Policy Procedure: Business Meals

Procedure Number: 314P

Responsible Office: Finance and Administration

Forms: Business Meal Approval Request Form (105-003), Supplemental Form for Business Meal Approval Requests (105-004)

Effective Date: 07/15/2023

Date Last Reviewed: 08/13/2024

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1. **Purpose**

   As a public institution of higher education, NOVA is obligated to ensure that all expenditures are necessary, cost-effective, and integral to the college's mission. Meal purchases are strictly limited to business meals, student events, and certain special functions, as defined in Table 1 regardless of the format of the occasion (e.g. grab and go snacks and beverages, catered meals, food trucks, pop-up tents).

2. **Definitions**

   N/A

3. **Procedure**

   a. For State Employees: The Commonwealth of Virginia prohibits expenditures for employee personal expenses, including meals, snacks, entertainment, and refreshments. There are limited circumstances in which it is considered appropriate to provide food and beverages to personnel who are not in travel status.
      i. As such, food or beverage may not be provided at regularly scheduled or routine meetings (e.g., monthly staff meetings, quarterly unit meeting) or as a way to boost morale or promote goodwill among employees. This restriction is based on current tax laws and is intended to avoid the necessity of including the value of such meals in an employee's taxable income.
      ii. Alcohol and flowers are prohibited.
      iii. Nothing in this procedure changes policy for emergency situations.

   b. For Students: Funds utilized from student accounts, such as Student Activities Funds or Student Club funds, must primarily be used for the students.

i. Incidental consumption by state employees is allowed, but care must be taken to limit this.
ii. Student Activities funded events must be allocated within yearly approved operating budgets provided for that purpose.
iii. With regards to food charged to student clubs (those funds starting with a "9") these requests do not require a Business Meal Approval Request.

c. For Outside Organizations: In conducting the college's business, we may have events supporting the college, such as board meetings, where the provision of food or snacks is appropriate. Incidental consumption by state employees is allowed, but care must be taken to limit this.

d. Externally Generated Funds: Certain funds such as grants, foundation endowments, or participant funded events such as Campus Job Fairs, may allow for expenditures of food and beverages.
   i. These must be clearly documented in the food request form.
   ii. These requests must still adhere to Commonwealth policies, procedures, and limits.
   iii. For those requesting approval using externally generated funds, the requestor is personally responsible for certifying the use of these funds for this purpose.

Type of Event	State Funds	Local Auxiliary Funds	Local Funds Student Life & Clubs	Participant Funds, Grants, & Other External Funds
Primary beneficiaries are non-NOVA employees				
Meeting supports NOVA's mission, strategic goals, and business	Yes	Yes	No	As Appropriate
Meeting supports future contributions to enrollment	No	Yes	Yes	As Appropriate
Meeting supports student events (speakers)	No	No	Yes	As Appropriate
Meeting supports NOVA (e.g. Local Boards, Advisory Boards)	Yes	Yes	No	As Appropriate
Primary beneficiaries are NOVA Faculty, Staff, and/or Students				
Convocation (Annual College Event)	No	Yes	No	No
ACE Conference (College Event)	Yes	Yes	No	No
PUP Conference (Annual College Event)	Yes	Yes	No	No
Commencement (Annual College Event)	Yes	Yes	No	No
College Service Awards (Annual College Event)	No	Yes	No	As Appropriate
Dean, Provost, Vice President Candidate Search (up to six NOVA employees)	Yes	Yes	No	No
Campus wide trainings where attendance is open for Faculty/Staff	No	No	No	No
Regularly Scheduled or Other Meetings for College Employees	No	No	No	No
Events that are Social in Nature (retirement, holiday party)	No	No	No	No
College or State Mandated Training for Which Meal Accommodations are Not Possible (must be justified)	Yes	Yes	No	No
Designated Emergencies	Yes	Yes	No	No
Art Gallery Events and other Similar Events	No	By Exception	Yes	As Appropriate
Career Services Job Fairs	No	No	No	Yes
VP or Provost Sponsored Activities Within Separately Provided Budget Limits				
Annual or Semi-Annual Welcome Event at Start of Fall or Spring Semester	No	Yes	No	No
Special Meetings and Trainings	No	Yes	No	No
Student Activities				
Student programming/club functions that contribute to student engagement	No	By Exception	Yes	As Appropriate
Meeting supports student engagement and/or the academic mission of NOVA	No	By Exception	Yes	As Appropriate

e. Business Meal Approval Request:

i. Form 105-003: The requester submits Form 105-003 'Business Meal Approval Request' at least five business days prior to creating a requisition in eVA. Agency 280 – Northern Virginia Community College must be selected under "Institution". The following documentation must be attached to the request:
   1. Vendor Quote (excluding tax)
   2. Agenda, flyer, and event summary justifying the need for food or beverages
   3. List of attendees and their affiliation. If a list of attendees cannot be provided, the requester must provide an explanation for how a participant total was determined.

ii. Form 105-004: A completed eform 105-004 Supplemental Form for Business Meal Approval Requests must be submitted along with the request.

f. Routing:

i. Routing Flow: The completed Form 105-003 and Form 105-004 is routed through the Administrative Council Member for approval. Once approved, Forms 105-003 and 105-004 are routed to BraultReception@nvcc.edu for review/approval by the Vice President of Finance and Administration.

ii. Denials: If denied, the requester will be notified. If corrective action is needed for approval, the requester must resubmit the Form once updates to the request are made.

iii. Approvals: If approved, the requester proceeds with creating a requisition in eVA.

iv. Exceptions: Exceptions to source of funding and events not outlined above must be approved by the President or Vice President of Finance and Administration using a fully completed 105-003 'Business Meal Approval Request' and 105-004 'Supplemental Form for Business Meal Approval Requests' form. The statement of justification must accompany these forms.

g. Requirements, Limitations, and Other Requirements

i. Funding Limits: The College follows the Commonwealth of Virginia's (COVA) Commonwealth Accounting Policies and Procedures (CAPP) Manual which uses the Federal General Services Administration (GSA) per diem rates and guidelines. Per diem includes the cost of:
   1. Food and beverages
   2. Delivery fees
   3. Gratuity (maximum of 15% and cannot exceed allowable per diem)

ii. Over Per Diem: Justification must be provided to utilize local funds to cover per diem overages. This is reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Vice President of Finance and Administration.

iii. eVA Registration: An eVA registered vendor must be utilized for all meal and catering services. The identified vendor must be registered as micro/SWaM (Small, Women-Owned or Minority-owned business) or have an established state contract.

iv. On Campus Vendors: NOVA has two contracted food service providers through Auxiliary Services that may be utilized:
    1. Surefire Catering, Isabella Lazo, isabella@Surefirecatering.com, 240-713-0059
    2. RNS Enterprise, Richard Buenaventura, richard@RNSEnterprise.com, 703-299-6767

v. Pre-Approval Required: All food and beverage expenditures require an approved 105-003. In instances in which pre-approval cannot be obtained prior to placing an order, an approved 105-003 must be submitted in eVA with the confirming order within two business days of the expenditure.

vi. Categorizing the Meal: Some meals fall outside the realm of breakfast, lunch, or dinner, such as snack-oriented events for student socials and art gallery openings, which support the mission of the college. There is no category for refreshments under the state per diem regulations. Categorize meal purchases under the appropriate meal allowance based upon the time of day of the event.

vii. P-Cards and Checks: The business meal form is required even if payment is made by these two methods. This requirement is effective whether the check is provided to the vendor directly or as reimbursement to a staff member who paid out of pocket. The only exception to this is for student clubs who are paying with funds that start with “9”.