



RDA UK EXPENSES POLICY Issued by National Office in 2015.

1. Volunteers and staff **MUST** be reimbursed for realistic expenses that they have incurred in performing duties for RDA UK or for Member Groups. Only actual expenditure should be reimbursed, but with the exception of travel expenses (for which rates are given below), it is acknowledged that standard levels of reimbursement applicable to all types of claims and all circumstances would be difficult to define.

Each part of RDA that is making a payment may therefore need to be flexible in establishing its principles for the reimbursement of expenses, which reflect the context and local situation.

2. General principles.

Everyone should adhere to the following principles that comply with existing and established practices:

- a. No claimant may authorise payment of his or her own expenses claims.
- b. All claims must be completed in ink, dated, and signed by the claimant. Where appropriate, supporting receipts should be attached to the claim form.
- c. Expenses will only be reimbursed to the person incurring the expense, and will not be paid to a third party.
- d. Reimbursement should normally be made by electronic transfer or cheque (in some cases it may be appropriate to make payments in cash, and where this is the case they should be in exchange for a signed and dated receipt).

3. Procedures

Claimants should make claims in a timely manner and in the appropriate way to the relevant part of RDA, from which they are claiming expenses. Payments should be made as quickly as is practical (bearing in mind that the payer may have several claims to process).

4. Guidance on Levels of Payments

- a. Travel by Car or Horsebox. Current RDA UK mileage rates are:
Travel by **Car 40 pence** per mile Travel by **Horsebox 45 pence** per mile
- b. Travel by Rail.
 - . (1) RDA UK policy is that only the cost of second-class travel may be reimbursed (unless another basis has first been agreed with the Honorary Treasurer, Chief Executive, Regional or County Chairman, or Group Chairman, as appropriate).
 - . (2) Rail travellers must always seek to take advantage of 'cheap-day', 'off-peak', 'away-day', 'travel-saver' tickets etc. where possible.
- c. Travel by Air. RDA UK policy is that the cost of air travel (unless previously agreed with the Honorary Treasurer, Chief Executive, Regional or County Chairman, or Group Chairman, as appropriate) should not be reimbursed. Exceptions to this general rule are flights to and from Northern Ireland, Scotland, the Isle of Man and the Channel Isles.
- d. Accommodation and Meals. Reimbursement should be agreed with the relevant Payment Authority before such expenses are incurred. RDA Policy is not to pay more than £10 per person for a lunch and £15 per person for an evening meal. Any claim for meals must be accompanied by the relevant receipts.
- e. Incidental and other “out of pocket” expenses. These will include (but not exclusively) such items as telephone calls, stationery, postage and taxi fares. Reimbursement is by arrangement with the relevant Payment Authority.

If the projected cost of expenses is likely to exceed £200, prior authorisation must be obtained from the payment authority, otherwise reimbursement may be restricted to £200 and any excess paid personally.

5. “Extraordinary” expenses

Expenses which are usually covered by an organisation include travel, food and accommodation. “Extraordinary” expenses are those which we would not normally expect to cover and may include:

- Gifts or items bought for a third party;
- Costs of animal care if away overnight (eg. horse or dog sitting).
- A more expensive form of travel, due to unforeseen or emergency circumstances.

RDA’s Policy is only to cover such items by prior agreement, where possible. A claim for an extraordinary expense that is not an emergency **must** be agreed by the budget holder before the expense is claimed. If this is not agreed, RDA reserves the right not to cover the expense. In cases of emergency, RDA will endeavour to cover all reasonable extraordinary costs.

6. M6 Toll Policy

RDA recognises that the M6 Toll offers a time-saving and legitimate alternative to using the M6 to travel past Birmingham. However, it is also a relatively expensive road and therefore we have the following policy with reference to its use.

- a. We would not normally expect the toll road to be used between 10am and 3pm; between 8pm and 6am; and at weekends.
- b. However, we recognise that there may be times when traffic conditions make it prudent to use the toll road during these times, in order to avoid delays. In these cases, people should use their own judgement as to whether to use the toll road.

7. Unclaimed expenses

We recognise that in some Regions and Groups volunteers choose not to claim expenses, as a way of saving RDA cost. This is a generous way of supporting the organisation and we thank volunteers who choose to do this.

However, best practice would be to make sure that these costs are still accounted for, for a number of important reasons:

a) it is important that the culture does not develop whereby a new volunteer into a role feels unable to claim any expenses as this will exclude some people from volunteering. The principle that expenses are always paid must be adhered to.

b)

volunteers who donate their expenses, are able to treat this as a donation of funds (which it is) and the recipient can claim Gift Aid, thereby "topping up" the sum by 25%. This is a legitimate and lawful way for the Group to raise money.

c)

the Group should take care that the true cost of an activity is not hidden by the fact that the expenses for it are not claimed and therefore not calculated.

Should volunteers or staff wish to not claim expenses, RDA Policy is for them to make a claim and donate the funds back to the Payment Authority.

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