



Housing Associations Branch London

Branch Members Expenses Policy

1.0 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to set branch-specific rules on expenses for the London Housing Association Branch of UNISON. Branches are encouraged to set their own ceilings for expenses reimbursement, and to pay these in advance to members where possible. This benefits both members and branch finances, as well as requires less administrative time to manage. It also encourages consistency in reimbursements to avoid claims of discriminatory treatment.

Member expenses ceilings are set in the UNISON Branch Members Expenses guide. However, these are intended as guidelines only and represent an absolute maximum to reimburse members. We do not currently require members produce receipts for subsistence, but do so for travel and accommodation. We currently expect members to submit expense claims, which have to go through the normal approval process, before reimbursement payment is released.

This policy will encourage a proactive approach to expenses reimbursement, as encouraged in the Branch Members Expenses guide. This includes the preemptive booking of hotels for conferences/SOG meetings and training days when required, and also travel where possible.

It is to be noted that the reimbursement of expenses incurred while attending conferences, SOG meetings, voluntary activities, or training will only be reimbursed if the intention to attend is notified to, and approved by the branch prior to attendance by the member in question.

2.0 Conference/SOG Expenses (exc. Nationally Organised)

2.1 Hotels

The branch will book hotel rooms for the pre-agreed number of delegates we can send to conference or SOGs, as soon as the conference location is announced. There will be a cap on hotel rooms costs at £75 per room per night outside of London or £90 per room per night inside of London. If it transpires that not all delegate positions can be filled, these rooms can be cancelled.

Centrally booking the rooms early will ensure that delegates are all staying together, and that we get the best possible prices. The branch will have discretion to breach the above caps should no rooms be available for these prices. Members are welcome to book their own accommodation, however the branch will not normally reimburse the cost of delegates booking their own rooms. Although, in exceptional circumstances, where the need to do so is demonstrated, we will reimburse these costs capped at £75 per room per night outside of London or £90 per room per night inside of London.

2.2 Subsistence

The branch will pay subsistence costs in advance to members attending conferences or SOGs at £25 per full day. Should the member not attend for the full day, the branch will pay in advance based on the following breakdown:

Lunch	£10.00
Dinner	£15.00

Should no breakfast be included in the cost of the hotel booking, the branch will include a further £5 per day.

This daily limit will be multiplied by the number of days of the conference and paid to delegates in advance of attendance, to reduce the need for submitting retrospective expense claims. No receipts will be need to be presented.

2.3 Travel

The branch will pay travel expenses at the current levels set in the UNISON Branch Members Expenses guide. However the branch will endeavour to centrally book travel in advance wherever possible. Where this is not possible we will pay travel costs as we currently do, with the presentation of receipts.

Public transport should be prioritised over private vehicles in line with UNISON's Green policy and to keep costs down, and for the advantage of central booking. Similarly, the branch will only pay travel expenses where journeys taken are the cheapest reasonably available. However personal circumstances can be taken into consideration.

3.0 Branch Meeting Expenses

3.1 Subsistence

The branch will approve spending for subsistence of £10 per head for members attending branch meetings. This will not be paid in advance but will cover central spending on refreshments for meetings and any spending on post-meeting socials, where both refreshments and post-meeting socials will not exceed £10 per head combined. No receipts will need to be presented as payment should be made from a branch credit card. If this is not possible receipts will be required for reimbursement.

3.2 Travel

The branch will pay travel expenses at the current levels set in the UNISON Branch Members Expenses guide. Public transport should be prioritised over private vehicles in line with UNISON's Green policy and to keep costs down, and for the advantage of central booking. Similarly, the branch will only pay travel expenses where journeys taken are the cheapest reasonably available. However personal circumstances can be taken into consideration.

3.3 AGM & Christmas Social

For the AGM and Christmas Social, per-head spending will increase to a cap of £20.

4.0 Branch Volunteering Expenses

4.1 Subsistence

The branch will pay subsistence costs to members volunteering for the branch, capped at £25 per full day. Should the member not attend for the full day, the branch will pay based on the following caps:

Lunch	£10.00
Dinner	£15.00

The branch will not pay a subsistence allowance in advance to members volunteering, and so will require receipts to be presented for reimbursement.

4.2 Travel

The branch will pay travel expenses at the current levels set in the UNISON Branch Members Expenses guide. Public transport should be prioritised over private vehicles in line with UNISON's Green policy and to keep costs down, and for the advantage of central booking. However personal circumstances can be taken into consideration.

5.0 Training Days

5.1 Hotels

Should training require the member to stay overnight in a hotel, the branch will book hotel rooms as early as possible ahead of the training course dates. There will be a cap on hotel rooms costs at £75 per room per night outside of London or £90 per room per night inside of London.

Centrally booking the rooms early will ensure that delegates are all staying together, and that we get the best possible prices. The branch will have discretion to breach the above caps should no rooms be available for these

prices. Members are welcome to book their own accommodation, however the branch will not normally reimburse the cost of delegates booking their own rooms. Although, in exceptional circumstances, where the need to do so is demonstrated, we will reimburse these costs capped at £75 per room per night outside of London or £90 per room per night inside of London.

5.2 Subsistence

Usually training courses provided by UNISON are catered. However, where this is not the case the branch will pay a subsistence allowance in advance of attendance capped at £25 per day.

Lunch	£10.00
Dinner	£15.00

This daily limit will be multiplied by the number of days of the conference and paid to delegates in advance of attendance, to reduce the need for submitting retrospective expense claims. No receipts will be need to be presented.

5.3 Travel

The branch will pay travel expenses at the current levels set in the UNISON Branch Members Expenses guide. Public transport should be prioritised over private vehicles in line with UNISON's Green policy and to keep costs down, and for the advantage of central booking. Similarly, the branch will only pay travel expenses where journeys taken are the cheapest reasonably available. However personal circumstances can be taken into consideration.

6.0 Non-attendance

Should a delegate, SOG member, volunteer or trainee who has been pre-paid a subsistence allowance then not attend their event, the branch will expect the pre-paid subsistence allowance to be returned. If the non-attendance is due to an unforeseen emergency, the branch will not expect the return of costs for hotels or pre-paid travel.

7.0 Our Approach

In writing this policy we have carried out assessments to ensure that we are considering:

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Privacy & Data Protection

8.0 Reference

- [UNISON Branch Members Expenses](#)
- [UNISON Rulebook 2018](#)

Document control

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