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RCN Expenses Policy for Unpaid Office Holders

Includes RCN Council Members

CORPORATE



RCN Legal Disclaimer

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1.0 Policy statement

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) recognises that all its unpaid Office Holders including RCN Council, RCN Accredited Representatives, RCN Members, unpaid Advisers and Volunteers, may incur expenditure when carrying out the activity and business of the RCN. The RCN believes the individual should not have to bear those additional costs. Equally, reimbursement is not a payment or reward and should not leave the individual better off.

If, on occasion, an RCN member of staff acts in the capacity of one of the various roles covered within this policy they must still follow the RCN staff expenses policy and not the policy outlined in this document.

This policy is for unpaid Office Holders, RCN Accredited Representatives, RCN Members, unpaid Advisers and Volunteers only. RCN employees should refer to the RCN staff expenses policy. RCN paid Office Holders will have a separate policy.

Any individual planning meetings, travelling or authorising expenses must do so under the principles and framework laid out within this policy.

All travel and associated activity carried out while undertaking RCN activity must h00l-28.3 (i)-13.3 (n)5.2 (g R)20.6 (C)-(e)-410 0 0l-28.3 ((t41)-10.1)10.5 (l

- e) The responsibility lies with the claimant to ensure that the expense is reasonable in amount and nature, and is within policy in accordance with the authorisation framework. The claimant should seek authorisation prior to incurring any cost to ensure it is allowable.
- f) Travel must be arranged through a member of staff (see table in section 6.0 for appropriate team), who will book through the RCN corporate travel provider, including the online booking facilities they provide.
- g) The expected mode of transport is public transport, at standard/economy class, taking advantage of advance fares where this is the most cost effective option. Private cars may be used where this is more cost effective, taking account of time as well as expense. Approval for car use spensr-£m80.9 (g)-17.6 (h t)-24.2 (h)/m80.9 (g)-51 (t)-6.6 (o)1C(f t)-110 85.032.6 (n)-£/m80.9 672.6 (

Category	RCN Accountable Officer	Booking Team
RCN Council and Committee Members	RCN Group Secretary	RCN Governance Team
RCN Board Members	Country / Regional Directors	Country / Region Admin Team
RCN UK Committees for Stewards, Learning Representatives and Safety Representatives	RCN Group Secretary	RCN Governance Team
Forums	RCN Group Secretary/Head of Nursing Practice	Governance Team/Nursing Practice Admin Team
RCN Accredited Representatives	Country / Regional Directors	Country / Region Admin Team
RCN Members	Country / Regional Directors	Country / Region Admin Team
Branches	Elected Branch Officials	N/A
RCN Students Committee	RCN Group Secretary	RCN Governance Team
RCN HP Committee	RCN Group Secretary	RCN Governance Team
RCN Fellows	RCN Group Secretary	RCN Governance Team
RCN Unpaid External Advisers	RCN Group Secretary	RCN Governance Team
Volunteers	RCN Group Secretary	RCN Governance Team

7.0 Authoriser's responsibilities

The individual authorising the expense claim is responsible for satisfying themselves that the appropriate policies, principles and claim rates

place at 6pm but their shift had finished at 2pm so that they went home and returned for the meeting at 6pm then the additional journey would be an RCN qualifying journey and therefore appropriate reimbursement may be made.

- 8.6 RCN Accredited Representatives and RCN members cannot claim for attending branch meetings, unless they are claiming in their role as Branch Officer. More detail is provided in the 'Branch Finances: Funding Guide' which is available from Country / Regional offices.

9.0 Tax and national insurance

- 9.1 The RCN has a duty to comply with tax and NIC law and to consider guidance issued by HMRC in constructing its expenses policy. PAYE and NIC Regulations





- 11.6.7 Flights should be booked as well in advance as is practicable to take advantage of low fares. Travellers wishing to travel at short notice must seek relevant approval.
- 11.6.8 Air miles or other bonus schemes earned on RCN journeys should only be redeemed in a manner which benefits the RCN and not for personal use.
- 11.6.9 Losses in airports or transit must be immediately reported to local authorities and documentation evidencing this must be obtained. Local authorities must be pressed for action. Claimants should report any losses to their relevant Accountable Officer, where appropriate.
- 11.6.10 Travellers must return cancelled or unused tickets immediately to ensure a credit is issued, where the ticket allows.



11.7 Accommodation

11.7.1 Justification for accommodation should accompany any claim. Reasons for accommodation would include:

- i. departure from home or arrival back at home would otherwise be before 6am or after 10pm
- ii. consecutive days' attendance at a site where extra daily travelling time would be greater than 60 minutes each way, or where the cost of travelling exceeds the cost of accommodation
- iii. where the performance of duties would be significantly impaired if accommodation were not available
- iv. where the overall cost of having accommodation provided is less than any alternative which enables the claimant to properly fulfil their duties
- v. where there is a demong we ae tst of ha74 (x)-29.6 (BT0 Tc6(e t)EFF0007)-2Tm{v}65..5 (n)10.3 (c)4an35.

and receipt. Personal expenses including alcohol, mini-bar, and hire of films or costs in excess of the expense limits in force, may not be claimed.

- 11.7.8 Any claimant staying away from home is entitled, within a space of 24 hours, to telephone calls home up to a financial limit specified in Appendix 1 when supported by details of calls claimed and the relevant statement of itemised calls.



11.8 Subsistence

- 11.8.1 The RCN will reimburse reasonable subsistence costs incurred on RCN activity, supported by itemised receipts, up to the limits set out in Appendix 1.
- 11.8.2 The cost of breakfast, up to the approved rate, may be claimed if:
- i. it is necessary for the claimant to start their journey from home before 7am, and
 - ii. the cost of breakfast is not included in the rate charged for overnight accommodation.
- 11.8.3 The cost of lunch, up to the approved rate may be claimed if:
- i. the claimant is occupied on RCN activity for more than four hours in any one day, and
 - ii. lunch is not otherwise provided.
- 11.8.4 The cost of dinner, up to the approved rate, may be claimed if the claimant is away from home and on RCN activity after 8pm.
- 11.8.5 Alcohol should not be included as part of a subsistence claim.
- 11.8.6 Where a claimant is also claiming the cost of dinner for another RCN claimant, the name of the other claimant must be included clearly on the claim.
- 11.8.7 Where a claimant is claiming the cost of dinner, the receipt of which is part of a group receipt, the claimant must clearly identify the items being claimed by themselves. They must also note the name of other potential RCN claimants included on the receipt.

11.9 International Travel

- 11.9.1 All international and European travel must be authorised prior to booking, by the Chair of Council or Chief Executive and General Secretary.
- 11.9.2 International travel and accommodation must be arranged through a member of staff who will book through the RCN corporate travel provider. Prior approval must be obtained for hotels exceeding the current London hotel rate ceiling.



11.11 Gifts

11.11.1 As a general rule, the provision of gifts, including flowers, chocolates and alcohol is not permitted. Flowers may be sent in the case of serious illness.





11.15 Emergency expenses

11.15.1 It is acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances an individual on RCN activity may need to incur expenses outside of this policy when an emergency has occurred. Possible emergency situations may include where the claimant has been taken ill whilst conducting RCN activity, or a close relative has been taken ill and the claimant needs to return home promptly.

11.15.2 In such cases the claimant should seek to obtain agreement from an appropriate source where possible. However it is acknowledged that this may not always be possible, in such circumstances, as long as the claimant adopts a reasonable and common sense approach the RCN is very unlikely to refuse reimbursement where a clear explanation is provided.



11.16 Other

11.16.1 The expense types included wit10 0 T(s)-4.8 f2 2172 0 0.1Bm6(9.5 (p)5.7 e)97.8661 537.0358 Tm[l]9.8 (o)9.8



Appendix 1: RCN Expense Rates for Unpaid Office Holders, RCN Accredited Representatives, Members, Unpaid Advisers and Volunteers

Claim limits and approved allowances from 1 January 2024 until further notice.

This Appendix sets out the expense rates and limits currently applicable for RCN unpaid Office Holders, RCN Accredited Representatives, RCN Members, Unpaid Advisers and Volunteers on approved RCN activity, within the RCN Expenses Policy. Please make sure that you are familiar with the policy, principles and guidance before making a claim.

Travel

Where travel is necessary, the preferred mode of travel for RCN business is public transport. All rail and air travel must be booked through a member of staff, who will use the RCN corporate travel provider, or the online facilities they provide.

Where a private car is used, the following rates apply:

	First 10,000 business miles in the tax year	Each business mile over 10,000 in the tax year
Private car/van	45p	25p
Motor cycle	24p	24p
Bicycle	45p	20p
*Passenger	5p	5p
**Alternative voluntary rate	24p	24p

* 5p per passenger per RCN mile for carrying fellow claimants in a car or van on journeys which are also RCN journeys for them.

**The alternative voluntary rate is claimed at the individual's discretion.

Accommodation

All hotel bookings must be booked through a member of staff (see table in section 6.0 for appropriate team), who will use the RCN corporate travel supplier to access approved rates, including negotiated rates at selected London hotels.

Maximum rates per night, bed and breakfast including VAT:

London	£180
Major city rate - Birmingham, Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester	£130
Outside London	£110

Appendix 2 – Document and Version Control Summaries

Title	RCN Unpaid Office Holders, Members, and Volunteers Expenses Policy
Status	Approved
Version no.	5.1
Date	January 2024
Approved by	Council
Effective from	1 January 2024
Next review date	November 2024

The RCN represents nurses and nursing, promotes
excellence in practice and shapes health policies

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