

# Business Meal Reimbursement Policy

## Introduction

Business meals are defined as meals taken with students, colleagues or donors during which specific University related business discussions take place / or meals due to University related travel. Individuals should show prudence and fiscal responsibility when deciding upon a restaurant. Overly expensive restaurants should be avoided unless circumstances provide that it is appropriate and approval is obtained from the appropriate Vice President. Please note: the University cafeteria should be used whenever possible and appropriate.

There are two methods for business meal reimbursement offered by the University – per diem and actual meal cost. Individuals must choose to claim one method or the other. Mixing per diems and actual meal costs for the same reimbursement or date is not permitted. The use of per diem in lieu of actual meal cost, when practical, is strongly encouraged. The per diem method is more efficient and involves less record keeping for all parties, as receipts are not required.

If the reimbursement (whether per diem or actual meal cost) is related to overnight, out-of-town travel, it must be submitted via the [Advance/Travel/Faculty & Staff Development and Substantiation Form](#) (This form is currently being developed. For the present time, the standard [Check Request](#) should be used). If the reimbursement is not related to overnight travel, the request may be submitted using a [Check Request](#).

## Per diem advance or reimbursement

To request a per diem advance, complete section I of the [Advance/Travel/Faculty & Staff Development and Substantiation Form](#) and submit to the Accounting office. The per diem along with all other expenses associated with the traveling event must be substantiated through the completion of section II of the [Advance/Travel/Faculty & Staff Development and Substantiation Form](#) within 10 days following the return to the campus. (This form is currently being developed. For the present time, the standard [Check Request](#) should be used).

It is preferred that the per diem be requested in advance of the traveling event, however, University policy permits the individual 10 days upon return to campus to request a per diem reimbursement for eligible meals purchased while traveling on University business.

Reimbursement requests must be submitted within 30 days of return to campus. Any requests exceeding 30 days will not be reimbursed.

## Per diem rates

<u>Faculty/Staff In-state</u>	<u>Faculty/Staff Out-of-State</u>	<u>Students In- or Out-of-State</u>
Breakfast - \$6	Breakfast - \$6	Breakfast - \$5
Lunch - \$10	Lunch - \$12	Lunch - \$7
Dinner - \$14	Dinner - \$16	Dinner - \$12
Total - \$30	Total - \$34	Total - \$24

Individuals are expected to take advantage of meals provided by fees paid for conference (or other) registrations. As a result, meals included in the cost of conferences, etc. should be deducted from the daily per diem rates listed above. If the individual is expecting to be away

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from the campus for a 24 hour period, a per diem for all meals that are not covered by registration fees may be requested. In the event the individual is not away from the campus for a 24 hour period, meals that are not covered by registration fees that fall within the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. may be requested as appropriate.

Per diem rates apply to the three meals typically consumed during the time period between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. For example, individuals beginning their travel time prior to 7:00 a.m. are entitled to the breakfast per diem; individuals beginning their travel time after 7:00 a.m. would not be entitled to the breakfast per diem. Likewise, individuals returning prior to 7:00 p.m. would not include a dinner per diem, but individuals returning after 7:00 p.m. would be entitled to the dinner rate.

### **Actual meal cost reimbursement**

In some circumstances, the individual may request to be reimbursed for the actual meal cost. For actual meal cost reimbursements, the individual must obtain and submit both the original detailed receipt and the summary receipt showing the last four digits of the credit card number used (if applicable) for the meal. The Accounting office will use this information to verify that the purchase was not made with a University credit or procurement card (P-Card program is scheduled for implementation by January 1, 2009). Documentation must be provided that supports the business purpose of the meal including the date(s), the stated purpose and a list of individuals partaking in the meal.

Tipping is expected; however, the University will only reimburse up to 20%. Discretion should be used when figuring the tip amount.

To request a reimbursement for the actual cost of meals related to out-of-town travel, submit an *Advance/Travel/Faculty & Staff Development and Substantiation Form* with the proper documentation to the Accounting office. (This form is currently being developed. For the present time, the standard *Check Request* should be used).

If the actual meal cost reimbursement is not associated with an *Advance/Travel/Faculty & Staff Development and Substantiation Form*, submit a *Check Request* with proper documentation to the Accounts Payable office.

### **Alcoholic beverage purchases**

University policy prohibits the reimbursement of any alcoholic beverages purchased. Any such purchases while on University business are the financial responsibility of the purchaser and may not be submitted for reimbursement.

In the event that alcohol is purchased on a University credit card, the individual making the purchase will be required to reimburse the University immediately. Failure to reimburse the University within 30 days from the date of purchase may result in the amount of the purchase being deducted from the individual's next pay check as stated in the Procurement Card Policy.

### **Reimbursement of non-business related meal expenses**

The University will not reimburse meals purchased for individuals who are not employees or students of the University (i.e. a spouse traveling with the employee) unless a University business purpose is established.