FV-24 | Volunteer Reimbursement Policy

APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE
Reviewed November 2026

Scope

Approved volunteers undertaking authorised Fishcare activities; employees use Staff Reimbursement Policy.

Purpose and policy statement

Reimburse reasonable, authorised out-of-pocket expenses for the period needed to perform an assigned volunteer role. Personal extensions, partners and friends are not covered unless separately eligible as approved working volunteers with independent approval.

Pay actual eligible expenditure up to the approved limit, not a flat allowance where less was spent. Provide an itemised tax invoice or suitable supporting receipt; card slips alone are insufficient. Mileage is reimbursed by the approved kilometre rate and must not also be claimed as fuel costs for the same travel.

Reimbursable items and retained rates

- Meals where no prepaid or organised meal is provided: breakfast up to $18, lunch up to $20 and dinner up to $35 per person per day, limited to actual reasonable cost. Identify eligible people for a group claim.
- Private vehicle travel to and from approved events: $0.33 per kilometre; $0.60 per kilometre when towing a Fishcare trailer. Record dates, event, route and kilometres; seek approval from the facilitator and meet the private vehicle safety requirements below. These are volunteer reimbursement rates, not employee award rates or a promise of tax deductibility.
- Accommodation for multi-day events: EO pre-approval is required; ordinarily cover nights between event days where travel exceeds 100 km one way and accommodation is not otherwise provided. Nights before or after need specific EO approval. Facilitators book and preferably pay directly using an approved Fishcare payment method. Volunteer-paid bookings require receipts and approval.

Consider safe carpooling where appropriate. Do not claim an expense already paid by another organisation. Alcohol must not be reimbursed to volunteers under any circumstances. Facilitators must not purchase alcohol with Fishcare funds. Tips are not ordinarily reimbursable and require prior written EO approval. Approved statewide hospitality is arranged directly through the EO under the Purchasing Policy and is not an exception to the prohibition on volunteer alcohol reimbursement.

Submitting claims

Use the current travel or expense form available through https://fishcare.org.au/resources/, not obsolete forms or Google Classroom. Provide accurate dates, event description, kilometres or receipts and secure banking details. Do not email bank details to a group distribution list. Facilitators must verify account changes using a known independent contact method.

Submit travel claims within two months of travel. The EO may approve a documented reasonable late-claim exception, for example illness, disability or system failure; communicate reasons for any refusal. Facilitators issue monthly reminders. Electronic forms may be submitted at any time; processing occurs on facilitators' normal working days. Volunteers are not required to limit access to those days, and staff are not required to monitor outside working time.

Processing and responsibilities

1. The volunteer submits a complete claim to the relevant facilitator using the current form.

2. The facilitator checks eligibility, evidence, approval and coding, resolves missing details and uploads the approved claim into the finance system by Friday for the following week's payment run, where within their working days.

3. The EO reviews claims on Monday mornings for accuracy and readiness.

4. The bookkeeper uploads supporting documents, checks entries and seeks clarification as needed.

5. The Treasurer reviews and processes payment; a second authorised signatory, the EO or President, approves release. No claimant or conflicted person may approve their own claim; substitute unconflicted authorised approvers are required.

Payments are generally completed by close of business Wednesday in the following cycle. Aim to pay within two weeks of receiving a correctly completed claim and all supporting information. This is a service target, not a guarantee where details, approvals or banking processing are outstanding. Advise the volunteer of delays and the next step.

Records and review

Keep finance and approval records securely for at least seven years or longer if required. Provide reasonable assistance with forms so reimbursement is accessible. The Committee approves rate changes and any change to entitlement or limits; facilitators cannot vary rates informally.

Private vehicle safety

Before private vehicle use, obtain authorisation and confirm that the driver is licensed and fit, the vehicle is registered and roadworthy and insurance covers the

actual work or volunteering. Secure equipment, plan safe travel and rest, and report incidents promptly. Do not arrange private transport of participant children without a separately authorised safeguarding and transport plan. Use the existing reimbursement and trailer procedures for relevant costs and towing.

References and review

Reviewed November 2026. Review again in November 2027, or earlier after a relevant legal, service or risk change.

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth): coverage and exemptions
https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-legislation/the-privacy-act/rights-and-responsibilities