



# Ongo Homes

## Customer Engagement Expenses Policy

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## **1. Our policy is...**

- 1.1 Everyone should have equal opportunities to become Ongo Homes volunteers regardless of their means, so it is important that residents will not be out of pocket as a result of volunteering in projects, participating in events, attending meetings or being involved in other activities (e.g. conferences or training events).

## **2. It applies to...**

- 2.1 This policy covers travel, subsistence and childcare/carer's costs incurred by volunteers (and other residents engaged in officially recognised Ongo Homes or customer engagement activity) travelling to the project base, meetings and on other official Ongo Homes business providing prior approval has been obtained from the Project Coordinator or Service Manager.
- 2.2 Claims for incidental expenses e.g. telephone calls, stationery will not be reimbursed unless they have been authorised by the Customer Engagement team. (Receipts will be required).

## **3. Because we want to...**

- ✓ Make sure no volunteer or resident is out of pocket as a result of their volunteering work;
- ✓ Provide clear guidelines to ensure that volunteers or residents do not inadvertently incur expenses which Ongo Homes can neither justify nor reimburse;
- ✓ Make sure staff are monitoring and managing the cost of expenses within their day-to-day operational budgets.

**Expenses will only be reimbursed if they comply with this policy.**

## **4. We will...**

- 4.1 Hold meetings (national, regional and local), whenever possible, at venues accessible by public transport, as many of our residents do not have access to cars.
- 4.2 Make sure expense claims are authorised and paid as quickly as possible. This may be at the meeting or event itself when this is feasible. Our preferred method of payment is via BACS transfer in arrears (bank details will be required) although in cases of extreme hardship consideration will be given to paying residents via other methods e.g. petty cash
- 4.3 Make sure residents are aware of the need to ensure their expense claims are cost effective and value for money. For example, car sharing is to be encouraged whenever possible. Receipts or travel tickets must be submitted with all claims.
- 4.4 Travel expenses will cover:
- ✓ The costs of second class rail fare or bus fares to and from the venue;
  - ✓ Taxi fares when necessary (e.g. for residents with mobility difficulties, or to and from the nearest railway station if that is the only means of transport. Specially adapted taxis can be arranged for wheelchair users);
  - ✓ Mileage rates for car drivers to be reimbursed;
  - ✓ Car park charges (supported by receipts).
- 4.5 Pay mileage and parking expenses to the driver when expense claims have been submitted and continue to encourage car-share whenever possible.

4.6 Book any hotel accommodation via the appropriate Service Manager. Occasionally it may be necessary to stay away overnight, for example if there are meetings in the same location on consecutive days, or if it would otherwise be necessary to leave home before 7am, or return after 7pm.

4.7 Subsistence:

The cost of meals and refreshments can be reimbursed in accordance with the following principles:

- ✓ All expenditure must be supported by receipts;
- ✓ Refreshments have not been provided at the project or event;
- ✓ If you have to leave home before 7am and the journey takes more than two hours, expenses for breakfast can be claimed up to the amount shown in the *Being Involved, Expenses and Allowances* leaflet;
- ✓ If it is necessary to travel over lunch time and the journey takes more than two hours, (e.g. if a meeting begins early in the afternoon, or ends late morning), lunch expenses can be claimed as shown in the *Being Involved, Expenses and Allowances* leaflet;
- ✓ If you are volunteering in a project or event for more than five hours, lunch expenses can be claimed as shown in the *Being Involved, Expenses and Allowances* leaflet;
- ✓ If you have to stay away from home overnight and a meal has not been arranged with the accommodation, or if you are travelling home after 7pm and the journey takes more than two hours, evening meal expenses can be claimed as shown in the *Being Involved, Expenses and Allowances* leaflet.

4.8 Child Care /Carer's expenses:

- ✓ If a volunteer has to use childcare then reasonable childcare costs will be reimbursed. These must be agreed with the appropriate Service Manager (receipts will be required);
- ✓ Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed if a volunteer needs to be accompanied by a carer due to disability. Prior approval must be obtained from the appropriate Service Manager;
- ✓ If a volunteer is normally the sole and essential carer for another member of the household, reasonable expenses to provide cover to enable the representative to attend a meeting will be reimbursed. This must be agreed in advance by the appropriate Service Manager. A receipt or note from the carer must be attached to the claim form.

4.9 Some costs incurred by volunteers, outside of those specifically detailed within this policy, may be reimbursed to allow individuals to carry out the responsibilities of their role, up to a maximum amount of £20.00 per month, at the discretion of the Customer Engagement Manager.

4.10 To claim expenses, a claim form must be completed and returned to the appropriate Service Manager for payment to be processed. Staff can assist residents to make and submit a claim where necessary. The form must include details of:

- ✓ Purpose of the claim, (e.g. general volunteering, meeting, event);
- ✓ Name of event/meeting, venue/project base, date & time;
- ✓ Name and address of person claiming;
- ✓ Amount of expenses claimed and details;
- ✓ Signature of person claiming;
- ✓ Receipts required to be attached to the form.

Expense claim forms are available from our website – [www.ongo.co.uk](http://www.ongo.co.uk) – or from the appropriate Service Manager from either the project base or Headquarters at Ongo House, High Street, Scunthorpe, DN15 6AT or by telephone on: 01724 279900.

## **5. Making sure we do what we say...**

5.1 The Customer Engagement Manager has overall responsibility for the policy and for monitoring its effectiveness.

5.2 Members of the Customer Engagement team are responsible for ensuring that they have read and understand the policy and that it is implemented on a day-to-day basis.

## **6. Other things to bear in mind...**

- ✓ Customer Engagement Strategy
- ✓ *Being Involved, Expenses and Allowances* Leaflet
- ✓ HM Revenue and Customs tax free mileage rates

## **7. We'll look at this again...**

7.1 This policy will have an annual health check unless there are any substantial changes to legislation or regulation then a full review of the policy will be carried out.

## **Appendix One – Customer Engagement Expense Rates**

### **A standard national rate**

We will always set our mileage rates in line with HM Revenue and Customs Mileage Approved Rates (MAPS). They are set at a level to take into account depreciation and other running costs, as well as fuel.

Rates paid for mileage will be updated each April to reflect the new rates set by HMRC.

### **Rates listed as applicable as at April 2017:**

Mileage:                   45p per mile

## Appendix Two – Expenses Guidance

### Travel expenses:

Guidance	Information required
<p>Rail Fares</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To and from home within Ongo Homes region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rail tickets to be ordered in advance via the Project Coordinator or Service Manager.</li> </ul>
<p>Bus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To and from home within Ongo Homes region (user to make own arrangements)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'All day tickets' to be bought for £3.50 instead of return fare (if cheaper)</li> <li>People who travel more than three days per week for volunteer purposes should purchase a week pass at £ 9.80</li> <li>Bus tickets to be attached to claim form</li> </ul>
<p>Taxi Fares</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These will be paid when the individual does not have access to a car or public transport</li> <li>Taxi sharing from the same area is essential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bookings to be made through the appropriate Service Manager with the exception of Community Voice when bookings will be made via the allocated booking officer</li> <li>Taxi accounts set up with individual firms.</li> </ul>
<p>Car Mileage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actual journey mileage including return can be claimed</li> <li>Car sharing is encouraged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mileage - 45p per mile</li> <li>Details of journey to be included on claim form</li> <li>Additional passengers to be included on claim form</li> </ul>
<p>Car Parking Fees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be claimed for the period of the meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receipt / parking ticket to be provided</li> </ul>
<p>Travel outside North Lincolnshire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Project Coordinator or Service Manager will advise on the most cost effective travel arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel arrangements to be agreed with the appropriate Service Manager in advance</li> </ul>
<p><b>N.B - The amount to be claimed by a person volunteering in a project or daily activity will be capped at £10 per day.</b></p>	

## Carer/Support Expenses

Guidance	Information required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childcare allowance (to be agreed with the Project Coordinator or Service Manager before submitting a claim)</li> <li>• Carer for elderly or sick person No expenses will be paid to a member of the same household.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payment to be made to registered carers only, receipt to be provided Details of rates: (minimum hourly)</li> <li>• Childcare: £3.50</li> <li>• Carer elderly/sick: £12.50</li> </ul>

## Subsistence Expenses

Guidance	Information required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overnight accommodation - where an individual attends training or a conference requiring an overnight stay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed and booked by Project Coordinator or Service Manager in advance.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full day meetings held at Ongo House.</li> <li>• Invites to external events would normally indicate if refreshments are being provided.</li> <li>• For attending conferences/training sessions where meals are not provided.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongo Homes will provide expenses for refreshments at meetings or events (if nothing else is provided) Receipts must be provided to make a claim.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial support for local community groups.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongo Homes will provide financial assistance in the form of grants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start Up Grants - to pay for setting up a new group (leaflets &amp; publicity).</li> <li>• Annual Grant - to pay towards the running costs of a group (hiring venue, stationery, leaflets etc.)</li> <li>• Community Grant - for small projects</li> <li>• Customer Engagement will provide further information on the grants</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Engagement can provide information about external funding opportunities for resident associations &amp; community groups.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongo Homes will signpost to external funding opportunities</p>