Buying Meals or Light Refreshments for Meetings

INTRODUCTION
The purchase of food for meetings is subject to state and University regulations.

Exception
Procedures in this section apply to purchases made with all University monies except for discretionary accounts in program 17A. See BPPM 70.33 to make purchases using a 17A discretionary account.

NOTE: Sponsored accounts may have additional restrictions regarding the purchase of food for meetings.

Conditions for Meals
University monies may be used to pay for meals without regard for participants' travel status or the Three-Hour Rule (BPPM 95.06) if all of the following conditions are met:

• The meal must be essential to the completeness (i.e., an integral part) of an official University meeting or training session.

• The University must require that the employee attend the meeting or formal training session.

• The purpose of the event must be to conduct official WSU business or to provide formal training to WSU employees.

Nonallowable
The cost of meals may not be supported by University monies when the purpose of the meeting is to conduct one of the following kinds of activities:

• Normal daily business of University employees

• Staff meetings

• Anniversaries of units

• Anniversaries of individual employment

EXCEPTION: Such events that are a part of an official employee recognition program approved by the University and HRS may be supported by University monies.

• Retirements

• Elections

• Lobbying a legislator or governmental official

• Social events

• Election celebrations
Buying Meals or Light Refreshments for Meetings

Cost Per Meal
Cost per meal served may not exceed the applicable travel meal limits for the location. See BPPM 95.19 for travel meal rates.

Enter the applicable cost per meal on the Request to Serve Food form.

Location
The meeting must be away from the employee's regular work place. (See BPPM 95.01 for a definition of work place.)

Conditions for Refreshments
Light refreshments include nonalcoholic beverages and edible items commonly served between meals, but not intended to substitute for meals, e.g., coffee, soft drinks, doughnuts, sweet rolls, fruit, cheese.

University monies may be used to support the costs of light refreshments, subject to the following conditions.

Purpose
The purpose of the meeting must be to conduct official WSU business or to provide formal training to WSU employees. The light refreshments must be essential for the completeness (i.e., an integral part) of an official University meeting or training session.

Nonallowable
The cost of light refreshments may not be supported by University monies when the purpose of the meeting is to conduct one of the following kinds of activities:

- Normal daily business of University employees
- Staff meetings
- Anniversaries of units
- Anniversaries of individual employment
  EXCEPTION: Such events that are a part of an official employee recognition program approved by the University and HRS may be supported by University monies.
- Retirements
- Receptions for employees
- Elections
- Lobbying a legislator or governmental official
- Social events
- Election celebrations
Buying Meals or Light Refreshments for Meetings

**PRIOR APPROVAL**

Complete a *Request to Serve Food* form to obtain prior approval to serve meals or light refreshments.

**List of Attendees**

The request form must include a list of participants, indicating each participant's relationship to the University, e.g., employee, official, guest.

**State Facility**

Indicate whether or not a state of Washington facility is to be used for the event. State regulations require that state facilities be given preference when possible. (SAAM 10.10.55) See *BPPM 95.06* for information about conferences and conventions.

**Prior Approval**

An expenditure from University monies for meals or light refreshments must be approved by the responsible chair or director at least five working days before the event. The responsible chair or director indicates approval on a completed *Request to Serve Food* form by signing the **Certification** near the bottom of the form.

Route a copy of the approved form to Accounts Payable.

**PAYMENT OR REIMBURSEMENT**

A department may directly pay the vendor or reimburse an employee for incurred food expenses.

**Requesting Reimbursement**

When an employee personally pays for the meals or refreshments, submit a request for reimbursement to the appropriate division of the Controller's Office. Include the following documents:

- An itemized receipt from the vendor.
- A completed and approved State of Washington Invoice Voucher, if the employee was not in travel status, approved by the supervisor to Accounts Payable (*BPPM 30.45*). (If the supervisor does not have expenditure authority for the charged account, an employee holding the appropriate expenditure authority also signs the Invoice Voucher. See *BPPM 70.02*).
- A Travel Expense Voucher (TEV), if the employee was in travel status. Submit the TEV to Travel Services (*BPPM 95.20*).
Buying Meals or Light Refreshments for Meetings

**Direct Deposit**

A WSU employee may authorize Accounts Payable or Travel Services to deposit his or her food or travel reimbursement in any domestic bank that is a member of an automated clearinghouse. See BPPM 95.21 to request direct deposit.

**Direct Vendor Payment**

The department may pay a vendor directly by using one of the following procedures:

- **DO**
  Complete a Department Order. Follow procedures in BPPM 70.07.

- **Departmental Requisition**
  Complete a Departmental Requisition prior to the event. (Purchasing Services generates a Purchase Order, which is given to the vendor at the time the food is obtained.) Follow procedures in BPPM 70.10.

- **IRI**
  Complete an Interdepartmental Requisition and Invoice if the vendor is a University organization, e.g., Dining Service, CUB. Follow procedures in BPPM 70.05.

- **Purchasing Card**
  Use a departmental purchasing card. Follow procedures in BPPM 70.08.

- **Vendor's Invoice**
  Obtain an invoice for the meals or refreshments from the vendor. If the vendor's address and name is not on the invoice, complete a State of Washington Invoice Voucher and obtain the vendor's signature on the form.

  *A University purchasing form is not required for this procedure.*

Submit the vendor's invoice to Accounts Payable. Add the coding of the supporting account. A University employee with expenditure authority for the supporting account must sign the invoice. (See BPPM 70.02 for an explanation of expenditure authority.)

**NOTE:** The total cost may not exceed the current purchasing bid limit (BPPM 70.13).