

SAMPLE 1

SAMPLE LETTER TO LOCAL SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF VOLUNTEER EXPENSES IN ADVANCE.

Dear

RE: Volunteer Expenses for (*volunteer's name and address*)

The above person is a volunteer with (*organisation*). They commenced volunteering with us on (*date*) and volunteer for an average of (*number*) hours per week. They will receive expenses to reimburse what they spend in the course of their volunteering. These expenses cover: (*select relevant expenses*)

- Travel to and from the place of volunteering
- Meals taken while volunteering
- Care of dependants during volunteering
- Travel in the course of volunteering
- Cost of protective clothing

We have taken (*volunteer's name*) individual circumstances into account and the estimated amount of expenses that he/she will incur is an average of £x per week. This will be paid at the beginning of each week and (*volunteer's name*) will submit evidence of expenditure at the end of each week.

If you have any questions or would like more information please feel free to contact me on (*contact details*).

Yours sincerely

Volunteer Co-ordinator

Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)

In order to qualify for JSA you must fulfil a number of requirements.

You must be:

- Actively seeking work
- Available for work

People can still volunteer as often as they like and fulfil these requirements provided:

- They are **still looking for work** as agreed with their Personal Advisor
- They can be **contacted quickly** if the chance of a job comes up
- They are able to attend job interviews at 48 hour's notice and available to work at one week's notice.
- It is **considered 'reasonable'** for an organisation **not** to pay a volunteer a wage for the role they are doing. If it is not considered reasonable the social security office may reduce JSA by the amount the volunteer **could** be paid, even if they are receiving no wage. What is considered reasonable is left open to interpretation by each local office. If there is any doubt it is **essential** to seek more information on individual volunteers circumstances from the relevant agencies.
- Volunteers must tell the social security office that they are carrying out their volunteering. Staff at each office have considerable discretion in deciding if a person is meeting the obligations under JSA. It is in the volunteer's best interest to create an open and honest relationship and show how volunteering does not contradict the terms of their JSA. Volunteer involving organisations should assist the volunteer by providing them with information and support. Overleaf is a sample of the information organisations should provide.
- Volunteers must tell the social security office if they receive any benefits in kind (e.g. honorarium).

Sample Letter for Volunteers in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance

Dear

RE: (volunteer's name and address)

The above mentioned person is a volunteer with our organisation and is based at (address of place of volunteering). He/she contributes approximately (number) hours per week volunteering as a (volunteer role) in order to gain valuable experience in his/her chosen career.

While undertaking this role he/she:

- *Will not be asked to do work, which would normally be done by some one in paid employment.*
- *Will receive no remuneration only the reimbursement of genuine and reasonable out of pocket expenses.*
- *Will be available to attend an interview at 48 hours notice and take up employment at 1 week's notice.*
- *Will be contactable while volunteering should a job opportunity or interview become available. (Organisation) will endeavour to pass on messages as quickly as possible.*
- *Will receive (on-the-job training/other training), which is essential for the volunteer role.*
- *Will receive a reference from (Organisation) if requested.*

If you require further information please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Volunteer Co-ordinator

Reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure information in this publication is accurate. However it is not intended to be legally comprehensive; it is designed to provide guidance in good faith without accepting liability. If relevant, we therefore recommend you take appropriate professional advice before taking any action on the matters covered herein. Charity (Inland Revenue) No. XT22896. Company Limited by Guarantee No. NI602399. Registered in Northern Ireland.