



41.211: Official Business Meals (Non-Travel) Policies and Procedures

Responsible Executive: Vice President for Finance and Business
Responsible Office: Office of the Controller/Financial Services
Related Policy: 41.208: University Travel Policies and Procedures/Virginia State Travel Policy #20335
Approved-On Date: January 8, 2007
Effective Date:
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Policy Statement

Norfolk State University purchases must be considered essential to the operation of the agency and in support of the agency's mission to justify the use of State funds.

Official business meals must involve substantive and bona fide business discussions and must be recommended for payment by the department head and approved by the Agency Head/Designee. A group conducting a meeting or function may charge meals to public funds if such activity maintains the continuity of the meeting or function and to do otherwise will impose arduous conditions on the meeting or function participants. Business meals may not be charged to public funds when no need exists for continuity of a meeting or function. Such activity is considered to be an entertainment cost and not an appropriate charge to public funds.

Examples of agency-sponsored event expenses incurred which do not clearly support the agency mission and will not be reimbursed from State funds include:

1. Retirement parties or employee going away parties,
2. Holiday parties or decorations,
3. Alcoholic beverages,
4. Charitable contributions, and
5. Gifts and flowers.

This policy does not apply to business meals reimbursed from the President's Discretionary Funds.

Purpose

This statement provides guidelines for conducting official business meals.

Procedures

1. General

- a. Authorized official business meals are reimbursed based on actual costs incurred up to the amount per the CAPP Manual and shown for the applicable meal in the M&IE Rate Table. These rates can also be found in the NSU Pocket Travel Guide. The M&IE rate used shall correspond to the location in which the official business meal was taken for in-state, out-of-state, and foreign travel (excluding the incidental allowance).
- b. Meal per diem rates on the individual meal rate table are to be applied to all business meal functions, on and off campus, including University visitors, such as visiting faculty, job candidates/interviewees, etc. These rates also apply to all business meals provided through the University food services contractor.
- c. The Agency Head/Designee *may* authorize business meal reimbursements up to 50% over the applicable per-diem guidelines with sufficient justification. Business meal reimbursements above 50% over the applicable per diem guideline *are not permitted*.
- d. Generally, meal expenses must involve an overnight stay to qualify for reimbursement. In these instances, the traveler must adhere to the travel regulations outlined in the travel policy and procedures for meal reimbursement and will be reimbursed using the applicable M&IE rate table for the location they are staying at. Individuals in travel status may occasionally attend meals that qualify as business meals. Individuals in travel status who attend a business meal, with the appropriate documentation and approval discussed earlier, will be reimbursed for the cost of the business meal. However, the per diem allowance applicable to that business meal must be clearly excluded from the daily reimbursement amount. In no case, will an individual in a travel status receive both per diem and reimbursement for the same meal.
- e. Expenses of a university employee's spouse involved with an interview process or other business meeting are not reimbursable from public funds.
- f. Business meals must be approved in IFAS in advance by the Agency Head/Designee.

2. Documentation required for reimbursement/payment of business meals charges

- a. Charges for dining in the Norfolk area or other official station are to be reimbursed on a Travel Voucher form. **Itemized** receipts are required for reimbursement of business meals expenses. Attach a completed copy of the Business Meal Certification form (see attached) which includes the approved Purchase Order number, list of names of all meal participants along with association, and justification showing the business necessity of the event. Initials of the representatives are not sufficient to document the attendees at the meeting.

For functions held through the University food services contractor, provide the contractor with a completed and authorized Business Meal Certification form (signed by appropriate designee) which includes the purchase order number (made payable to the contractor), and a list of names of all meal participants. Without the Business Meal Certification form and the Purchase Order number, the food service contractor will not be reimbursed for the charges and, therefore, will not perform the services requested. After the completion of the event, the food service contractor will forward the original invoice with the Original Business Meal Certification form to the Accounts Payable office for payment processing.

3. Timeframe to submit request for reimbursement

It is critical that all requests for reimbursement for business meals be submitted within five (5) business days of the conclusion of the event in order to allow time for processing and payment in a timely fashion.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
BUSINESS MEAL CERTIFICATION FORM

Purchase Order # _____

The purpose of this form is to document the qualification of business meals for payment or reimbursement. The following information is required for business meals:

- Agency Head or Appropriate Designee's approval
- Original, itemized receipt for the meal
- Justification and description of substantive and bona fide business discussion
- List of all the attendees' names

PAYEE: *(Always required)* _____

MEAL REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNT: _____ **DATE OF MEAL:** _____

NAME OF RESTAURANT/DINING FACILITY: _____

TYPE OF MEAL (Check One): **Breakfast** **Lunch** **Dinner**

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: _____

PURPOSE/REASON FOR THE MEAL: _____

NAME OF MEAL PARTICIPANTS: *(please attach a separate sheet if necessary)*

This form must be properly signed below by the appropriate agency head designee. The original, itemized receipt(s) along with any other necessary documentation must be attached. All information entered on this form must be completely consistent with information entered on the Purchase Order requesting payment or reimbursement for the meal.

DESIGNEE NAME: _____

DESIGNEE SIGNATURE: _____

TITLE: _____

DATE: _____