

Webb County Policy for: Non-Travel Meals, Refreshments & Related Expenses

04/13/2015 — *approved 4/27/15 Item 63*

Scope

The policy, procedures, and guidelines apply to all Webb County Departments.

Definitions

"County Sponsored Events" means meetings, seminars, training sessions, employee appreciation, health and safety fairs, and/or conferences, to conduct official County business.

"Meals" means food and non-alcoholic beverages provided at breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

"Necessary Expense" means an expense that is absolutely necessary in the discharge of official County business.

"Refreshments" means non-alcoholic-beverages and food items (i.e. snacks, pastries, chips) commonly served between meals, but not intended to substitute for meals.

"Related Expenses" means expenses for essential serving products such as paper plates, cups, stirrers, napkins, and plastic utensils, coffee creamer, sugar, sugar substitutes related to allowable non-travel meals and refreshments.

Purpose

The Webb County Policy provides guidelines to departments concerning when non-travel meals, refreshments, and related expenses may be paid for with Webb County funds. The procedures set for herein are prescribed by the Webb County Purchasing Agent in conjunction with the Webb County Auditor and County Attorney and are to be followed regarding the payment or reimbursement of non-travel meals, refreshments, and related expenses.

A. Permitted Expenditures

1. County sponsored events for the purpose of conducting substantial and bona fide official County business.
 - a. Expenditures may be incurred only for those attendees whose presence is necessary for the purpose of the event.
 - b. If the County sponsored event occurs during a recognized meal period, in order to accommodate scheduling requirements, meals may be provided. Otherwise, only refreshments will be permitted.

- c. Examples include, but are not limited to:
- Commissioners Court meetings
 - Commission/board/committee meetings.
 - Business meetings relating to promotion of economic development, building community cooperation, or information gathering.
 - Formal training sessions held for the purpose of instruction
 - Health & Safety Fairs
2. Meal, refreshments, and related costs specifically authorized in a Federal, state or local government contract or grant, and only to the extent and for the purposes authorized.
- Jurors (Code of Criminal Procedures Art 104.001)
 - Prisoners (Code of Criminal Procedures Art 104.002)
 - Adult Probation (Government Code 509.011)
 - Juvenile Probation (Human Resource Code 141.082; 141.084; 152.0012; 152.1141)
 - Agri Life Extension (Agriculture Code 43.033)
3. Beverages for the purpose of providing hydration (sports drinks containing electrolytes) for employees performing job tasks outdoors where they are exposed to hot or humid weather conditions. This includes employees performing road work.
4. Water and coffee may be purchased by departments. A purchase order and an original Itemized invoice or receipt will be required for payment.
5. Purchases made from Goods for Public Events Account
- Goods from public events account budget will provide funds for food items purchased for a specific event (not for inventory purposes)
 - Amounts requested must be reasonable and must be aligned to expected number of participants
6. Purchases made from donated funds
- Donated funds may be used for the purchase of food items for county related activities not covered under the official Webb County approved budget

B. Guidelines for Permitted Expenditures

The following guidelines should be followed when making permitted expenditures for non-travel meals, refreshments, and related costs:

1. Budget: The sponsoring department must have sufficient appropriations in their budget for such expenditures.
2. Documentation Requirements: The following supporting documentation will be required for the County Auditor to process payment for non-travel meals, refreshments, and related expenses:

- a. Purchase order. The purchase order should include the event date, time, duration, and place; estimated number of attendees and affiliation; purpose of the event. Purchase order backup information will include the completed/signed County Auditor's Form, "Non-Travel Meals, refreshments, and Related Expenses Claim"
 - b. Original itemized invoice or receipt.
 - c. Written agenda and/or event flyer
 - d. Sign-in sheet. The sign-in sheet must include the attendees' first and last names, title, and filiation with the County.
3. The county auditor will not pay or reimburse expenses that lack documentation or a clear business purpose.

C. Prohibited Expenditures

- Alcoholic beverages
- Food and beverages for:
 - Regularly scheduled staff meeting
 - Social events such as celebrating holidays or birthdays
 - Individual employee recognition, volunteer recognition, or thank you events
 - Charitable or political functions

PROCEDURES

A. County Department

1. Ensure that expenditures for non-travel meals, refreshments, and related costs comply with County policy and fund source restrictions.
2. Process a requisition in accordance with county purchasing policies and procedures. A requisition(s) should be issued for each event. The requisition should include the required information
3. Submit completed and signed County Auditor's Form, "*Non-Travel Meals, Refreshments, and Related Expenses Claim*" to the County Purchasing Department.
4. The Purchasing Department will ensure that the "*Non-Travel Meals, Refreshments, and Related Expenses Claim*" is accompanied by the following documentation:
 - a. Purchase order.
 - b. An original itemized invoice or receipt.
 - c. A written agenda and/or event flyer
 - d. A sign-in sheet. The sign-in sheet must include the attendees' first and last names, affiliation with the County, and position.

B. Purchasing Department

1. Review requisition submitted by county departments for compliance with this County policy as well as County purchasing policies and procedures.
 - a. If requisition complies with County policy, issue purchase order.
 - b. If requisition does not comply with County policy, deny the requisition and notify department of deficiencies.

Note this policy does not apply to emergency management related expense claims or purchases made with forfeiture funds.