

▶ POLICY:

RESIDENT EXPENSES

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of the policy is:

- To outline our commitment to supporting residents to become involved.
- To be clear about what expenses will be paid.
- To ensure there is consistency in how we pay expenses.
- To ensure both residents and TVH receive value for money.

2.0 Background Legislation

Although there is no specific legislation that enforces TVH to pay expenses or incentives there is a requirement for co-regulation between the landlord and tenant We aim to enable residents to do this by having a clear Expenses Policy.

3.0 Definitions

TVH	Thames Valley Charitable Housing Association
Rail warrant	A voucher entitling the bearer to travel on a train without having to purchase a ticket. Only travel between defined stations on a specified date allowed. Issued by TVH staff. One weeks notice required so these can be sent to resident in time.
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs
Resident	Leaseholder, shared owner, homeowner or tenant
Carer	A formal arrangement where a person provides care and/or support to another to enable them to participate to the same degree as someone who does not require support.
BACS	Bankers automatic clearing services. An electronic payment from our bank into the recipients bank

4.0 Payment of expenses

4.1 Qualifying expenses

The following expenses will be considered:

- Travel expenses
- Child care / carer expenses
- Meal and refreshment costs

4.2 We pay expenses for



- Attending meetings, focus groups, training, panels , volunteering or TVHA authorised events
- Carrying out duties as part of an authorised panel or group by prior arrangement

4.3 We will not pay expenses for

- Loss of earnings
- Printing/ink/cartridge costs (we can print documents out for you)
- Internet or telephone
- Stationery – for example – paper, pens, folders etc (we can supply these for you)

4.4 How we pay expenses

- We pay expenses retrospectively.
- Claim forms must be filled in, relevant documents/receipts attached.
- Claim forms must be authorised by the relevant member of staff.
- Claim forms are processed once a month. Payment schedule available on request or see our website <http://www.tvha.co.uk/involvement/resident-expense-policy/>
- Payment will be via BACS straight into a bank account. We will need your bank details to set you up on our payment system. We may be able to pay public transport costs in cash on the day by prior arrangement.
- Claims should be submitted once a month.
- Payments will only be authorised when we receive a fully completed form with the relevant documentation/receipts attached. Failure to do this will delay payment.
- Expenses should be submitted no more than two months in arrears. We will not pay any expenses that are more than three months old.

Reimbursed out-of-pocket expenses are not earnings, therefore they are not liable for tax or National Insurance, nor should they affect entitlement to state benefits. As all involvement is voluntary, all travel expenses from home to the venue are not considered as income providing they are correct amounts and not rounded up. We strongly recommend that you keep records of expenses reimbursed and contact your Job Centre Plus to confirm that the expenses paid will not have an adverse impact on benefit/Council Tax claim(s).



4.5

i, TRAVEL EXPENSES	
Car mileage	<p>45p per mile up to a maximum of 40 miles each way (80 mile round trip) or cost of standard class rail fare if cheaper (disabled drivers excluded).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passenger details must be provided on the claim form. • TVHA will only pay mileage for one resident per household. • Mileage will only be paid for direct travel; eg. from meeting location to place of work or home (which ever is the lesser amount). • Mileage may be checked on Google Maps for the shortest routes. • This is above the HMRC set amounts. Residents are responsible for their own declarations of income for tax/benefit purposes.
Car Sharing	An additional 5p per mile for one or more passengers attending (all passengers to sign the same claim form)
Motorbike	24p mile
Cycle	20p a mile
Car parking	<p>We will reimburse car parking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will not pay central London car park or congestion charge fees. Travel to and from central London (Zone 1) should be done by public transport, unless registered disabled. • Receipts must be provided
Public transport	<p>We will reimburse bus and standard class rail fares</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tickets/receipts must be provided • If travelling by rail, we can provide a warrant. Contact us one week before so we can send this before you travel. • If travelling on a cashless TFL service we will need proof of payment. Either a bank statement, journey print out or a photograph of a TFL screen showing your journey details. .
Taxi	<p>Paid only by prior arrangement with the relevant staff member.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receipts must be provided • We can pre order a taxi on our account <p>Eligibility for a taxi includes::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility issues. • Vulnerable – age, registered disability. • Those living in rural or isolated areas with lack of suitable public transport.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When group travel by taxi is more cost effective than individual fares • Travel late at night where driving is not possible. • Exceptions may be considered.
ii. CHILDCARE / CARERS EXPENSES / TRANSLATION COSTS	
Child care	<p>We pay up to minimum wage rate (https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £2.50 per hour for each subsequent child • Claims cover the duration of the meeting or event, as well as reasonable travel times. • Residents can claim for children up to 15 years old (15 – 18 year olds in exceptional circumstances). • Childcare costs must be agreed in advance with relevant staff member. • Payable to non household or non family members only. • You must provide full receipts.
Carers expenses	<p>We will pay reasonable carers expenses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of carers allowance or caring responsibility required. • Claims cover the duration of the meeting or event, as well as reasonable travel times. • Care costs must be agreed in advance with the relevant staff member. • Payable to non household or non family members only. • We will check all claims with the care provider.
Translation costs	Costs must be agreed in advance with the relevant staff member
iii. MEALS & REFRESHMENTS	
Subsistence	<p>If you attend a conference where a meal has not been provided you can claim for; lunch (12.00 – 14.00 hrs), dinner 18.30 – 20.00hrs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claims will need prior agreement from TVHA staff. • Receipts need to be provided. • Lunch: up to £7.50. Evening meal up to £9.50

4.7

INCENTIVES

Any incentives (including vouchers) are classed as income and could be subject to benefit or tax deductions. You will need to declare this to either the Department for Work and Pensions or HM Revenues and Customs or/and your local authority Housing Benefit department.

Vouchers or cash are offered as a way of recognising residents involvement



We will send you an annual statement setting out what expenses and/or incentives you have received over the year.	
We may withhold offering incentives/vouchers if residents have failed to adhere to the terms and conditions of the below groups.	
We may withdraw incentives/vouchers at any time.	
If a resident's rental / service charge account is in arrears of over 8 weeks the incentive may be used as a credit to their account, with no vouchers offered.	
We may give incentives to the following groups	
Mystery Shopping	For completing one phase of mystery shopping (four phases in a year)
Regular Groups	Paid for meeting attended.
Estate Inspectors	Given every 6 completed inspections.
Focus Groups or other consultation	We may give vouchers for specific consultation.
Competitions or prize draws	We may use incentives/vouchers for competitions or prize draws from time to time.
There will be some events run by either TVH or external consultants where Incentives only may be offered. If this is the case no expenses can be claimed as the incentives should cover any out of pocket expenses.	

4.8

CATERING
Catering will be decided by the member of staff who is organising the event (dietary requirements will be catered for)
We will generally provide light refreshments at meetings or training (tea, coffee, biscuits etc).
We may provide catering for meetings or training where the meeting or training runs over mealtimes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch; 12.30–14.00hrs where resident is required to attend from 10.00 to 16.00 hrs • Dinner; 18.30–20.00hrs where resident is required to attend from 18.00 to 20.00 hrs. •



5.0 Other useful links

<http://www.tvha.co.uk/involvement/resident-expense-policy/>

<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

6.0 Equality Impact Assessment

This was carried out in March 2015. To mitigate against potential adverse impacts upon residents with a disability we have made exceptions., See points 4.5.i – car mileage, 4.5.i – car parking, 4.5.i – Taxi. Full impact assessment on file

7.0 Policy Information

Policy owner: Head of Communities and Resident Involvement

Approved by: Housing Services Director

Last review date: March 2015

Next review date: July 2018

Equality assessment: Completed (on file)

Resident consultation completed: March 2021

