

 **Dorcas Befriending Project****Volunteer Expenses Policy and Procedures**

## **Our Commitment to Our Volunteers**

The Dorcas Befriending Project (DBP) derives tremendous benefit from the many volunteers who kindly donate their time, energy and commitment to our projects.

In order to make sure that none of our volunteers experience financial hardship by doing voluntary work for the DBP, and as part of our own commitment to our Volunteers, we have drawn up a formal policy in order to reimburse volunteers out of pocket expenses. Volunteer expenses play an important role in ensuring the involvement of volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds.

We are committed to reimbursing expenses promptly and to paying expenses in advance of volunteer activity, if required. Volunteers will receive their expenses by cheque.

We pay a combination of flat rate and actual expenses depending on the situation/activity and aim to follow best practice guidance in the reimbursement of out of pocket expenses. We encourage all volunteers to claim expenses; however, if you do not wish to receive expenses, you can donate them back to the DBP.

Please contact the Project Co-ordinator or the Executive Committee if you are unsure about any element of the policy or procedure.

### **Who this Policy Covers**

This policy covers DBP volunteers and Executive Committee.

### **How the System for Claiming Expenses Operates**

The DBP only reimburses volunteer expenses relating directly to its volunteering activities. This service is for DBP volunteers only and covers travel expenses, subsistence expenses and resource expenses which all must relate to a volunteering activity.

If you do voluntary work for the DBP you will be entitled to receive:

- A full reimbursement of your fares to and from the volunteering activity location by public transportation.
- Reimbursement of any additional pre-approved travel costs undertaken in the course of your volunteering activity.

In all cases, volunteer expense claims of over £10 made to the DBP must be approved by the Project Co-ordinator or the Executive Committee in advance to the expenditure taking place. This applies to single or multiple items of expenditure. For example, if you wish to claim back the cost of bus fares relating to your volunteering, then you need to submit your tickets to the Project Co-ordinator or Executive Committee for a refund before the total

amount exceeds £10. If this is not possible then you need to contact us (by email, phone or by visiting our office) to gain approval for your expenses claim to exceed £10. If advance approval for expenditure of over £10 is not given by DBP then we reserve the right to refuse an expense reimbursement.

In order to claim you must retain proof of travel i.e. tickets which are to be attached to the back of the Volunteer Expenses Claim Form. If you use a weekly travel card this can be photocopied and a percentage calculated for travel costs for the days you volunteer, i.e. if you volunteer for two days we would be able to pay 2/7 of the travel card.

## 1. Travel Expenses

**Public Transport** : As a charity and organisation, we try to work cost effectively, so would ask our volunteers to make use of public transport where it is available, unless its use results in considerable inconvenience, expense or if it is not a viable option due to a disability. The following traveling expenses will be reimbursed:

- **Rail fares:** Standard class fares; prior authorisation from the Project Co-ordinator or the Executive Committee is required.
- **Bus and underground fares:** Expenses can be claimed as incurred providing they relate to DBP volunteers and their approved volunteer activity. Volunteers should keep their tickets, write the details of the journey on the Volunteer Expenses Claim Form and then submit these to the Project Co-ordinator or the Executive Committee for a refund. If such expenses are expected to exceed £10 then the volunteer should gain approval in advance.
- **Taxi fares:** We will not normally pay for taxis, however, we can look into this on a case by case basis (for example, if you have mobility problems, or are volunteering late at night/in an isolated location, or in the case of an emergency). The cost of taxis will only be reimbursed if prior approval has been obtained from the Project Co-ordinator or the Executive Committee.

**Private Transport** : DBP volunteers may use their cars for authorised journeys connected with their volunteer activities subject to having the necessary insurance cover as described below and approval from the Project Co-ordinator or the Executive Committee.

Volunteers using their private motor vehicle or a vehicle owned by a spouse or partner on volunteering work must have motor vehicle insurance without financial limits covering the following:

- bodily injury to or death of third parties;
- bodily injury to or death of any passenger; and
- damage to the property of third parties.

It is strictly prohibited for a volunteer to drive any vehicle as part of their volunteering duties unless they have a valid driving licence. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to ensure their licence is valid. The current mileage rate is 45p per mile.

## **2. Subsistence Expenses**

The cost of volunteer subsistence (food and drink for volunteers while volunteering) is for meals only and not for any activity or task carried out in the course of volunteering. We will reimburse you for the cost of, or provide, a light meal (up to £4), if you are volunteering for four hours or more, or over a meal time (please attach receipts to your Volunteer Expenses Claim Form).

### **Reimbursements for meals are as follows:**

4-7 hours of volunteering or	
volunteering over a mealtime	£4.00
Over 7 hours in one day	£8.00

## **3. Resource Expenses**

Expenses claims for resources associated with volunteer activities. DBP volunteers and staff should contact the Project Co-ordinator or the Executive Committee in advance if resource expenditure relating to a Volunteer Activity is expected or required.

### **How to Claim Expenses**

In order to claim these expenses you will need to complete a Volunteer's Expenses Claim Form. The Expense Claim Form can be obtained from the Project Co-ordinator or the Executive Committee, and will be made available online.

All volunteer expenses should be submitted on a Volunteer Expenses Claim Form with details of the dates, distance and reasons for expense together with receipts for all expenditure where practical.

- Once you have completed and signed the Volunteer Expenses Claim Form, you will need to get it authorised by the Project Co-ordinator or the Executive Committee who will then administer payment. The sheets are then retained by the Project Co-ordinator.
- Expenses submitted electronically include a statement that expenses have been incurred genuinely which is equivalent to a signature.

In our experience, it is usually most practical if you can claim your volunteer expenses on a monthly basis. This can be discussed on an individual basis.

If you have any queries or need further clarification on the above, then please do not hesitate to speak to the Project Co-ordinator or Executive Committee who will be happy to

assist.

NB. Please note that there is a time limit of three months on back payment of expenses claims. We will always encourage you to claim but ultimately it is your responsibility. Any claims made after three months (unless previously agreed with the Project Co-ordinator or Executive Committee) may unfortunately be forfeited.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Executive Committee every three years, or as required.

### **Additional Information**

**Tax implications for the volunteer:** A volunteer does not have a formal contract with the DBP, so the expenses they claim whilst carrying out their voluntary work will not be liable to Income Tax.

Author(s):	Zakari Momodu
Approved by:	Executive Committee
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