



Lived Experience Advocate Service Finance Policy

Policy statement

Lived Experience Advocates (LEAs) may be paid an honorarium (see below), be provided with Cabcharge vouchers, and/or be reimbursed for expenses associated with volunteering roles.

Training for new Lived Experience Advocates (LEAs) includes information on the policies and processes that LEAs need to be aware of when carrying out their role. LEAs are encouraged to contact the Lived Experience Advocate Service Coordinator (LEASC) with any questions about these policies or processes, and to stay updated on policy and/or process changes.

Further information on lived experience participation can be found in the ATDC's Lived Experience Advocate Induction Pack.

This Policy contains important information for LEAs and others who connect with the Lived Experience Advocate Service (LEAS).

Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
ABN	Australian Business Number
ACNC	Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission
ATDC	Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council (includes the LEAS)
ATO	Australian Tax Office
LEA	Lived Experience Advocate (volunteer)
LEAS	Lived Experience Advocate Service (currently managed by the ATDC)
LEASC	Lived Experience Advocate Service Coordinator

How are volunteering opportunities costed?

To determine the scope and cost of a volunteering role, the LEASC will work with a requesting service to understand what the role involves before working out how much time the role will take, and any costs that may need to be covered, such as travel expenses.

LEAs will then be provided with an LEA Role Sheet that provides all these details, including the fixed honorarium amount and any other expenses that will be covered or reimbursed.



Honorariums

An honorarium is a recognition payment made to community members who volunteer their time to support not-for-profit activities.

An honorarium is generally (but not always) a tax-free payment to a volunteer, with Volunteering Australia defining volunteering as "time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain".¹

In most cases, honorariums are not assessed as income. It is very important that LEAs get their own independent financial advice on how honorarium payments may affect their income or taxation.² The ATDC will not provide financial advice.

The Australian Tax Office (ATO) provides the following guidance on why an honorarium is not assessable income

- the payment is to meet incurred or anticipated expenses
- the payment has no connection to the volunteer's income-producing activities or services
- the payment is not received as remuneration or as a consequence of employment
- the payment is not relied upon or expected by the volunteer for day-to-day living
- the payment is not legally required or expected
- there is no obligation on the part of your organisation to make the payment
- the payment is a token amount compared to the services provided or expenses incurred by the volunteer. Whether the payment is a token depends on the full facts surrounding the payment and the volunteer's circumstances³

The Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission (ACNC) states that not-for-profit organisations should ensure that an honorarium payment or gift

- does not provide any individual with a sizeable or significant personal benefit
- is made in good faith and with transparency (i.e. is not a secret payment)
- suits the character and best interests of the charity
- is carefully managed in terms of a conflict of interest
- is responsibly managed in accordance with ACNC expectations⁴

The LEAS aims to provide a fixed honorarium amount for all roles. The LEA Role Sheet for each assigned role will detail what expenses will be reimbursed and the amount of the fixed honorarium.

LEAs are volunteers, not Peer Workers or employees of the ATDC. It is expected that LEAs will volunteer some of their time without the expectation of payment, as per the Volunteering Australia definition of a volunteer.

¹ Volunteering Australia (2015). Definition of Volunteering. Volunteering Australia. Accessed 21/11/22. <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/resources/definition-of-volunteering/#/>

² Australian Taxation Office (2017). Honorariums. Australian Tax Office, 12/12/17. Accessed 22/11/22. <https://www.ato.gov.au/Non-profit/Types-of-Not-for-profit-workers/Not-for-profit-volunteers/Paying-volunteers/Honorariums/>

³ Australian Taxation Office (2017). Honorariums. Australian Tax Office, 12/12/17. Accessed 22/11/22. <https://www.ato.gov.au/Non-profit/Types-of-Not-for-profit-workers/Not-for-profit-volunteers/Paying-volunteers/>

⁴ Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission (n.d.). Gifts and Honorariums. Accessed 22/11/22. <https://www.acnc.gov.au/tools/guides/gifts-and-honorariums#:~:text=An%20honorarium%20is%20an%20honorary,individual%20for%20their%20charitable%20service.>

^{*} The term 'token' is used to reflect a small payment in recognition of a person volunteering their time, not in any way meaning to devalue the contribution itself



Statement by Supplier

To be able to receive payment of an honorarium, LEAs must either

- complete a Statement by a Supplier form found on the [ATO website](#) or
- provide an ABN

Payment methods

Honorarium payments are usually made by electronic funds transfer into the LEA's nominated bank account.

LEAs can request payment of an honorarium by a gift card if they do not have a bank account, or if their current living circumstances prevent payment by electronic funds transfer. Gift card payments must be pre-arranged with the LEASC and a reason provided. The LEAS will not provide gift cards for an amount greater than \$200 unless in exceptional circumstances.

LEAs may also request that an honorarium is paid into a bank account other than their own, if the request is made in writing. The ATDC will only keep a record of one nominated bank account.

It is the LEA's responsibility to advise the ATDC of any changes to bank accounts **before** submitting a payment claim.

Reimbursements

Reimbursements are payments made to someone for actual expenses that have already been incurred and paid for.

What expenses can be reimbursed?

The LEAS will reimburse an LEA for:

1. agreed expenses paid for by the LEA as per the LEA Role Sheet
2. any additional expense paid by the LEA, which has **been agreed with the LEASC before the role has started and the expense incurred**

Common expenses that may be reimbursed include public transport and taxi fares, parking fees and meals (when travelling overnight).

The LEAS operates a Cabcharge account. LEAs may be provided with electronic Cabcharge cards. Otherwise, taxi fares will be reimbursed if the travel has been agreed to by the LEASC before the journey is taken.

Ideally, these expenses will be agreed upon before the role begins and detailed on the LEA Role Sheet.

What expenses aren't covered?

The LEAS will not usually cover the following expenses, unless pre-arranged and agreed with the LEASC before the role starts

- vehicle mileage or fuel costs
- time spent in transit to or from a role or volunteer engagement
- accommodation for family or friends
- fines or penalties incurred whilst volunteering through the LEAS
- time spent in training (unless specifically required by a requesting service)



Finance procedures

Honorariums and reimbursements are paid by bank transfer after the LEA submits a claim.

Claims should be submitted via the ATDC website. If the website is unavailable, claims can be emailed to the LEASC.

Claims should be submitted by 5pm on Wednesdays for payment the following Monday.

Claims submitted after 5pm on a Wednesday will not be paid until the next Monday (that is, in 12 days' time).

Every claim for reimbursement must be supported by a valid receipt as proof of expenditure. For tax purposes, a valid receipt must show

- the name of the business that provided the goods or services
- the ABN of the business that provided the goods or services (unless the provider is not required to provide an ABN, in which case they must provide a completed Statement of Supplier form)
- the cost of the goods or services (that is, the amount spent)
- the nature of the goods/services paid for
- the date the goods/services were bought
- the date the receipt was issued

No payments will be progressed without a Statement by Supplier form or ABN.

Photos or print-outs of bank statements will not be accepted as proof of an expense.

Reimbursement claims will be reviewed by ATDC staff. If there are any concerns or queries, the LEASC will contact the LEA.

Payments can take up to 14 days from the time a claim is submitted.

If payment is not received within 14 days of submitting a claim, the LEA should contact the LEASC via email at leas@atdc.org.au. The LEASC will follow up the payment on the LEA's behalf.

Related policies

The ATDC has established numerous policies to direct its staff and volunteers. For any activities related to LEAS financial claims and reimbursements, please refer to this policy. However, it's crucial to understand that the LEAS policies do not supersede ATDC operational policies. In case of any discrepancies or ambiguities within the LEAS policy suite, the ATDC operational policies should be the primary reference for guidance. ATDC operational policies can be supplied upon request.

Disclaimer

This document is not to be considered financial advice. All volunteers are encouraged to obtain independent financial advice before volunteering for any activities through the LEAS.

Version

Version	1.3
Date Approved	17-May-2023
Date for next review	17-May-2024