeys only – so you can claim for journeys made using your Oyster card or similar travel cards with suitable receipts that show the journey undertaken (such as evidence from your TfL account), but you cannot claim for top up amounts.</p>
Taxi	Agree in advance with your volunteering contact	
Car mileage rate	45p/mile	
Cycle mileage rate	20p/mile	
Motorcycle mileage rate	24p/mile	
FOOD & DRINK		
Food & drink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Breakfast £8</li><li>Lunch £8</li><li>Dinner £20</li><li>Drinks £4</li></ul> <p>Meal allowances are per person</p>	These are daily limits. Underspend on one meal does not allow for overspend on another. Alcohol is not an allowable expense.
ACCOMMODATION		
Accommodation-London & other major cities	£200/night	You must talk to your volunteer contact before booking accommodation as they may be able to book for you.
Accommodation-rest of the UK	£120/night	

## Further information

### 3.2 Travel

We will pay for any travel costs:

- To and from where people are volunteering
- To a volunteer interview
- To training
- Or if volunteers need to travel as part of their role.

If a volunteer is travelling a long distance, for example to attend a national event, then their volunteering contact for the event or project will inform them of the cost limit in advance of the event.

### 3.3 Food and drink



If you are volunteering over a meal time but a meal is not provided, we will cover the cost of a meal. While we have set limits for the amount to be claimed for food, we want to make sure we support volunteers to have a healthy balanced diet and that special dietary requirements are met. Volunteers with any concerns should talk to their volunteering contact.

The rates in section 2 above apply as follows:

- Breakfast – applies when you need to leave home before 7am to complete your role, daily limit per person. Not applicable if you're staying overnight and breakfast is included in your room rate.
- Lunch – applies when you are volunteering over lunch (eg between 12 midday and 2pm) and lunch is not provided
- Dinner – applies when you are staying away from home overnight, or are volunteering over dinner time/will arrive home after 7pm and a meal is not provided, daily limit per person
- Drinks & Snacks - daily limit per person if you are volunteering for 3 hours or more

### **3.4 Accommodation**

There may be rare occasions when volunteers will need to stay away from home overnight. In most cases we will try to book accommodation on behalf of volunteers so please talk to your volunteer contact before making any bookings.

### **3.5 Other costs**

We ask that volunteers agree any other costs in writing with their volunteering contact before purchasing other items, like stationery. When a volunteer role requires a specific piece of equipment, we will look to buy these in bulk and give these to volunteers.

#### **3.5.1 Childcare and carer costs**

Unfortunately, we are not able to cover formal or informal childcare expenses or pay for respite care to volunteers with caring responsibilities. We are happy to help volunteers talk to organisations who can give advice about finding help caring.

#### **3.5.2 Telephone and internet charges**

If you use your personal phone to provide a hotspot or make calls to enable you to complete Diabetes UK activity when there are no other options, you can claim for these charges provided that they are:

- Agreed in advance – it is best to agree a limit for spend with your volunteer contact and your mobile phone company before you start to use your personal phone.
- Reasonable – you must keep an eye on the costs and to ensure that they don't escalate to unreasonable levels (particularly regarding mobile data costs).

## **4. How can volunteers claim and when will expenses be paid?**

We will pay your expenses by bank transfer (BACS). Expenses should be claimed within two months of the activity so that any questions can be answered easily, and to help us manage our budget.

## 4.1 Expense claim form and accompanying receipts

Volunteers must complete and sign a volunteer expense claim form for any expenses. Original receipts must be attached to the form for it to be approved. Receipts must be:

- Itemised, so it is clear exactly what is being claimed for.
- VAT receipts – which enable the charity to claim the VAT back from the government and to ultimately reduce the cost of our expenses. VAT receipts should be obtained for all expenditure unless VAT is not included. Please bear in mind that order/booking confirmations are not valid VAT receipts.

For mileage claims, where no accompanying receipts are needed, the form can be electronically signed and submitted to the volunteering contact via email. The expense claim will be checked and signed off by the relevant volunteering contact before being submitted for payment.

## 4.2 Payment by bank transfer (BACS)

All being well, BACS payments should be paid within 10 working days of a correctly filled expenses claim form being given to your volunteering contact. In this instance, your volunteering contact should approve the claim and forward it to Finance by the Friday of the week they receive it, and it should then be in your bank account on the following Friday. If your volunteering contact is on holiday, or if there are any queries about your claim, payment may take a bit longer – please get in touch with your volunteering contact if you have any concerns.

## 4.3 Payment to overseas (non-UK banks)

We require an IBAN and SWIFT code for all banks outside of the UK. Please ensure that these are provided clearly on the claims form. Please note that due to the nature of international payments, these can take a little longer to go through.

# 5. Other volunteering policies and resources

We have a set of volunteering policies and documents that may help you when volunteering with Diabetes UK. These can be found on [Assemble](#), our [website](#) or are available from your volunteering team.

1. Volunteering Policy
2. Keeping Safe, Legal and Healthy Policy
3. Volunteer Expenses Policy
4. How we solve problems together
5. Whistleblowing Policy
6. Social Media Policy