**EXPENSE GUIDANCE FOR REPRESENTATIVES AND MEMBERS**

# 1. Introduction

This policy provides guidance to representatives and members about how to claim expenses which have been incurred when undertaking activities on behalf of the union. The policy describes the permitted expenses and the procedure for making a claim.

The guidance notes comply with current HMRC regulations.

**2. Reimbursement of Expense Claims**

# Basic Principles

As a general principle, members will be reimbursed in full for expenses exclusively incurred during Union activity on behalf of Prospect. Where the expense, such as travel, is paid for by an employer, no claim should arise. All claims must be made on the forms provided by finance or downloaded from the internet (Link: [Expense claims for Prospect business)](https://members.prospect.org.uk/resources/forms-templates-logos/expenses). ALL expenses must be accompanied by **itemised VAT receipts and claims must be necessarily incurred**.

To process the claim, reps/members must provide sufficient details, including the purpose of a meeting/event (e.g. training course, seminar, etc.), the location of the meeting/event, etc. This will ensure the claim can be authorised and assist the finance team when posting claims, thus reducing queries and the turnaround time for payment.

All expense claim forms need to be authorised by the claimant and the appropriate person, usually the meeting organiser or budget holder before payment can be made. To avoid subsequent difficulties, any expenditure not falling within this guidance must be discussed in advance with the event organiser/budget holder. Claims which do not meet this policy may be rejected.

Should you choose accommodation, flights or transport that is outside the guidelines, you will only be reimbursed as per this guide.

To assist the finance team to prepare accurate accounts, claims must be submitted as promptly as possible, but **no more than three months** after the expense has been incurred. Claims over three months will need to be authorised by the Senior Management Team (SMT) and there is no guarantee that it will be accepted for reimbursement. **Claims made after 3 months may be rejected if there is no good reason for the delay.**

# Submission Process

Email submission – Please scan your expenses and receipts as one document and submit for approval to the appropriate person. The approver will then send this to finance for payment. For queries relating to payment of your expenses please email finance@prospect.org.uk.

Hard copy submission – We have moved to an electronic processing system. However, as an exception when it is not possible for the member, hard copies can be submitted. Please ensure that your receipts and supporting documents are firmly attached to your expense sheet. Always keep a copy of your expenses until payment is received. If organisers/reps have received hard copies and need to dispose of them after scanning to finance, this can be shredded at any of Prospect’s offices.

Payments are processed via BACS each Wednesday and will be in your account the following Friday. BACS payment dates will vary over festive periods.

All approved expenses submitted to finance by 5pm on **Monday** will be included in the payment run on the Wednesday. Claims submitted after this will be processed the following Wednesday.

Please indicate clearly if your bank details have changed. Otherwise, payments will be made to the bank account held in our accounts system.

# 3. Business Travel

Business travel means that the journey is necessary in performing union business.

The most cost and time effective mode of transport should be used when travelling on union business, with public transport being the preferred method. Journeys should always be booked in advance where possible to obtain the best prices.

# Private Car

For members using their own car, it is their responsibility to ensure that they have adequate insurance in place to cover the use of the vehicle for business purposes. The mileage rates displayed belowwill be payable:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Mode of Travel**  | **Rate**  | **Additional Passengers**  |
| Private Cars (any car that is not provided by Prospect even if this is your employers car) | 33p  | 2p for first passenger, 1p for each additional passenger.  |
| Motorcycles  | 24p  |   |
| Bicycles  | 20p  |   |

# Air Travel

All air travel should be booked as economy unless the flight is over 4 hours. If so, members may then book economy plus or equivalent.

# Taxis / Hire Cars

This may be claimed **ONLY** where it is demonstrably more economical or practical when compared with public transport. Otherwise, you can only claim what it would have cost to take public transport.

# 4. Business Accommodation

Members should exercise discretion when booking overnight accommodation and should only do so when necessary.

# Hotel

Where an overnight stay is necessary, members should book accommodation through the union’s preferred suppliers if available in the area, unless it’s not the most cost-effective option.

**Staying with Relatives/Friends**

Where members stay with relatives/friends whilst undertaking union business, they may claim for reasonable expenses related to this. For example, the cost of a meal for host (up to a maximum of two people), considering the limits for meals or overnight stays. The cost of meals for hosts should not exceed hotel cost. If in doubt, members should discuss the matter with a Prospect member of staff or the finance team in advance.

# 5. Subsistence

Members who are away on union business for **more than 4 hours** are entitled to claim for subsistence. Claims will be reimbursed up to the maximum level of expenditure as shown in the table below.

You should not claim for additional meals if you are already being provided with a meal at the meeting/event unless specific dietary requirements have not been met. Please advise the event/meeting organiser if you have specific dietary requirements in advance.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Meal Type**  | **Rates**  | **Details**  |
| Breakfast | £9 maximum | When you leave home prior to 06:30 or it is associated with an overnight stay where breakfast is not included. |
| Lunch | £15 maximum | When you have attended a meeting away from your base and you have incurred additional costs. Only if lunch is not provided. |
| Dinner | £30 maximum | When associated with an overnight stay or where you have attended a late meeting, and you will get home too late to eat. |
| Tea/Coffee | £6 maximum | This is limited to 2 additional refreshments per day when you are on a full day of business travel and tea/coffee is not provided at the meeting. This must not be claimed when you are working at your normal place of work |

If you are away on union business for an entire day, we will apply a daily cap of £60 for any combination of the above.

# 6. Business Calls and Internet Access

The cost of business telephone calls and/or internet access whilst travelling on union business may be claimed.

# 7. Business Entertainment/Subsistence

Members will be reimbursed reasonable entertainment costs whilst on union business.

The following information should be included on the expense claim form:

* The name(s) of the attendee(s).
* The organisation which they represent.
* Where relevant, the reason for exceeding the guideline maximum level of expenditure.

# 8. Completing the Expense Form

The worksheet is protected, so only cells highlighted in yellow should be completed. The remaining cells will be calculated automatically. If you need help in completing the form, please speak to a member of the finance team. Please see **Appendix 1** for detailed guidance. This is also included on the expense form named ‘GuidanceForFormCompletionM’.

**Appendix 1 – Guidance for Expense Form Completion**

# Personal Details Section

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Field**  | **Description**  |
| Name  | Claimant’s name  |
| Membership No  | Membership number. This must be provided.  |
| Email Address  | Claimant’s email address for remittances.  |
| Home Address  | Claimant’s address  |
| Post Code  | This must be provided.  |
| Meeting Attended  | The name of the meeting/event that the claim relates to.  |
| Budget/Cost Centre Code  | **For members completing the form in writing, the organiser of the meeting/event** **MUST provide this to the member. If claim is for multiple events with various Budget/Cost Centre Codes, then these must be completed in the breakdown section of the form against each cost.**  |
| Account Number/Sort Code  | Only complete if bank details have changed or member is claiming for the first time.  |
| Mileage Rate  | A maximum of 33p. 2p for first additional passenger and 1p for all other passengers. If claiming for passengers and multiple rates apply, you must manually enter the rate and the mileage in the last two Mileage Amount cells at the bottom of the sheet, so it can be calculated manually .  |

# Transactions Breakdown Section

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Field**  | **Description**  |
| Date  | As per the transaction/invoice date or date of travel.  |
| Description of Expenses  | Purpose of the claim, giving full description of any sundry items.  |
| Expenditure Category/Expenditure Description  | Only complete if claiming from multiple budgets, otherwise the Budget/Cost Centre Code will suffice. From the dropdown lists, select the Expenditure Category / Expenditure Description for each cost. **If incomplete by member, the organiser or the authoriser must enter the budget code before submitting the claim to finance for payment.**  |
| Cost Centre Category  | This must be provided so expenditures can be allocated to the correct cost centre / team code. If ‘Budget/Cost Centre Code’ section is completed above, then this does not need to be completed unless expenditures should be allocated to multiple cost centres.  |
| Business Mileage  | The number of mileage whilst on Prospect business.  |
| Mileage Amount  | This is automatically calculated (unless manually completed) based on the mileage rate and the business mileage entered, except for the last two rows where claim can be manually entered for passengers.  |
| Other Travel  | All travel costs. Please separately record plane and rail travel where possible.  |
| Subsistence  | All costs relating to meals and accommodations.  |
|   |   |
| Sundries Items  | Any other costs that do not fall under travel and subsistence.  |
| Budget Code  | This will automatically be completed (unless manually completed) based on the Expenditure Category/Expenditure Description selected.  |
| Cost Centre  | This will automatically be completed (unless manually completed) based on the Cost Centre Category selected.  |
| Total  | This sums up the totals for the £ amount in each row (unless manually completed).  |

**Authorisation Section**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Field**  | **Description**  |
| Signature of Claimant  | Email authorisation accepted or physical signature if submitting hard copy.  |
| Authorised By  | The signature of the person authorising the claim. If authorising by email, please state the total you are approving in the email and who the claim is for.  |
| Name of Authoriser  | As per description  |
| Position of Authoriser  | Only required if authorised by branch treasurers.  |
| Date  | The date the expense form is signed by both the claimant and authoriser if submitting hard copy.  |
| Total Being Claimed  | As per description.  |