

BELGRAVE NEIGHBOURHOOD CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING ASSOCIATION EXPENSES POLICY

Aims of the expenses policy

The following are aims of the expenses policy:

- the co-op enables its volunteer members to claim for any legitimate cost incurred in carrying out co-op business
- there is a clear and fair system for members to claim expenses.

Delegated Authority

- 1 Payments of expenses will be authorised by either the Chief Executive Officer or Secretary. The co-op delegates payment of expenses to the Finance Lead once authorised.

What the co-op will pay for

- 2 The co-op will cover expenses for the following:
 - refreshments at co-op meetings or on co-op business (tea, coffee, biscuits, sandwiches etc)
 - conference and training costs that are agreed by the co-op
 - transport costs for co-op work
 - childcare costs to enable volunteers to attend meetings and carry out co-op business
 - subsistence allowances for members on co-op business.
- 3 Reasonable costs of refreshments will be reimbursed on the basis of receipts provided. Conference and training costs will be approved by the committee and will usually be paid by invoice.
- 4 To avoid doubt, it is not possible for committee members to claim for loss of earnings payments.

Telephone expenses

- 5 Where a committee member needs to make a phone call on behalf of the co-op, they should normally make the call from the office mobile phone.

Travel

- 6 The co-op will pay the cost of bus fares for shorter journeys or a pushbike mileage rate of 9p per mile.
- 7 For longer journeys (ie. to a conference), the co-op will usually only cover the cost of the cheapest form of transport available.
- 8 **Train travel** - for individual members, this will usually be the cost of second class train travel, which should be booked, where possible, in advance to take advantage of discounted fares. The member will be entitled to claim for the actual costs of journeys made, and expenses claims should normally be accompanied by the ticket receipt.
- 9 **Use of a car** - where several co-op members are travelling a long distance on behalf of the co-op, it may be cheaper to use a car. On occasions where co-op members use their own car for co-op business, reimbursement will be at a rate of 45p per mile.
- 10 **Car hire** - only where co-op members involved can show that the cost of hiring a car and petrol is cheaper than those members attending an event each buying a discounted train ticket (or where there are no other methods to get to the event) will the cost of hiring a car be claimed under the expenses policy. If it is cheaper to hire a car, then the co-op will pay hire car costs and petrol costs (on production of receipts).

Car hire will need to be approved in advance by the committee.

- 11 **Taxi fares** – will be paid when:
 - there is a need to travel from coach, bus or railways stations to venues where there is no transport laid on
 - the cost of public transport is more than the taxi fare

- if the member is disabled and unable to use public transport, or has a medical condition that would prevent them from doing so

Subsistence allowances

- 12 The co-op will provide a subsistence allowance to members attending conferences, training or other events on the co-op's behalf outside the co-op. These allowances are provided to enable the member to have some spending money at the event and/or to cover the costs of phoning home.
- 13 A subsistence allowance of £20 can be claimed for each event.
- 14 Subsistence allowances will be signed for on receipt of the allowance.
- 15 The co-op will not normally expect co-op members to attend an overnight event outside Leicester where accommodation is not provided. If hotel accommodation is required, the co-op will pay up to £120 for a hotel in the London area and £80 for a hotel outside London. Use of a hotel must be approved by the committee and receipts must be provided in order for these allowances to be paid.

Childcare

- 16 Members may claim childcare in relation to children they are responsible for if a co-op member attends a meeting or event on behalf of the co-op such as general or committee meeting or other committee work, or training courses.
- 17 Childcare is not paid for attendance at social events.
- 18 To claim childcare expenses, members must complete a childcare form which states the date, hours and who the childcarer was (ie. a relative, NNEB or non NNEB childcarer, or carer of special needs). The form should be signed by the co-op member claiming, and the childcarer.
- 19 All NNEB carers will be paid the statutory minimum wage. For other childcare arrangements, the maximum payments are:

- £15 per committee meeting providing the member attends all, or a substantial part of, the meeting
- an hourly rate of £6 for carer of a child with special needs, & £5 for non-NNEB carer or relative; a daily rate of £28 for the day (9am-6pm). Extra children shall qualify for half this rate for each extra child.
- in the case of being away for co-op work for weekends or overnight, this will need to be negotiated with the committee prior to the event, and payment agreed by a co-op meeting, dependent on the circumstances of the child needing to be looked after. Payment of a maximum of £50 a day and night will be paid unless otherwise agreed by the co-op.

Claiming expenses

- 20 All claims should be submitted within one month of the date that they were incurred.
- 21 Claims will be settled through BACS transfers to the claimant.

Payments in advance

- 22 Payments can be made in advance of potential expenditure if necessary. They must be authorised by the Finance Lead who must be given at least one week's notice that an advance payment is required, and the expenditure that it is required for.
- 23 A receipt for the advance payment, which states what the payment is for, will be signed by the recipient.
- 24 With the exception of subsistence allowances, receipts for the actual expenditure should be produced within one month of the advance payment being made. If all the advance payment is not spent, the difference must be returned to the co-op.

Lost receipts and rejected expenses claims

- 25 With the exception of subsistence allowances, if a member does not have a receipt for an expenses claim, they may raise the issue to the committee who will determine whether the expenditure was legitimate and can be paid for.
- 26 Members may raise other expenses claims rejected for consideration, and the committee will determine whether the expenditure was legitimate and can be paid for.

Risks to be avoided:

- A member is not able to claim for legitimate expenses
- There is a lack of clarity about what expenses can be claimed and decisions about expenses are made without reference to a policy at committee meetings