

The Royal Air Forces Association Volunteer Programme Expenses Policy for Volunteers

The following policy applies to all individuals volunteering for the RAF Association in a welfare, fundraising or general role. For the purposes of the following policy, both Branch and all other Association volunteers will be referred to as 'volunteers'.

Statement of policy

The Association is a member-led registered welfare charity that provides welfare support to the RAF family. Much of our work is funded by the generosity of our members and volunteers and through vital donations. We therefore encourage any costs incurred by volunteers to be kept to a minimum, where possible. However, where they do occur we hope you find the following policy useful.

The Association values our volunteers and wants to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteering. One of the ways we can help is to reimburse volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses relating to volunteering for the Association, including travel, refreshments and food, where volunteers are eligible for it. Where a volunteer is unable to cover expenses up-front, the Association will work with them to purchase any items up-front that they may be able to or purchase train tickets on their behalf, where required.

Expenses covered by the Association

The Association will cover expenses for the following, provided receipts are submitted where possible:

- Travel
- Subsistence
- Printing and any other associated costs that relate to your role

The Association does not cover expenses for:

- Hospitality
- Fines for parking, speeding or any other related offences. It is the responsibility of volunteers to ensure they abide by rules and laws to ensure they do not attract fines.

Volunteering for the Association directly or for a Branch

Volunteering for the Association	Volunteering for a Branch
Volunteers supporting the Association directly (all non-Branch roles) will be eligible to claim for out-of-pocket expenses incurred through volunteering for the Association directly, by completing a volunteer Expenses Claim Form.	Branch Support Volunteers may be eligible to claim for out of pocket expenses, incurred through volunteering for the Branch, directly from that Branch. [Each Branch is a registered charity in its own right so will have different expenses procedures.]



Form to complete: Obtain from your manager, the Volunteer Portal or through requesting from volunteers@rafa.org.uk	Form to complete: Obtain from Branch Treasurer (each Branch will be different)
Receipts will need to be provided and referenced on the expenses claim form submitted to their manager or Branch.	

Travel

The Association will cover expenses for volunteers travelling to and from their assigned activities.

Cars

- Volunteers are encouraged to share where possible and a rate of 45p per mile is set.
- It is unusual for volunteers to travel much further than 50 miles as volunteering is mainly done locally. If a volunteer needs to travel further than this for their volunteering they should check with their manager that it is necessary for them to do so.
- It is a volunteer's responsibility to ensure their car is covered by appropriate tax, insurance and MOT documentation and that their car is covered for business use.
- Toll charges and congestion charges should be paid and will be refunded on production of a valid receipt.
- Claims for parking should be accompanied by a receipt and volunteers are asked to find the cheapest method of parking, whilst still convenient for the purposes of the role. (For example, volunteers unloading a car for a fundraising event should park next to the set-up location – where it may be more expensive – for the time it takes to unload the vehicle and then locate a cheaper longer stay parking space within walking distance.)

Public transport

Volunteers are encouraged to use public transport where possible (although it is appreciated that for some roles a car will be essential) and where it is more cost-effective to do so.

- It is important that volunteers ensure they purchase standard class tickets for trains and take advantage of advance tickets where it is feasible.
- There is a £7 charge to send out rail tickets by post and so picking them up at the station is the most cost-effective method.
- Volunteers should use sites such as 'nationalrail.co.uk' or purchase from train firm websites directly, rather than 'thetrainline.com' which charges a booking fee.
- Volunteers should keep receipts for their journeys to be submitted with their expense claim forms.
- Volunteers in London should use an Oyster card for journeys rather than purchase a daily underground ticket. Oyster cards require a small deposit (£5) but this is refundable after use from any London Underground station ticket office.

Taxis

The Association will only cover expenses for taxis when:

- a volunteer is ill during duty;
- there is no access to public transport and they do not have use of a private vehicle
- when heavy baggage is being carried as part of their role (and their role has not stated it is essential to have use of a car);
- where individual safety is compromised;
- where it is more economical in terms of time and cost for a group of people to travel together;

- where a return taxi (e.g. to a rail station) is less than the cost of parking;
- there are any other extenuating circumstances that require it.

Subsistence

- Volunteers assisting at an organised event or activity that spans the course of a day or longer, may be entitled to a lunch of up to £6.00, if meal costs are incurred and they are continuously volunteering for the day. Volunteers will be made aware of whether or not refreshments or meals are provided or will be reimbursed (up to the agreed value) before engaging in their volunteering or attending their event/shift.
 - Volunteers undertaking a welfare role will not normally be reimbursed for food or refreshments unless there is an occasion that requires it and the Area Welfare Officer managing them informs them of this.
- If an organised volunteering activity or event begins before 07:00, volunteers may be entitled to a breakfast of up to £5.00 or provided with sustenance.
- If volunteers are supporting an organised full-day event or activity which finishes later than 20:00 (where a full day has been undertaken), volunteers may be entitled to an evening meal of up to £20.00.

If the organisers have provided food for volunteers free of charge for one of the meals and volunteers have been informed of this, but choose to dine elsewhere, this will be at their own cost.

Associated costs for your role

Volunteers in roles such as Caseworker and Fundraising Team Leader roles may incur additional costs. These will be reimbursed provided they are logged and receipts or other evidence is provided. Examples of these costs include:

- Printing
- Photocopying
- Postage
- Phone calls*

How to claim expenses

- Download a volunteer Expenses Claim Form from the Volunteer Portal or through emailing volunteers@rafa.org.uk.
- Complete the form, including the date, details of expenses, receipt reference number and mileage. Please separate out the Net cost and VAT cost where possible and include any necessary notes in 'remarks'.
 - For receipt reference number, please mark 1,2,3, etc. on the form and on corresponding receipts, before stapling to the form.
- Submit the form to the relevant manager, as outlined in tabs '2' and '3' on the form.
- Expenses to be claimed through the central finance team will be paid on a weekly basis.

or

- Expenses to be claimed through the Area team managing a volunteer (e.g. Caseworker and Befriending expenses) will be paid according to the Area's policy, which can be obtained on request.

*Where phone calls for volunteering are absorbed into minutes from a contract, if a volunteer then runs over their contracted limit for the month, they can claim for the number of minutes used for volunteering, at the cost per minute which they are being charged by their network. A copy of the phone record will need to be presented with any personal contact numbers blacked out.

If you need to check the progress of your claim, contact your assigned manager or email the volunteering team on volunteers@rafa.org.uk who will investigate for you.