

A GUIDE

to
Reimbursement of Expenses
for Resident Involvement



This Document has been Read and Approved by the

Tenants Editorial Panel

We use the term 'resident' to describe anyone living in one of our homes or receiving one of our services. This includes tenants, leaseholders and shared owners.



Reimbursement of Expenses for Resident Involvement

Cosmopolitan's Commitment

Cosmopolitan has a high regard and value for the positive contribution that individual residents make to improving services. The Association recognises that resident involvement in service delivery is essential in order for the business to be efficient, responsive and reflective of the customers it serves.

Therefore the Association has identified expenses which you can make a claim for:

Travel by Bus

Payment will be made in full for travel by bus on production of a receipt to and from the home address. If a receipt or ticket cannot be produced, the Association will reimburse payment at the cheap day rate equivalent.

Travel by Train

Payment will be made in full for travel by train on production of a receipt to and from the home address. If a receipt or ticket cannot be produced, the Association will reimburse payment at the cheap day rate equivalent.

Please Note: User to make own arrangements for travel, unless the resident is making a journey to a conference or similar event. In these circumstances, a member of the Resident Involvement Team will make the arrangements.

Taxi Fares

The use of taxis is an expensive option and in all cases, public transport (or private car) should be encouraged wherever possible. Taxi fares will be paid in the event of the resident being unable to use a car or public transport.

Those using public transport to come to meetings that finish late can claim taxi fares for the return journey.

Taxi sharing to the same estate/area is encouraged.

To request a taxi, residents must contact the member of staff organising the meeting or a member of the Resident Involvement Team who operate the taxi account. Unauthorised use of taxi journeys will be charged to the resident responsible.

Car Mileage

Expenses will be paid for those using their own transport. Car sharing will be encouraged. The rates applicable will be equivalent to those contained within the existing Cosmopolitan casual car user policy at the time of the claim.

In the event of a journey outside of the Association's area of operation (i.e. the local authority areas containing Cosmopolitan's social housing stock) residents must contact a member of the Resident Involvement Team. For long journeys where cheaper transport can be arranged (e.g. train) residents will be required to provide evidence on safety or medical grounds that prevent the use of public transport. In this event the mileage allowance will be disregarded and the cost of the cheapest transport will be paid.

Please Note: The Association will not accept responsibility for any car parking fines, damage to, theft from or theft of vehicles.

Car Parking Fees

These can be claimed for the period of attendance at the meeting or event. This should not normally exceed 4 hours, except in exceptional circumstances. Fees will be paid without a receipt on the day of the event. After the event, the resident has the responsibility to provide their receipt to a member of the Resident Involvement Team within one month.

Support Worker

The additional travel costs for a support worker assisting and enabling a resident to attend a meeting or similar event will be paid. The support worker's information and employment details must be obtained.





Carer Costs

These payments will be made to the additional travel costs and cover childcare or other caring responsibilities. The rate to be paid for childcare will be based upon the national minimum wage using the form provided by the Resident Involvement Team.

Please Note: No expenses will be paid to a member of the same household and rates are unrelated to the number of children cared for. Some form of evidence of the resident's childcare needs has to be provided.

Interpreter / Signer Costs

In the event of residents having a disability or a language / cultural barrier, which make it difficult for participation in a meeting, project or similar event, the Association will endeavour to provide the services to enable residents to fully participate. Rates and requests for interpretation to be negotiated in advance of the event.

Room Hire

The Association can provide a number of meeting rooms, available free of charge at various locations. Please contact the Resident Involvement Team.

Refreshments / Catering

For some meetings or events it may be appropriate to provide refreshments such as tea, coffee or sandwiches. In certain circumstances, the Association may be able to assist financially. Please contact the Resident Involvement Team.

Meal Allowance / Subsistence

In the event of residents travelling away from home to attend a conference or similar event lasting a full day or more, refreshments and meals will normally be provided at the venue free of charge.

However, occasionally you may be expected to pay for yourself. Should this occur, the Association may refund some or all of your meals or refreshments.

The Resident Involvement Officer will usually know about the catering arrangements before you go and will advise you if you can claim subsistence allowance.

The amount that you can claim depends on several different factors but will be equivalent to what an officer of the Association could claim in the same circumstances. Residents will need to provide receipts for any expenditure incurred.

Where an event has been organised by a residents association, without the assistance of the Resident Involvement Team, residents should check with the Chair or Treasurer of the group to see what, if any, allowance will be paid.

Accommodation

If a resident travels away from home to attend a conference, course or similar event outside of the Association's area of operation, overnight stay may be necessary. Providing the event is approved & organised by the Resident Involvement Team, the Association will pay for appropriate overnight accommodation.

Where an event has been organised by a residents association, without the assistance of the Resident Involvement Team, residents should check with the Chair or Treasurer of the group to see what, if any, accommodation is provided.


Hospitality Allowance

The Association will pay allowances to residents to pay for sundry items, where overnight stay is required. (The allowance will be negotiated depending on the geographical area). Residents will need to provide receipts for their expenditure for auditing purposes.

Office Equipment / Ink Cartridges

The Association will not repair or replace personal computer or office equipment.





However, providing residents can demonstrate considerable use of their personal computer for significant amounts of printing, residents may be able to claim for ink cartridges providing you submit a valid receipt and the permission of the Resident Involvement Officer has been sought beforehand.

If a residents association receives direct funding from the Association in the form of a grant, residents cannot claim for ink cartridges.

Photocopying

The Resident Involvement Team will provide a photocopying service to any resident or resident groups. For any item(s) requiring over 100 copies, residents must contact the Resident Involvement Team at least 5 working days prior to the deadline.

For residents who cannot reasonably be expected to travel to the Association's Head Office in Marybone, local photocopying services should be sought. Costs will be reimbursed up to a maximum of £15.00. Residents must ensure receipts are obtained

Stationery

The Association can provide almost all the stationery that residents need, such as pens, paper, folders, envelopes etc. Please speak to the Resident Involvement Team. Where a residents' association is in receipt of a grant from the Association, requests for stationery will not be met.

Loss of Earnings

Requests for reimbursement of loss of earnings must be made and approved in advance. The Association will only reimburse for loss of basic earnings where a resident representative is specifically required by the Association to attend a meeting, training event or other specific project. Written evidence from the employer with the amount of earnings lost will be required. Loss of earnings will not be reimbursed for regular or standard meetings or events.

Incidental Expenses

The Association has occasionally been asked to fund expenses generally related to the illness, death or 'special' birthday of a member of Cosmopolitan's Tenants' Forum.

The range of expense incurred includes:

- Flowers at funerals.

- Flowers for illness.

- Donations to charitable organisations following the death of a resident representative.

- 'Get well' cards.

- 'Happy Birthday' cards.

- Small bottles of champagne.

The Association acknowledges the commitment, dedication and contribution that resident representatives have made to improve the housing services by supporting such requests for financial help. The maximum the Association will contribute will be £25.00 and resident representatives are also expected to make their own contribution. The details are as follows:

- On the death of an active resident a contribution will be made for either flowers OR a donation to a registered charity.

- Cards for an active resident in the event of illness.

- Cards for an active resident in the event of a birthday.

Expenses and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)

The Department of Work and Pensions issues guidelines on the payment of expenses for voluntary work and the association will be governed by these guidelines when paying expenses.

The DWP state that expenses can be set at whatever level is seen as reasonable by each organisation and payment of expenses can be made to anyone in receipt of benefit without their benefit being affected in any way so long as the organisation does not profit from the work that the 'volunteers' do.



In the event of a resident having a dispute with the DWP in this matter, the Association will issue a letter to anyone in receipt of benefit, which the claimant would hand in to whichever benefit department they are in contact with. The letter should bring to the attention of the benefits agency the regulations governing voluntary work and payment which is the 'Income Support general regulation 1987, regulation 6, part 1c and schedule 9, paragraph 2. The letter clearly explains that the payments being made by the Association are classified as expenses and therefore the claimant will not receive any deductions from their benefit entitlement.

This document is available translated into your own language and in large print, braille and audio tape on request.

यह दस्तावेज़ आपकी भाषा में अनुदित रूप में भी उपलब्ध है। विवरण के लिए कृपया इस कार्यालय से उपलब्ध "हमारी सेवा पुस्तिकाओं की गाइड" प्रकाशन देखें।

ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ। ਵੇਰਵਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਦੇਖੋ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ "ਸਾਡੇ ਸੇਵਾ ਲੀਫਲੈਟਾਂ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਗਾਈਡ", ਜੋ ਇਸ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਤੋਂ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

یہ دستاویز آپ کی زبان میں ترجمہ شدہ شکل میں بھی دستیاب ہے کتابچہ بعنوان "رہنما پرچے برائے ہماری خدمات" (گائڈ ٹو اور سروس لیفلٹس) دیکھیں

هذا المستند متوفر أيضا، رجماً إلى لغتكم ،
للمزيد من التفصيل برجاء إطلاع على نشرة " دليل خدماتنا "
من هذا المكتب

এই ডকুমেন্টটি /লেখটি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় অনূদিত পাওয়া যাবে, 'গাইড টু আওয়ার সার্ভিস লিফলেটস'
(আমাদের পরিষেবা পত্রিকার নির্দেশিকা) প্রকাশনা দেখুন, বিশদ বিবরণের জন্য, যা এই অফিসে পাওয়া যাচ্ছে।

這份資料冊已有中文譯本，請參閱《我們的服務 介紹資料冊指引》，
請向我們 辦公室詢問這份 指引 之詳情。

Waxaad kalood heli kataa dukumeentigani oo ku qoran luqaddaada, fadlan waxaad eegtaa "Kaaliyaha xaashida adeegyadena" oo laga heli karo xafiiskani.

Ky dokument është poashtu i përkthyer në gjuhën tuaj, ju lutemi shikoni botimin "Udhëzime për shërbimet tona në fletpalosjet", që mund t'i gjeni në këtë zyrë, për të dhëna.



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Cosmopolitan Housing Association is a Charitable Industrial and Provident Society.