

Expert by experience partners – reimbursing expenses and involvement payments policy

1 Why do we need this policy?

We (Social Work England) believe in the power of collaboration. We are committed to working with those that we regulate and members of the public with lived and learned experience of social work, to ensure that our services and policies are developed and shaped in collaboration with the people and communities that we serve.

As an organisation we are committed to involving Expert by Experience Partners wherever possible in our work. Expert by Experience Partners include registered social workers, representatives from employers of social workers, current students studying on a pathway into the profession, representatives from education institutions, and individuals with lived experience of social work (this may be an individual that has accessed a social work service or a carer).

Our aim is to actively seek input from Expert by Experience Partners to inform and help improve our work. This may be through a variety of approaches, including advisory groups and forums, and policy development. Expert by Experience Partners bring a unique viewpoint to our work, and it is vital that we facilitate their involvement in order to understand their perspectives and learn from their experiences. Social Work England's work with Expert by Experience also aligns directly with our corporate values, specifically, transparency and collaboration.

In recognising the contribution that Expert by Experience bring to our work, Social Work England aims to remove or minimise financial barriers that can prevent or discourage participation. Expert by Experience should not be out of pocket as a result of their involvement with Social Work England, so reasonable expenses will be reimbursed for voluntary engagement activities carried out by Expert by Experience on behalf of Social Work England.

In addition, some Expert by Experience groups can receive an "involvement payment" in recognition of the significant level of input, skills, expertise and experience that they contribute in volunteering.

Reimbursing expenses and offering involvement payments to Expert by Experience is intended to support inclusion and create incentive for active participation. It also supports people whose financial circumstances mean that they might otherwise be unable to volunteer and contribute their expertise.

This policy documents how Social Work England supports Expert by Experience to volunteer and be involved in our work through the reimbursement of expenses and the offering of involvement payments.

2 Who needs to follow this policy and why?

This policy applies throughout Social Work England and ensures consistency regarding the reimbursement of expenses and issuing of involvement payments to our Expert by Experience who volunteer and contribute their expertise.

This policy does not apply to Social Work England's engagement with contracted self-employed partners, or organisations from which we procure specialist advice. It only applies to those Expert by Experience who volunteer to provide their expertise to Social Work England.

For the avoidance of doubt, Expert by Experience are not employees, workers or agents of Social Work England. This policy or Social Work England's engagement of Expert by Experience does not intend to create any employment relationship either now or at any time in the future.

This policy is non-contractual and may be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of Social Work England. It is not intended to be a legally binding contract between Social Work England and an Expert by Experience Partner(s).

3 What's our policy and how will we implement it?

3.1 Policy Principles

With regards to the reimbursement of reasonable expenses for Expert by Experience Partner(s), and making of involvement payments, Social Work England will:

- aim to remove financial barriers and encourage a wide range of Expert by Experience Partner(s) to participate, through the reimbursement of reasonable expenses in line with section 3 below.
- recognise the contribution of Expert by Experience Partner(s), through an involvement payment in line with section 4 below.
- recognise the contribution of Expert by Experience Partner(s) who participate on a voluntary basis, through a non-monetary gift in line with section 7 below.
- be open and transparent about whether expenses will be reimbursed and whether an involvement payment is applicable when an Expert by Experience Partner(s) volunteers to join one of Social Work England's engagement activities.
- provide a named Social Work England employee (lead contact) who Expert by Experience Partner(s) can liaise with regarding expenses and involvement payments. Anyone experiencing specific barriers with support needs should contact their lead contact.
- actively seek a diversity of Expert by Experience Partner(s) and recognise the possibility that these people may have complex conditions or circumstances, and this may mean making bespoke arrangements to support people's involvement. These will be agreed in advance with the Social Work England lead contact.

- aim to reimburse expenses incurred for voluntary engagement activities in a timely manner, recognising that this is essential for many people who are reliant on prompt payment, and failure to do this can seriously jeopardise their financial circumstances.
- work in partnership with individual Expert by Experience Partner(s) to ensure that we reimburse reasonable expenses in a way that is fair, feasible and best value when spending public funds. Our people and Expert by Experience Partner(s) have a responsibility to identify and use the most cost-effective options.
- ensure that all individuals who volunteer with Social Work England in an Expert by Experience Partner(s) capacity are always signposted to information, advice and support. This will enable an assessment of individual circumstances and potential impact of volunteering with Social Work England.
- recognise that we have a duty of care to take every possible step to prevent any negative impact arising from paying Expert by Experience Partner(s) an involvement payment.

3.2 Appointment of Expert by Experience Partners

Social Work England will use a variety of methods that are appropriate and proportionate to the type of work that is required when selecting Expert by Experience Partner(s). This may include, but is not limited to:

- acceptance of verbal expression of interest
- selection from written expression of interests
- application and interview process

3.3 Reimbursement of reasonable expenses

The reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred for voluntary engagement activities should only be made to Expert by Experience Partner(s) that:

- have successfully been appointed as per point 1 above
- have signed an Expert by Experience Partner(s) Agreement (available in Annex A)

The below information outlines our principles, rules and thresholds as a non-departmental public body (NDPB) in relation to travel, subsistence and expenses incurred by Expert by Experience Partner(s) who volunteer to and attend advisory forums, and other engagement events and activities on behalf of Social Work England. This policy aims to provide a clear, consistent and accountable framework by which we demonstrate our use of resources and deliver services to the public in an effective and efficient manner.

This section will provide guidance regarding:

- the types of expenditure which can and cannot be reimbursed;
- ensuring the public interest remains central to the decision-making process;
- maintaining high ethical standards; and
- demonstrating Value for Money (VfM) within the decision-making process.

The principles outlined in this section complement the guidance on good governance as contained with the *Corporate Governance Code* and *Managing Public Money*.

Expert by Experience Partner(s) must always ensure that their travel arrangements comply with the requirements set out in this policy before making a booking or incurring costs for which they intend to make a claim. Any losses incurred regarding cancelled or unused travel and hotel bookings that cannot be refunded in full, must be notified to the lead contact immediately.

All actual expense claims must be supported by receipts, other than mileage claims.

All requirements and claims for travel, subsistence and expenses must be related to a genuine business need and be expenses that are incurred in respect of voluntary engagement activities.

Travel

Rail Travel

When travelling by rail, EbE's Partner must always travel standard class, preferably pre-booking their tickets to travel on specific (timed) trains. They may book an open ticket if they have no way of knowing what time their meeting or event will finish, in which case they should still book a restricted (timed) ticket for their outward journey.

First class travel can be booked where there are no standard class facilities, or on the rare occasions when first class travel is cheaper than standard class.

All first-class travel must be pre-approved by the lead contact before booking. Failure to do so may lead to the request for reimbursement being denied.

Tube, Coach and Bus Travel

All tube, coach and bus fares will be reimbursed as incurred.

We will refund the cost of all necessarily incurred journeys. A receipt or statement clearly indicating those journeys made will be required when claiming these expenses.

Taxi Travel

We encourage all parties to make use of public transport.

Taxi travel does not often represent value for money, therefore use of taxis may only be permitted and reimbursed in the following circumstance:

- where no public transport is available within a reasonable walking distance
- where the number of passengers dictates this to be cost-efficient
- public transport is infrequent and will lead to unreasonable additional travel time
- where disability or other special needs requirements would make use of public transport an inappropriate option

Mileage Limits and Allowances

Mileage allowances are applicable where an individual chooses to use a private vehicle as an alternative to public transport, for their own convenience and there is a benefit to Social Work England in so doing. Mileage Allowance Payments:

Transport Method	Per mile
Cars	25 pence
Motorcycle	20 pence
Bicycle	10 pence
Passengers	5 pence

Reasonable car parking charges will normally be paid.

The mileage allowance covers the full cost of using a private vehicle e.g. fuel, insurance, road tax, servicing and wear and tear.

Charges and Fines

Individuals will be responsible for ensuring:

- they have valid travel tickets for their journey
- private or hire vehicles are legally parked
- all necessarily incurred toll or congestion charges are paid prior to reimbursement
- any fines incurred by an individual whilst using their vehicle to travel for advisory meetings and events, such as a speeding fine or other traffic violation, are paid.

We will not reimburse or accept any liability for fines levied as a result of penalty fares, parking tickets or late or non-payment of toll and congestion charges.

Subsistence

Day Subsistence

All necessarily incurred day subsistence expenses will be reimbursed on an actual cost basis within the following limits:

Criteria	Allowance
Duration of qualifying travel and/or engagement in activities in that day is 5 hours or more	£5.00
Duration of qualifying travel and/or engagement in activities in that day is 10 hours or more	£10.00
Duration of qualifying travel and/or engagement in activities in that day is 15 hours or more	£25.00

The time periods referred to above should be calculated on the actual time spent based on departure time from home or office and time of arrival back to home or office.

Subsistence rates are fixed amounts toward the costs of meals and refreshments where the Expert by Experience Partner(s) is away from their home or normal place of work to attend a Social Work England advisory event or meeting as an invited Expert by Experience Partner(s). Where meals and refreshments are provided by us, they will not be able to claim the equivalent allowance.

Valid receipts will be required in order to claim actual costs spent.

Overnight Accommodation

Overnight accommodation covers a period of 24 hours away from home and where necessary will be arranged and paid for by us. Where the Expert by Experience Partner(s) has had to arrange their own overnight accommodation, we will reimburse actual rates up to the maximum overnight allowance (£75 per night). Where the cost of a meal is not included within the overnight rate these can be claimed in line with the subsistence rates contained above.

Expert by Experience Partner(s) must settle the balance of their bill upon departure, covering any other reasonable costs incurred on departure. Expert by Experience Partner(s) will be reimbursed for all necessarily incurred overnight incidental costs on an actual basis subject to this policy and the limits contained therein.

Child and Other Caring Responsibilities

Child and dependent care costs will be reimbursed up to a maximum daily rate of £65 per child/dependent while an individual is away from home. Child/dependant costs will only be reimbursed when the care is not normally in place for that period of time and it is required to

allow the Expert by Experience Partner(s) to perform their voluntary duties on behalf of Social Work England.

Care costs may only be claimed where an individual is the parent, or has daily responsibility for the child/dependant in respect of whom the allowance is claimed.

Payment will only be made if the replacement care giver is registered with the appropriate agency (Ofsted, CQC), and only against a valid invoice addressed to the individual with parental/dependant responsibility.

Personal Assistants

We will reimburse the cost of a personal assistant accompanying an individual to an advisory meeting or event in respect of Social Work England, where the attendance of the personal assistant is considered absolutely necessary for the Expert by Experience Partner(s) to be able to perform their voluntary duties, and the cost of the support worker is not covered by *Access to Work* funding, and the cost is only incurred in respect of the Expert by Experience Partner(s) performing their voluntary duties on behalf of Social Work England.

Reimbursement will be subject to receipt of an invoice; payment can be made to the individual required to attend, or the personal assistants directly.

All necessarily incurred travel and subsistence costs of the personal assistant will be provided for by us subject to this policy and the limits contained therein.

Non-Reclaimable Expenses

Non-reclaimable expenses are identified as follows:

- alcoholic drinks
- tobacco products
- personal gifts
- hairdressing
- hire or purchase of clothing
- ancillary hotel services e.g. spa/Pay-Per-View
- traffic/Parking fines and violations

Please note the above list is not exhaustive; if in doubt, Expert by Experience Partner(s) should consult with their lead contact

How to claim Expenses

All claims for expenses should be made using the form attached to this policy (Annex B). Completed claim forms should be returned to the lead contact who will approve the expenditure and pass the claim to our Finance Team for processing. Forms will be made available at all events, and support provided to complete the form when required. Payments by us are limited to expenses incurred by the Expert by Experience Partner(s) at advisory

meetings or events in the performance of their voluntary duties on behalf of Social Work England. Social Work England retains discretion to reject any claims made by Expert by Experience Partner(s) where receipts have not been provided, or an individual attended an advisory meetings or event without prior invitation, or where an individual has claimed expenses in contravention of this policy.

3.4 Involvement Payments

Involvement payments will only be made to Expert by Experience Partner(s) that:

- have successfully been appointed as per point 1 above
- have signed an Expert by Experience Partner(s) Agreement (available in Annex A)
- are attending in a lived experience or student volunteer capacity. For the avoidance of doubt, any Expert by Experience Partner(s) that is attending in a professional capacity and in receipt of a paid salary from an employer connected with the social work profession are not able to receive an involvement payment. This includes when attendance is through the use of annual leave.

Involvement payments will be made at the following rate:

Unit	Involvement Payment Allowance
Per Hour spent on engagement activities	£15.00

Involvement payments may affect means tested benefits. All individuals that engage with Social Work England should be encouraged to seek professional independent advice before voluntarily attending any advisory events or meetings to ensure they are fully aware of any potential impact.

[In cases where the receipt of an involvement payment would have negative repercussions for the Expert by Experience Partner(s), individuals are able to engage with Social Work England waiving any form of involvement payment for volunteering. For the avoidance of doubt, Expert by Experience Partner(s) can claim reimbursement of expenses irrespective of the basis on which they are volunteering.]

How to claim involvement payments

All claims for involvement payments should be made using the form attached to this policy (Annex B). Completed forms should be returned to the lead contact who will approve the payment and pass the form to our Finance Team for processing. Forms will be made available at all events, and support provided to complete the form when required.

3.5 Tax and National Insurance

HM Revenues & Customs (HMRC) state that 'payments for a service are earnings'. Expert by Experience Partner(s) must pay the appropriate tax and National Insurance on any income they receive to HMRC (above the individuals tax-free personal allowance). For the avoidance of doubt, this does not include direct reimbursement of reasonable expenses.

Social Work England actively seeks a diverse and inclusive approach to engagement. We recognise that some of our Expert by Experience Partner(s) may have complex conditions or circumstances which could potentially cause the registration as self-employed to become a barrier to engaging with Social Work England. Social Work England aims to ensure that this does not constitute a barrier to engagement with us. Therefore, should Expert by Experience Partner(s) elect to receive involvement payments, they are able to receive involvement payments in the following ways:

- The individual registers as self-employed with HMRC and receives the full involvement payment. Individuals are then expected to liaise with HMRC and pay the appropriate tax and National Insurance contributions direct to HMRC. Evidence of self-assessment submissions must be provided to Social Work England when requested. See <https://www.gov.uk/log-in-file-self-assessment-tax-return/register-if-youre-selfemployed> for more information.
- The individual will be paid through Social Work England's payroll system. This will automatically deduct tax and National Insurance contributions. Individuals who are not required to pay tax and/or National Insurance contributions should contact HMRC directly to apply for the appropriate refund. For the avoidance of doubt the Expert by Experience Partner(s) will not be classed as employed or having worker status under employment law.

Please note that the information provided in this document relating to tax and National Insurance contributions are for guidance only. Expert by Experience Partner(s) should always be advised to seek professional independent advice in relation to tax and National Insurance contributions for their personal circumstances. Rules and guidance that come from the HMRC are subject to change, and as such all Expert by Experience Partner(s) should be encouraged to regularly check the impact of engaging in Social Work England's activities with a professional advisory service.

Professional advice can be obtained from:

- Citizens Advice Bureau (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/contact-us/>) (Tel: 03444 111 444)
- HM Revenues and Customs (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs>) (Tel: 0300 200 3310)

3.6 Involving people in receipt of state benefits

Social Work England actively seeks a diverse and inclusive approach to engagement. We recognise that some of our Expert by Experience Partner(s) may have complex conditions or circumstances and may be in receipt of state benefits. Social Work England aims to ensure that being in receipt of a state benefit does not constitute a barrier to be able to volunteer with us.

All individuals who are interested in volunteering with Social Work England as an Expert by Experience Partner(s) **must** be made aware of the benefit conditions that are required by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The DWP recognises co-production and understands that 'service user involvement' is not the same as work and should not be used to assess an individual's capacity to be able to undertake work. The DWP use the phrase 'service user' which is reflected in the template letters available in Annex C.

Involvement payments may affect an individual's means-tested benefits. There is a risk that an individual's benefits can be stopped in circumstances where people fail to obtain the appropriate permission from DWP for earnings or failure to inform the DWP that work has been undertaken. Reimbursement of expenses are ignored and should not affect benefits.

Further information about benefits can be accessed on the [SCIE Website](#) and there is also [DWP guidance](#) for staff who make decisions about benefits.

Expert by Experience Partner(s) are able to volunteer with Social Work England but decline to receive any involvement payment to avoid having negative repercussions on their state benefits.

Please note that the information provided in this document relating to benefits are for guidance only. Expert by Experience Partner(s) should always be advised to seek professional advice in relation to impact on benefits for their personal circumstances. Rules and guidance that come from the government are subject to change, and as such all Expert by Experience Partner(s) should be encouraged to regularly check the impact of engaging in Social Work England's voluntary activities with a professional independent advisory service.

A suite of letter templates are available in Annex C to support individuals to inform JobCentre Plus of their involvement with Social Work England.

Professional advice can be obtained from:

Independent organisations:

- [Citizens Advice](#)
- [Disability Rights UK](#)
- [The Social Care Institute for Excellence \(SCIE\)](#).

Government organisations:

- [Jobcentre Plus](#)

- [HM Revenue & Customs](#)
- [Department for Work and Pensions](#).

3.7 Rewarding Volunteers

In instances where Expert by Experience Partner(s) volunteer with Social Work England but choose not to receive an involvement payment, Social Work England at its own discretion may choose to provide a low value gift or organise a celebration event as a thank you to volunteers.

3.8 Expert by Experience Partner Agreement

All Expert by Experience Partner(s) that participate in voluntary advisory activities will be expected to sign a basic, non-legally binding agreement with Social Work England that outlines mutual expectations in the following areas:

- What the Expert by Experience Partner(s) can expect from Social Work England.
- What Social Work England expect from the Expert by Experience Partner(s).
- Reiteration to seek independent professional advice before commencement of advisory activities.
- Confidentiality.

A draft agreement is available in Appendix A.

If this policy isn't followed, the most appropriate course of action will be agreed between the policy owner and the HR manager, dependent on the circumstances.

4 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Expert by Experience Partner(s):

- must always ensure that your travel arrangements comply with the requirements set out in this policy before making a booking or incurring costs for which you intend to make a claim. Any losses incurred regarding cancelled or unused travel and hotel bookings that cannot be refunded in full, must be notified to your lead contact immediately.
- all actual expense claims must be supported by receipts, other than mileage claims.
- should seek independent professional advice regarding their personal circumstances to ensure that engagement does not have negative repercussions on income.

4.2 Social Work England's Head of Strategic Engagement:

- is, within the requirements of this policy, free to decide the best course of action for the inclusion of Expert by Experience Partner(s). All expenditure incurred will be met from their respective budget.
- will identify a lead contact for each Expert by Experience Partner(s)
- is responsible for approving Expert by Experience Partner(s) volunteer roles

4.3 Social Work England's lead contact:

- is responsible for selecting appropriate Expert by Experience Partner(s) to undertake co-production voluntary activities
- must authorise reimbursed and involvement payments under this policy. This includes:
 - ensuring that travel and associated expenses are wholly necessary for the effective and efficient delivery of our business/objectives and incurred in the performance of the EbE Partner's duties;
 - that proposed bookings and/or claims are in line with requirements set out in this policy e.g. hotel costs are within the agreed thresholds, subsistence claims are for actual receipted amounts within expenditure limits and reflect the actual hours committed in respect of the specific claim being made.
- providing day-to-day support to Expert by Experience Partner(s), including acting as first point of contact for any queries.
- obtaining signed terms and conditions from Expert by Experience Partner(s).
- Must signpost Expert by Experience Partner(s) to seek appropriate independent advice in advance of involvement with Social Work England engagement activities.

4.4 Social Work England's Finance Team will be responsible for:

- ensuring that all claims are in line with the requirements of this policy
- validating the coding of all expenses to the specific areas of work or budget lines
- ensuring all expenses claims are supported by receipt evidence
- where any errors within a claim are highlighted, or misuse of the policy is evident:
 - act to rectify the error and recover any monies that may have been over-claimed;
 - monitor future claims for compliance with this policy;
 - take further any training/disciplinary action where necessary.

4.5 Social Work England's Accounting Officer:

The Accounting Officer's responsibilities apply to the whole organisation and underpin the operational and strategic achievement of objectives. The AO responsibilities are summarised by the standards listed below:

- Regularity and Propriety
Securing Treasury approval for any expenditure outside the normal delegations.
- Affordability and Sustainability
Respecting agreed budgets and avoiding unaffordable longer-term commitments, taking a proportionate view about other demands for resources.
- Value for Money
Ensuring that the organisation's procurement, projects and processes are systematically evaluated to provide confidence about suitability, effectiveness, prudence, quality and good value.
- Control
The accounting officer should personally approve and confirm their agreement to all statutory documents, committee papers and major project or policy initiatives before they proceed.

- Management of Opportunity and Risk
To achieve the right balance commensurate with the organisation's business and risk appetite.
- Learning from Experience
Using internal feedback (e.g. through managing projects and programmes), and from right across the public sector.
- Accounting Accurately for the Organisation's Financial Position and Transactions
To ensure that its published financial information is transparent and up to date; and that the organisation's efficiency in the use of resources is tracked and recorded.

5 Related policies, procedures and information sources

Expert by Experience Partner volunteer agreement with people who have lived experience of Social Work (see appendix A)

Expert by Experience Partner claim form (see appendix B)

Letter Templates (see appendix C)

MS Word versions of these appendices can be requested from Joe Stockwell, Partner Contracts and Quality Assurance Manager

6 Data protection, equality and diversity

A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) and equality impact assessment (EIA) have been completed for this policy.

7 Queries?

If you have a query about this policy, please contact Joe Stockwell, Partner Contracts and Quality Assurance Manager

8 Definitions

8.1 Expert by Experience

registered social workers, representatives from employers of social workers, current students studying on a pathway into the profession, representatives from education institutions, and individuals with lived experience of social work (this may be an individual that has accessed a social work service or a carer).

8.2 Involvement payment

payments offered in recognition of the significant level of input, skills, expertise and experience that they contribute in volunteering.

8.3 Mileage Allowance Payments

Payments made to cover the usage of a private vehicle

8.4 NDPD (non-department public body)

body which has a role in the process of national government but is not a government department or part of one and which accordingly operates to a greater or lesser extent at arm's length from ministers. NDPBs have different roles, including those that advise ministers and those which carry out an executive or regulatory function. They work within a strategic framework set by ministers.

body which has a role in the process of national government but is not a government department or part of one and which accordingly operates to a greater or lesser extent at arm's length from ministers. NDPBs have different roles, including those that advise ministers and those which carry out an executive or regulatory function. They work within a strategic framework set by ministers.

8.5 Subsistence

meals and any other necessary costs of travelling e.g. parking charges, tolls and congestion charges.

8.6 Value for Money (VfM)

is the achievement of the most desirable outcome given expressed or implied restrictions or constraints e.g. financial resources, time.

Last reviewed: June 2020

Policy Owner: Tracy Watterson, Assistant Director – People and Business Support

Appendix A

Expert by Experience Partner volunteer agreement with people who have lived experience of Social Work

Organisation: Social Work England

Expert by Experience Partner: **Name to be inserted here**

This agreement outlines what you can expect from Social Work England and what we ask of you as a volunteer Expert by Experience Partner. Social Work England aims to ensure that we make all attempts to ensure your experience of volunteering with us is rewarding and enjoyable.

This agreement is not intended to be legally binding, nor is this agreement intended to create an employment or worker relationship between Social Work England and you either now or at any time in the future. Its sole purpose is to clarify the basis on which you have agreed to volunteer your time on a co-production project as someone who has lived or learned experience of social work.

If you decide not to continue in your involvement with Social Work England at any time please just let your lead contact know. Either party may cancel your involvement at any time at their absolute discretion.

Expert by Experience Partners have the option receive an involvement payment of £15.00 per hour should they so wish.

Social Work England will cover all reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred in connection with your volunteering for us in accordance with the 'Working with Expert by Experience Partners - Reimbursing expenses and involvement payments' policy

What you can expect from Social Work England

1. An introduction to the organisation
2. An overview of co-production and your volunteering role in the project
3. A named lead contact at Social Work England who you can contact with any queries or questions
4. Appropriate support to enable you to take part in voluntary co-production activity
5. Reimbursement of reasonable expenses

Involvement Payments

Social Work England agrees to provide an involvement payment of £15.00 per hour for your voluntary participation in co-production projects or meetings should you wish to accept it.

We will agree with you from the start what you can and cannot claim for.

Important information

For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this agreement shall be deemed to form a contract of employment or engagement between yourself and Social Work England.

Payments may affect any state benefits you receive. There is a risk that benefits can be stopped in certain circumstances if you fail to get permission for earnings, earn over the limit or fail to inform job centre of activity. Reimbursed expenses are ignored and do not affect benefits.

There is excellent information about benefits on the SCIE website and there is also DWP guidance for staff who make decisions about benefits. Please talk to your lead contact if you need any advice. We have provided letter templates to support you with providing information to the Department for Work and Pensions and JobCentre Plus. We advise all Expert by Experience Partners to seek professional independent advice in advance of undertaking any involvement with Social Work England to ensure that involvement does not have any negative repercussions on your income.

Confidentiality

In the course of your voluntary involvement in co-production you may come across confidential information about the organisation, its staff, service users and their carers. You must respect this confidentiality and not use the information for your own benefit or disclose the information to any person either during your volunteering experience with us or at any time afterwards, except where required or permitted to do so by law.

By signing this agreement, you are committing to do the following:

To meet time commitments as may usually be required in co-production events. However, there is no mutuality of obligation and as such, we are flexible about when you provide your volunteering services and you can refuse to carry out any volunteering duties should you so wish.

To follow Social Work England's policies and procedures including:

- Data protection (<https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/about/how-we-operate/policies-and-procedures/data-and-information-policies/>)
- Equality and Diversity (<https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/about/how-we-operate/policies-and-procedures/equality-and-diversity/>)
- To be responsible for paying your own tax or N.I. contributions if liable.
- To be responsible for notifying the DWP or local council if you get any benefits that could be affected by this income.

Signed:	Signed on behalf of Social Work England:
Print Name:	Print Name:
Date:	Date:

Appendix B

Expert by Experience Partner claim form

In recognising the contribution that Expert by Experience Partner(s) bring to our work, Social Work England aims to remove or minimise financial barriers that can prevent or discourage participation. Expert by Experience Partner(s) should not be out of pocket as a result of their involvement with Social Work England, so reasonable expenses will be reimbursed for voluntary engagement activities carried out by Expert by Experience Partner(s) on behalf of Social Work England.

In addition, some Expert by Experience Partner(s) groups can receive an involvement payment in recognition of the significant level of input, skills, expertise and experience that they contribute in volunteering.

Reimbursing expenses and offering involvement payments to Expert by Experience Partner(s) is intended to support inclusion and create incentive for active participation. It also supports people whose financial circumstances mean that they might otherwise be unable to volunteer and contribute their expertise.

Expert by Experience Personal Details:

Name:	
Full (Current) Address:	
Date of Birth:	
Telephone Number:	
National Insurance Number:	

Bank Details:

Bank Name:	
Name on Account:	
Account Number:	
Sort Code:	

Involvement Payment:

Involvement payments may affect means tested benefits. All individuals that engage with Social Work England should be encouraged to seek professional independent advice before voluntarily attending any advisory events or meetings to ensure they are fully aware of any potential impact.

[In cases where the receipt of an involvement payment would have negative repercussions for the Expert by Experience Partner(s), individuals are able to engage with Social Work England waiving any form of involvement payment for volunteering. For the avoidance of doubt, Expert by Experience Partner(s) can claim reimbursement of expenses irrespective of the basis on which they are volunteering.]

If you would like to claim an involvement payment, please complete the below

Date of event/work completed:	
Description of event/work completed:	
Total number of hours completed:	
Hourly rate:	£15.00
Total amount of involvement payment claimed:	£

Tax and National Insurance

HM Revenues & Customs (HMRC) state that ‘payments for a service are earnings’. Expert by Experience Partner(s) must pay the appropriate tax and National Insurance on any income they receive to HMRC (above the individuals tax-free personal allowance). For the avoidance of doubt, this does not include direct reimbursement of reasonable expenses.

Where Expert by Experience Partner(s) elect to receive involvement payments, they are able to receive involvement payments in the following ways:

- The individual registers as self-employed with HMRC and receives the full involvement payment. Individuals are then expected to liaise with HMRC and pay the appropriate tax and National Insurance contributions direct to HMRC. Evidence of self-assessment submissions must be provided to Social Work England. See <https://www.gov.uk/log-in-file-self-assessment-tax-return/register-if-youre-selfemployed> for more information.
- The individual will be paid through Social Work England’s payroll system. This will automatically deduct tax and National Insurance contributions. Individuals who are not

required to pay tax and/or National Insurance contributions should contact HMRC directly to apply for the appropriate refund. For the avoidance of doubt the Expert by Experience Partner(s) will not be classed as employed or having worker status under employment law.

How do you wish to receive the involvement payment (please tick one)

Through payroll with PAYE deducted:	
Via Bacs transfer:	

Reasonable Expenses:

Payments by Social Work England are limited to expenses incurred by the Expert by Experience Partner(s) at advisory meetings or events in the performance of their voluntary duties on behalf of Social Work England. Social Work England retains discretion to reject any claims made by Expert by Experience Partner(s) where receipts have not been provided (except for claim relating to mileage), or an individual attended an advisory meetings or event without prior invitation, or where an individual has claimed expenses in contravention of the policy.

Date of event/work completed:	
Description of event/work completed:	

	<u>Date Expense incurred</u>	<u>Description of Expense</u> (for mileage, please include postcodes for start and end destination)	<u>Amount claimed</u>	<u>Receipt attached</u>
Expense Item 1:				Yes/No
Expense Item 2:				Yes/No
Expense Item 3:				Yes/No
Expense Item 4:				Yes/No

		Total claimed:		

Expert by Experience Declaration:

By signing below, you are confirming that the above is an accurate reflection of the work undertaken and expenses incurred.

Signature:	
-------------------	--

For Internal Use:

Lead Contact:	
Cost Code:	
Approved/Not approved:	
Lead Contact Signature:	

Appendix C

Letter Template 1

Employment and Support Allowance, or Income Support with disability premium or Universal Credit if they have only limited capacity for work.

Standard letter to give to people who are considering co-production, participation or involvement and who are in receipt of any of the above benefits some of whom may also be in receipt of disability living allowance or personal independence payment.

Use of letter

To provide to people who are being invited to become voluntarily involved, and are in receipt of the above state benefits. They can give the letter to the Jobcentre if they wish when obtaining permission for earnings and involvement activity.

Purpose of letter

To prevent benefits entitlement being reviewed or stopped, which can occur for five reasons:

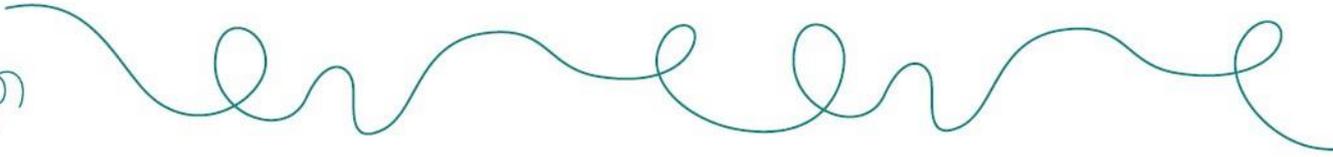
- Involvement being mistaken for evidence of capacity for work leading to a review of benefit entitlement.
- Travel to events or participation in involvement being mistaken for a reduction in care or mobility needs.
- Paid involvement being mistaken for employment that prevents a person from fulfilling Jobcentre Plus requirements for training and job search.
- Reimbursed expenses being wrongly treated as earnings leading to benefits being reduced or stopped.
- An offer of payment that is declined being treated as if it had been received (notional earnings)
- (Note: DWP legislation refers to `service user involvement` and therefore the letter should contain this phrase) NB Delete the above when providing this letter.

Use headed paper

To: Jobcentre Plus

I am writing to you to explain about voluntary service user involvement with Social Work England.

We involve people in our work who have personal lived experience of social work, including people who are carers, partners and other family members and friends who are voluntarily offering their experience and expertise.



People who are asked to help Social Work England by voluntarily offering their involvement in our work will be asked to assist at consultation events.

Service user involvement is intermittent, generally for a few hours on an occasional basis. Each involvement event is a one off. People can choose whether or not to be involved on each occasion.

Service user involvement does not resemble work as it is entirely voluntary and about consultation.

Involvement will not affect the person's ability to fulfil any Jobcentre Plus requirements for attending interviews at the Jobcentre or if required participation in the Work & Health programme.

Social Work England offers support measures if required so that people who have health problems that affect them in using public transport are able to travel to our meetings or events and to participate. We provide support if this is needed for people to participate in discussion about services. Involvement should not be mistaken for a reduction of care or mobility needs.

Social Work England may offer payment for certain voluntary involvement activities as recommended by government policy. People may choose to decline payment or to accept a lesser amount. We will reimburse any exact out-of-pocket expenses incurred necessarily in the course of involvement.

Please note that we have been advised that DWP has introduced legislation specific to service user involvement. Reimbursed expenses are ignored. This legislation now applies to all benefits. (ADM vol. 4 paragraph 4017 (8)).

Yours faithfully,

[Name]

Letter Template 2

Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Carers Allowance, Universal Credit if paid on basis of being unemployed or exempt due to caring responsibilities

Standard letter to give to people who are considering co-production or participation and who are in receipt of any of these benefits, some of whom may also be in receipt of disability living allowance or personal independence payment.

Use of letter

To provide to people who are being invited to become voluntarily involved, and are in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support or Universal Credit, which may have conditions that require the person to demonstrate that they are looking for a job and to undertake training or work focussed activities from time to time. Carers Allowance or UC paid on basis of being a carer is different, in that there is no requirement to seek work, but there are issues about earnings and hours spent caring that have to be addressed.

If the Jobcentre think that involvement prevents them from fulfilling their 'claimant commitment' to seek work, they may have their benefit sanctioned. This means that their benefit is reduced or stopped for several weeks or months. They can give the letter to the Jobcentre if they wish when obtaining permission for involvement activity and possibly earnings.

Purpose of letter

To prevent benefits entitlement being sanctioned or reduced, which can occur for the following reasons:

- Paid involvement being mistaken for employment that prevents a person from fulfilling Jobcentre Plus requirements for job search, obtaining employment or training or work focussed activity.
- Reimbursed expenses being wrongly treated as earnings leading to benefits being reduced or stopped.
- If in receipt of DLA or PIP travel to events or participation in involvement being mistaken for a reduction in care or mobility needs;
- (Note: DWP legislation refers to 'service user involvement' and therefore the letter should contain this phrase)

Use headed paper

To: Jobcentre Plus

I am writing to you to explain about voluntary service user involvement with Social Work England.

We involve people in our work who have personal lived experience of social work, including people who are carers, partners and other family members and friends who are voluntarily offering their experience and expertise.

People who are asked to Social Work England by voluntarily offering their involvement in our work will be asked to assist at consultation events.

Service user involvement is intermittent, generally for a few hours on an occasional basis. Each involvement event is a one off. People can choose whether or not to be involved on each occasion.

Service user involvement does not resemble work as it is entirely voluntary and about consultation.

Involvement will not affect the person's ability to fulfil any Jobcentre Plus requirements for attending interviews at the Jobcentre or if required, participation in activities listed in their claimant commitment. It also does not detract from a carers ability to provide at least 35 hours per week of care if that is the basis on which benefit is being paid.

Social Work England offers support measures if required so that people who have health problems that affect them in using public transport are able to travel to our meetings or events and to participate. We provide support if this is needed for people to participate in discussion about services. Involvement should not be mistaken for a reduction of care or mobility needs.

Social Work England may offer payment for certain voluntary involvement activities as recommended by government policy. People may choose to decline payment or to accept a lesser amount. We will reimburse any exact out-of-pocket expenses incurred necessarily in the course of involvement.

Please note that we have been advised that DWP has introduced legislation specific to service user involvement. Reimbursed expenses are ignored. This legislation now applies to all benefits. (ADM vol. 4 paragraph 4017 (8)).

Yours faithfully,

[Name]

Letter Template 3

All benefit groups

Standard letter which is addressed to the person who will be involved after they have decided how much they can accept as a payment.

Use of letter

To provide to the person to show the letter to the Jobcentre if they wish.

Purpose of letter

To ensure that the Jobcentre are aware that the person will be paid monthly and that therefore the weekly limit on earnings will be spread over a calendar month.

Provide evidence of the amount of the payment (this must be the amount of payment that they have agreed to accept).

Provide evidence of the amount of any reimbursed expenses as a separate amount to payment for time (so that earnings and reimbursed expenses are not wrongly added together).

NB Delete the above when providing this letter.

Use headed paper

Dear **insert name**

I am writing to you to thank you for agreeing to voluntary service user involvement with Social Work England.

We greatly value the assistance of people who have some personal lived experience of social work

We are offering you voluntary involvement in [**describe activity**].

This involvement will be intermittent, and include preparation before meetings. There may be several involvement events per year. I will be in touch closer to the start date about this.

We are offering you a discretionary payment for your time of £££ per event in arrears for your time.

Social Work England appreciates that people who are in receipt of benefits may be looking for work or be required to meet a claimant commitment or be involved in work-related activity such as training. There is no problem if you decide to leave the voluntary involvement at any time. Please just let us know.

We will reimburse any exact out-of-pocket expenses incurred necessarily in the course of your voluntary involvement including travel, accommodation and subsistence.

Social Work England has been advised that DWP has introduced legislation specific to service user involvement. Reimbursed expenses are ignored. This legislation now applies to all benefits. (ADM vol. 4 paragraph 4017 (8)).

For the purpose of this volunteering co-production arrangement you are considered to be a volunteer and do not have employment or worker status with Social Work England.

Should you have any queries about involvement please do not hesitate to contact me at the above number.

Yours faithfully,

[Name]

Letter Template 4

All benefits for voluntary involvement

Standard letter to give to people who are considering voluntary involvement and who are in receipt of benefits.

Use of letter

To provide to people who have decided to volunteer their involvement and are in receipt of state benefits. They can provide the letter to the Jobcentre if they wish when they meet with their Work Coach at the Jobcentre. To provide to people who are being invited to become involved, and have benefit conditions that require the person to undertake job search or training or work related activities from time to time.

If the Jobcentre think that voluntary involvement prevents them from fulfilling their claimant commitment they may have their benefit sanctioned. This means that their benefit is stopped or reduced for several weeks or months.

Purpose of letter

To prevent benefit entitlement being reviewed or stopped, which can occur for three reasons:

- Voluntary involvement being mistaken for evidence of capacity for work leading to a review of benefit entitlement.
- Travel to events or participation in involvement being mistaken for a reduction in care or mobility needs.
- Voluntary involvement being thought to prevent the person from fulfilling Jobcentre Plus requirements for job search or work related activities.
- (Note: DWP legislation refers to `service user involvement` and therefore the letter should contain this phrase)

NB Delete the above when providing this letter.

Use headed paper

Dear **insert name**

I am writing to you to thank you for agreeing to volunteer for service user involvement with Social Work England.

We greatly value the assistance of people who have some personal lived experience of social work.

We are offering you voluntary involvement in **[describe activity]**.

This voluntary involvement will be intermittent. I will be in touch closer to the start date about this.

Social Work England appreciates that people who are in receipt of benefits may be looking for work or required to undertake work-related activity or meet specific commitments as agreed with the job centre. There is no problem if you decide to leave the voluntary involvement at any time. Please just let us know.

We will reimburse any exact out-of-pocket expenses incurred necessarily in the course of your voluntary involvement including travel, accommodation and subsistence.

Should you have any queries about involvement please do not hesitate to contact me at the above number.

Yours faithfully,

[Name]