



National Survivor User Network

Policy name	Expenses Policy
Operational from	14/07/2023
Next review date	14/07/2025
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Associated policies	Privacy Policy Safeguarding Policy Participation Payments Policy Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy Leave Policy
Privacy	External

NSUN

Expenses Policy – Trustees, Staff, Associates, Members and Volunteers

1. Purpose
 2. Payment of expenses
 3. Claiming expenses
 4. Authorisation
 5. Types of Expenditure
 6. Reasonable Adjustments
 7. Review
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the criteria by which all NSUN Trustees, Staff, Associates, Members and Volunteers can claim out-of-pocket expenses. NSUN values the contribution of all of these groups and no-one should feel they cannot take part, or be left out of pocket, for contributing to the work of the charity.

This policy only covers reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred during the normal course of the Charity's business and does not cover payment for services, or participation and involvement payments, which are covered by the Finance Policy and Participation Payments Policy.

All expense claims must be authorised in advance – see section 4.

2. Payment of expenses

It is NSUN's policy to reimburse all expenses directly through the bank (unless otherwise agreed). For most expenses, this will mean reimbursement after the activity has taken place on production of a valid expense claim and receipt.

NSUN is committed to making participation in the work of the charity accessible for all and where receiving expense payments in advance would make this possible, this can be agreed on a case-by-case basis, in advance, by the CEO. Wherever possible, this will mean that NSUN will make the payment on behalf of the claimant. In order to request payment in advance, at least 2 weeks' notice must be given by the claimant.

Expenditure will be reimbursed as soon as possible after the receipt of a valid expense claim, which will normally be within a week or two.

3. Claiming Expenses

All expenditure must be claimed using the standard expense form (Appendix 1, or available from the CEO or Operations Manager) and by attaching receipts which support the expenditure. Receipts should show who was paid, the date the expenditure was incurred, and the amount paid. Expense claims received by email will be considered as though signed by the sender.

Expenses must be claimed as soon as possible after they are incurred. Expenditure claimed more than 3 months after the date of the expense may not be paid.

Where receipts have been lost the decision to reimburse the expenditure will be at the discretion of the CEO or line manager.

4. Authorisation

All expense claims should be authorised by the line manager or CEO prior to payment (or by the Chair in their absence, the Chair must also authorise the expense claims of the CEO) who is responsible for ensuring all supporting documentation is in place to support the claim.

All expenditure should be authorised in advance as follows (by email where possible) any expenditure not agreed in advance, may not be reimbursed.

- a) Travel, small consumables such as stationery (under £10), café allowances within limits below- Line Managers or CEO in their absence
- b) Wellbeing allowances, co-working spaces, larger consumables, office equipment, welfare items or leaving gifts for staff/trustees (cards, flowers etc)- Line Managers, Operations Manager or CEO
- c) All other items - CEO

The CEO may approve specific types of expenditure, within an agreed budget for staff/Trustees, without needing to approve each individual items in advance, such as travel to meetings and stationery. The CEO may also deputise the prior authorisation of other types of expense claims to project managers or line managers within an agreed budget. This must all be agreed in writing, and the CEO must be copied into emails agreeing expenditure types and amounts so that these can be tracked.

5. Types of expenditure

Guidance around specific types of expenditure are shown below. All expenditure must be agreed in advance and may be refused. No expenditure will be reimbursed without a valid receipt.

5.1 Meals

Expenses for meals will only normally be reimbursed where they are part of an overnight stay or for lunch during a formal NSUN meeting. No meals will be reimbursed for co-working days.

For meals associated with an overnight stay, an evening meal for the night of the overnight stay, breakfast the following morning and lunch the following day, where the claimant is unable to return home before lunch, may be reimbursed. This must be agreed in advance by the line manager or CEO.

In rare circumstances, Trustees, Staff members, Associates or Volunteers may need to purchase a meal other than under these two circumstances set out above. This may be approved at the discretion of the CEO but would be due to unusual circumstances

No meals will be reimbursed without a valid receipt and NSUN will not cover the cost of any alcohol purchased with or without a meal. The maximum reimbursement for meals is as follows:

Breakfast £6.00

Lunch £10.00

Dinner £20.00

These limits do not include meals purchased as part of team building days where costs may be more than these amounts. All expenditure of this type must be agreed in advance by the CEO and must be within agreed budget for the overall event.

5.2 Travel

NSUN will reimburse travel incurred in the course of normal NSUN business. All staff are home-based so travel costs from their home to meetings, events etc will be reimbursed.

Mileage will be reimbursed at the agreed HMRC rate, which for normal single occupancy car travel, is currently 45p per mile. Train and Air travel should be at the cheapest available rate and booked in advance where possible. Taxi travel should be agreed in advance and should not exceed £20.

In making travel decisions due consideration should be made to any NSUN environmental policy in place at the time of booking.

5.3 Phone Bills/Internet

In general, no reimbursement will be made for phone calls or internet costs. NSUN has a business phone system which can be used by Staff, Trustees and Associates to make calls where needed.

Specific situations may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

5.4 Co-working spaces/Café allowance

The team should be able to access co-working spaces as agreed with their line manager where they find this a helpful alternative to spending their whole working week at home. The maximum budget per financial year for using co-working spaces must be agreed in advance with the CEO as part of the annual budget setting process.

It is recognised that some staff may prefer to spend part of their day working from a café instead of using a co-working space. This should be occasional- no more than twice per week- and for confidentiality reasons staff may not take part any online confidential work-related meetings in café spaces. Staff may claim up to £8 per visit on non-alcoholic drinks while working in a café up to 2 times a week.

These expenditure types may be claimed on expenses or where there is a regular use of co-working space invoices may be passed to the CEO and Operations Manager for payment.

5.5 Wellbeing allowances

Where the trustees have approved a budget for a staff wellbeing allowance, staff who have passed their probationary period are able to claim up to £150 (pro-rated) in a financial year towards expenditure which they feel contributes to their wellbeing outside of work. All claims should be approved by the CEO prior to expenditure being made and claimed through staff expenses in the normal way. We will aim to approve any expenditure which you feel improves your wellbeing and recent examples have included books, craft materials, contributions to gym membership, plants, sports lessons etc. Approved claims will not include alcohol unless it is part of a meal. We aim to be as flexible as possible, however if we do not consider your claim to be an appropriate use of this allowance, we will discuss this with you but may decide not to approve your claim.

5.6 Other Out-of-pocket expenditure

Other out-of-pocket expenditure, such as stationery, postage and photocopying may be reimbursed but should be approved in advance by the CEO and must represent the best value for money for the charity. Trustee printing expenses are covered by Appendix 2

5.7 Entertaining/Meetings

When holding work meetings in public spaces such as cafes, staff may be reimbursed for the cost of a soft/hot drink. The number of drinks reimbursed should be proportional to the length of the meeting and as a rule of thumb this should be one drink per 90 minutes. Trustees may also claim the cost of refreshments for NSUN related meetings on the same basis provided this has been agreed in advance with the CEO.

When meeting with external contacts, staff may also claim the cost of the drink for the person/people they are meeting on the same basis. Due consideration should be made to any Bribery Policy in place at the time.

Associates, who are self-employed, would not normally be reimbursed for the cost of any refreshments purchased unless agreed in advance.

5.8 Accommodation

Overnight accommodation should be approved in advance by the CEO. The need will be determined by the time and nature of the event/meeting and travel required. For staff travelling for more than 2 hours either side of their normal working hours, accommodation will normally only be provided for one of either the night before, or the night after the meeting or event being attended. The provision of TOIL for travel outside of working hours is set out in the Leave Policy.

It's acknowledged that overnight accommodation can be used to enable a person's involvement, both for them and anyone supporting them, see Reasonable Adjustments section 6. Prior agreement should be sought from the CEO.

To ensure the best rates available, all overnight accommodation, once approved will be booked by the Operations Manager or CEO. The rate agreed will be based on a standard city centre rate for budget accommodation at the time of booking (e.g. rates will be determined by look at premier inn/travel lodge for the dates/locations concerned)

6. Reasonable Adjustments

No individual should be disadvantaged from taking part in NSUN activities for any reason and reasonable adjustments will be considered where needed. NSUN will meet all reasonable expenses associated with meeting a claimant's need that would otherwise form a barrier to involvement. - see Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

The decision to approve reasonable adjustments will be made by the CEO, who will consider all aspects of the claim including whether these costs would normally be supported by other schemes such as Access for Work, or an individual's social care arrangements. No claim will be paid where it hasn't been approved in advance.

The reimbursement of Carer's and Childcare expenses will only be reimbursed for staff and volunteers when they cover time outside of normal working hours. Costs associated with Trustees will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Costs of this type incurred by Associates will not be reimbursed.

7. Review

This policy will next be reviewed in July 2025

Appendix 1

The NSUN expenses policy which includes Trustees explains that out of pocket expenditure, such as stationery, will be reimbursed where agreed in advance. It is important that any expenditure which is reimbursed has been incurred in the course of carrying out NSUN business and does not give rise to a private benefit.

In terms of printing costs, where a Trustee wanted to claim this, we could ascertain the approximate printing cost of a page, using readily available information online about the type of printer someone uses, and we could make a reimbursement based on the number of pages contained within the correspondence sent to the board. The amounts due can be calculated by the Operations Manager and approved by the CEO.

Wherever possible all documents should be printed in black and white and double sided to reduce the costs incurred.

The provision of printers as hardware is not currently covered by our policy. The Charity Commission in its guidance CC11 allows the provision of equipment to allow a Trustee to do their role on grounds of disability. The Expenses Policy states that in considering a claim for reasonable adjustments, the CEO will consider whether the costs in question would normally be met elsewhere. This expenditure would need to consider this on a case-by-case basis and any expenditure approved would be at a minimum level to meet the needs of the Trustee in carrying out their duty and any personal benefit would also need to be considered.