

SALT LAKE COUNTY
COUNTY-WIDE POLICY
ON
COUNTY MEALS

Purpose -

To provide guidelines and limits on charges, including reimbursable expenses incurred by the County while hosting officials and guests of the government on a recurring or one time basis. If meals, refreshments, or other food are served at functions where only employees attend, the food should not be provided at County expense, unless specifically approved by the Elected Official or as authorized by the Department Director.

1.0 Functions Where Expenditures are Permissible

- 1.1 Meetings of a Board, Council, Task Force, or Committee.
- 1.2 Functions of an exigency nature, which could not be anticipated where food costs must be incurred in the line of duty.
- 1.3 Meetings at conventions, conferences and seminars where an employee is representing the County.
- 1.4 Other functions or situations specifically authorized by the Elected Officials, and Department Directors such as meetings involving food costs with individuals who are not paid County employees.
- 1.5 Agencies are authorized to spend up to \$200 for food for use at a retirement event for an employee.

2.0 Specific Approval Criteria For Functions Incurring Charges

- 2.1 The meeting must have a County government purpose.
 - 2.1.1 Special circumstances may occur when an employee is in position to buy a meal(s) for non-employees, without prior approval, where a definite advantage to the County may accrue. Examples of specific situations where this might occur would include but not be limited to the Utah State Legislature, U.S. Congress, NACo or UAC meetings.
- 2.2 On-going Boards, Councils, Task Forces, or Committees where food is provided and where expenditures will be requested must receive prior approval to provide food. The organization staffing said Board, Council, Task Force or Committee shall be responsible for requesting approval from the Elected Official or Department Directors.
- 2.3 The primary purpose of the meeting must be to transact County business or to receive or give information that is beneficial to the County.
 - 2.3.1 The primary purpose may not be merely good will.

- 2.3.2 The meeting must be of a clear government nature and not for the purpose of furthering personal or social relationships between the employee(s) and guest(s) or the County and guest(s).
- 2.3.3 Expenditures will not be paid when the meeting between the County and guest(s) or the employee(s) and guest(s) occurs when there is little or no probability of engaging in the active conduct of government business such as meetings at night clubs, sporting events or essentially social gatherings.
- 2.3.4 Expenditures will not be paid for friends, relatives or spouses of employees attending a meeting with the employee, even when the purpose of the meeting is to transact county business.

3 Specific Approval Criteria For Guests/Employees Incurring Charges

- 3.1 All County Board, Task Force, or Council members must be serving without compensation or per diem expenses that would normally cover meals.
 - 3.1.1 County employees acting as staff to groups may be included in meals/snacks served to those groups when assigned to attend specific meetings of those groups.
- 3.2 Employees attending conferences, seminars, or conventions must not be receiving per diem expenses that would normally cover meal costs.

4 Limits on Expenditures

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the Elected Official or Department Director to monitor expenses and determine reasonableness for the meal.
- 4.2 No charges relating to serving or consumption of alcoholic beverages may be included in payment requests unless previously approved by the County Mayor.

5 Procedures to Obtain Approval

- 5.1 To obtain prior approval (as referred to in 2.2) the requesting organization should submit an explanation of the function where food will be made available including frequency of the meetings, locations, type of meeting (breakfast, lunch, dinner) purpose, attendees, and the County organization responsible for arranging the meeting. The Department Director or Elected Official will then set the budget according to a reasonable estimate of the cost of the function.
- 5.2 If by the nature of the function the requesting organization could not anticipate the charge before the function takes place (e.g., emergency meals provided to fire fighters etc.); this type of "after-the-fact" approval will be subject to the policy requirements contained herein; payment will be made as explained in 6.1.

6 Processing Payment Requests

- 6.1 All requests for payment (including reimbursements from petty cash accounts) shall be submitted with the attached form which contains: the date of the meeting; the location of the meeting; the type of meeting, whether a breakfast, lunch, or dinner; certification of the purpose of the meeting and the group attending in relation to county business; the total number of

attendees, with employees separated from other attendees; the total payment amount requested; the signature of the person submitting the request; the date the request was signed; the signature of the Division or Department Director or Elected Official approving the request; the date approved by the official; and a copy of the bill or receipt.

6.1.1 The method of payment shall be made in the following manner which depends on the amount of payment as follows:

6.1.1.1 Functions costing \$200 or less (total may include miscellaneous purchases of cups, napkins, drinks, etc.) may be paid from authorized petty cash or imprest accounts.

6.1.1.2 Functions costing greater than \$200 will be paid by means of an entry into the M & D system using the “VR” automated payment program through the Auditor’s Office. These need not go through Contracts & Procurement Division since there is no “purchasing” review of these transactions. These are known as “Auditor Direct Payments.” (The total may also include miscellaneous purchases of cups, napkins, drinks, etc., which are reimbursed out of petty cash.)

6.1.1.3 When recurring payments will be made to the same vendor, the VR system may again be used by setting up a blanket order for each different vendor.

7 General Exceptions To This Policy

7.1 County organizations whose circumstances differ widely from those envisioned in this policy should submit a special policy on food and entertainment to the County Council for consideration and approval.

7.2 Special food and entertainment policies must be approved by the Department Director or Elected Official before submission to the County Council.

7.3 County organizations may provide for food and beverages at special training and educational events if the primary purpose of the activity is to enhance the organization’s ability to perform their government functions. Included within this exception would be staff meetings or organizational meetings with a training function not occurring more often than once a month.

APPROVED and PASSED this 30 day of August, 2005.

SALT LAKE COUNTY COUNCIL

Michael Jensen, Chair

ATTEST:

Sherrie Swensen, County Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

District Attorney’s Office

Date