



5.06 VOLUNTEER EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT AND ALLOWANCE RATE

5.06.1 GENERAL

Public Safety Lifeline (PSL) volunteers and organizations are responsible for the care and maintenance of their own equipment during operational and training tasks. As well, volunteers often travel some distance to an incident or training site and spend prolonged time away from their work and home.

PSL volunteers and organizations shall not be faced with an onerous financial burden because of the volunteer work they do on behalf of the responsible agencies.

Related Policies:

- [1.01 Task Report](#)
- [1.05 Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer Registration](#)
- [1.08 Application for Training Task Number](#)
- [2.02 Task Authorization](#)
- [5.01 Task Registration](#)
- [5.02 Expense Reimbursement](#)
- [5.04 Repair/Replacement of Lost/Damaged Equipment/Personal Property](#)
- [5.05 PEP Air Invoice \(CASARA Expense Claim\)](#)

5.06.2 DEFINITIONS

See [Terms and Definitions](#)

5.06.3 POLICY STATEMENT

- (1) EMBC will reimburse PSL volunteers and organizations for eligible personal out-of-pocket expenses and for the use of their equipment and property for approved emergency response or training tasks.

5.06.4 CONDITIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT APPROVAL

- (1) Task Number: The necessary approval, by either an emergency response or training task number, must be obtained before the eligible reimbursements can be approved. The issuance of a task number shall not be regarded as an automatic approval of reimbursement requests.
- (2) Training Task Number: All expense reimbursements and allowances to be claimed under a training task number must be pre-approved. Refer to 1.08 Application for Training Task Number Policy.



- (3) Expense Approval: The following EMBC positions are authorized to provide approvals for expenditures to undertake specific emergency response works under task: Regional Duty Manager, Regional Manager, Provincial Duty Manager, Senior Regional Manager, and others as specified by EMBC. Response authorization is obtained via the ECC at 1 800 663 3456, who will coordinate approvals. Training task authorization is obtained via the applicable Regional Office. All volunteer expense reimbursement claims must receive EMBC expense approval.

MEAL ALLOWANCES

- (1) PSL volunteers and organizations shall use the most current Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate chart to determine the meal allowance claim. When meals are provided, volunteers may not claim for these meals unless they have special dietary needs that prevent them from eating the food provided.
- (2) Operational Task (Emergency Response): Where the operational task exceeds three hours duration, the individual volunteer may claim for one meal every three hours to a maximum of four meals per 24-hour period. This 24 period shall include the travel time of the individual volunteer portal to portal. Portal to portal shall be understood as the round trip from the volunteer's residence to the assembly point and/or incident site.

TRAVEL

- (1) Accommodation Expense: Volunteers who require accommodations due to an operational or training task must have pre-approval from EMBC.

Reimbursement for commercial or private accommodation within BC must be in accordance with the "BC Business Travel Accommodation Listing". Refer to the most current Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate Chart for information. Soft-sided accommodations such as tents will be considered private accommodations for the purposes of the accommodations reimbursement claim.

Accommodation expenses within BC that exceed the limits established by this guide require specific pre-authorization to exceed this limit from EMBC. Amounts in excess that are considered acceptable may be determined on a case by case basis, considering variables such as the urgency of the travel, whether travel is occurring in peak season and if accommodations at the established limits are not available.

- (2) Mileage Allowance: Volunteers and organizations may claim mileage when using a privately owned vehicle on an operational task. Volunteers are expected to carpool where practical to minimize costs.

Mileage claims for a training task must be pre-authorized by EMBC via the Regional Office.



Refer to the current Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate Chart for the mileage rates in effect.

- (3) Miscellaneous Travel Expenses: Volunteers on an operational task are entitled to claim miscellaneous travel expenses for:
- a. Ferry tolls, ferry reservation fees and highway tolls.
 - b. Airport improvement and security fees, NAVCANADA fees, and applicable fuel charges.
 - c. Parking charges.
 - d. Telephone, cellular and satellite calls related to the operational task.
 - e. Personal phone calls (one five-minute telephone call home for each night away).

Receipts and/or statements showing the charges incurred are required for all miscellaneous travel expenses other than personal phone calls.

VOLUNTEER CHILD CARE EXPENSES

- (1) EMBC may authorize the reimbursement of child care expenses for a volunteer on an operational task in the following circumstances:
- a. The volunteer is the only available service provider with the required skill- set for the operational task.
 - b. There is no one else at the volunteer's residence to provide childcare.
 - c. Prior authorization has been received.
 - d. An employer or other agency is not funding childcare expenses.

(2) Volunteer childcare expenses will not be paid for volunteers under a training task.

(3) Volunteer childcare reimbursement rates can be found in the current Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate Chart.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OSH) SUPPLEMENT

- (1) The OSH supplement will provide PSL organizations with funds to assist in accessing training that will minimize the OSH risks to volunteers during operational tasks. This supplement represents a percentage of the total claim from an operational task excluding extraordinary costs such as helicopters.



(2) The OSH supplement can be claimed under the following conditions:

- a. This supplement must be claimed by a PSL organization and is not available for individuals.
- b. This supplement must be claimed by each PSL organization in a mutual support operational task based on the amount claimed by the organization and its members.
- c. This supplement can only be claimed for operational tasks.
- d. While all PSL organizations are eligible to claim the OSH supplement, for the purposes of the OSH supplement, an [Emergency Social Services \(ESS\) Level 1 response](#) is not an eligible operational task.
- e. A PSL organization that participates in a call out, i.e. the deployment of the organization is cancelled either enroute to the site or at the site before any volunteer response activity has occurred, may not claim the OSH supplement.
- f. The OSH supplement percentage rate and the minimum supplement amount can be found in the current Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate Chart.

EQUIPMENT

(1) Volunteer Group Equipment Allowance: PSL organizations will be able to claim a daily Volunteer Group Equipment Allowance for each volunteer who participates in an operational task. This daily allowance replaces previous radio equipment allowances and can be claimed under the following conditions:

- a. This allowance must be claimed by a PSL organization and is not available for individuals.
- b. This allowance must be claimed by each PSL organization in a mutual support operational task based on the number of group members participating.
- c. This allowance can only be claimed for operational tasks.
- d. This allowance cannot be claimed for convergent volunteers.
- e. This allowance is limited to the following Public Safety Lifeline volunteer groups:
 - Search and Rescue
 - Emergency Communications including Amateur Radio
 - PEP Air (when on EMBC tasking)



- f. A PSL organization that participates in a call out, i.e. the deployment of the group is cancelled either enroute to the site or at the site before any volunteer response activity has occurred, may not claim the Volunteer Group Equipment Allowance.
 - g. The Volunteer Group Equipment Allowance can be found in the current Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate Chart.
- (2) Vehicles Rates: These rates are in addition to the mileage rate. Rates can be found in the current Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate Chart.
- a. Call Out: The call out rate is used when the deployment of the group is cancelled either enroute to the site or at the site before any volunteer response activity has occurred.
 - b. SAR Command Vehicle Allowance Rate: A SAR organization may claim these rates for the vehicle from which the response is managed. If the command vehicle is a trailer, the motor vehicle pulling the trailer and trailer are treated as one unit. As well, they serve to reimburse the PSL organization for the use of all equipment and administrative supplies associated with the command vehicle.
 - c. During a mutual support operational task, only the primary SAR organization may claim these rates. However, in unusually large emergency responses, EMBC may choose to pre-authorize a claim for the use of additional command vehicles.
- (3) Communications Vehicle Allowance Rate: A PSL organization using a vehicle specifically for the provision of emergency communications during an operational task may claim this rate. Emergency Communications volunteers must staff the vehicle.

There is no call out allowance for communications vehicles.

During a mutual support operational task, only the primary PSL organization may claim these rates. However, in unusually large emergency responses EMBC may choose to pre-authorize a claim for the use of additional communications vehicles.

- (4) Feeding Van Allowance Rate: A PSL organization using a vehicle specifically for the provision of cooking and/or serving food to PSL volunteers during an operational task may claim this rate. If the feeding van is a trailer, the motor vehicle pulling the trailer and trailer are treated as one unit.

These rates are in addition to the mileage rate. As well, they serve to reimburse the PSL organization for the use of all equipment and supplies other than food and consumables associated with the feeding van.



Bulk food and other consumable purchases shall be reimbursed to the PSL organization. A receipt for goods received must accompany such claims.

If the PSL organization chooses to use a different organization for mobile food service, pre-authorization from EMBC must be obtained.

There is no call out allowance for feeding vans.

(5) Mutual Support Vehicle Allowance Rate: This allowance replaces the “first vehicle per group” allowance and applies to one vehicle per PSL organization under the following conditions:

- a. The organization is not claiming the allowance rate for a command vehicle, communications vehicle, or feeding van.
- b. The organization is assisting in a mutual support operational task.

There is no call out allowance for mutual support vehicles.

(6) Equipment Expense Reimbursement Rates: Eligible rates can be found in the current Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate Chart. Should a PSL organization choose to rent equipment, the rental rate shall apply. All rental agreements should be pre-authorized by an EMBC Regional Duty Manager.

5.06.5 AUTHORITIES

N/A

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A/Assistant Deputy Minister
Emergency Management BC

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5.06.6 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [5.06 Volunteer Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate Procedures](#)
- [5.06 EMBC Volunteer Reimbursement and Allowance Rates for 2013](#)
- [5.06 Volunteer Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate FAQs](#)