

**Austin Peay State  
University**

## **Business Meals and Recognition Events**

**Issued:** August 17, 2018

### **POLICIES**

**Responsible Official:** Vice President for Finance and Administration

**Responsible Office:** Accounting Services

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#### **Policy Statement**

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It is the policy of Austin Peay State University that all hospitality and meal expenses must withstand the test of public scrutiny. University officials should exercise prudent judgment when determining whether an expenditure is appropriate. This policy applies to all purchases of food and beverages. Food and beverage purchases should not be solely for enjoyment and benefit of department personnel. Under no circumstances should state funds be used for the purchase of alcohol.

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The University may pay or reimburse properly documented meals whose primary purpose is a business discussion. Business meals generally include at least one non-APSU university employee. However, occasional gatherings of university employees may also be reimbursed. Expenses may be incurred only for those individuals whose presence is necessary to the business discussion.

In addition to an itemized receipt, IRS rules on substantiation of business expenses require documentation of the time, date, place, specific topic of discussion and attendees at the meal. The documentation requirements apply to all on-campus or off-campus business meals, regardless of payment method. Accordingly, all on-campus dining facilities require this documentation for all meals charged to departmental accounts.

All on-campus or off-campus business meals and recognition events must be authorized in advance by the appropriate approving authority.

The University will deny reimbursement for meal expenses that lack documentation or a clear business purpose.

Departmental funds shall not be used for the donation component of a ticket price for a sponsored event. If the premium component (generally the meal cost) can be broken out of the ticket price, this expense must be supported in the same manner as properly documented business meals. The ticket price for personal guests of the employee shall not be paid from university.

Institutional funds may be used to purchase food and non-alcoholic beverages for special recognition events held on behalf of the University (i.e. dinners honoring distinguished guests of the University, University-wide appreciation functions). Recognition gifts and retirement plaques are allowable in conjunction with the hosted event. Gatherings that are primarily social in nature do not qualify for payment or reimbursement as business meals and/or recognition events (i.e., holiday socials, departmental gatherings, birthday celebrations).

Departmental funds may be used for food and refreshments up to \$200.00 per office or departmental recognition/retirement event. Events for an honoree that are sponsored by several offices may combine funds not to exceed \$200 per office or department up to a maximum of \$500 per honoree.

Department funds, not to exceed \$100 per employee recognized, may be used to purchase recognition gifts and/or plaques. Austin Peay will not reimburse any expenses related to non-university recognition or appreciation events except as provided in above.

All on-campus or off-campus business meals must be authorized in advance by the employee's supervisor. Recognition events must be authorized in advance by the department head. Advance authorization may be given in written or spoken communication.

### **Payment Procedures**

Provisions of this policy apply only to university employees hosting guests of the University off campus and/or official business functions and special events catered by the University's food service vendor. The University official requesting reimbursement must have been present when the meal was purchased or refreshments offered.

1. Reimbursement of actual expenses for meals and related costs shall be allowable when acting as designated host(s) to guests of the institution or other official business functions. Employees are expected to use good judgment to ensure meals and related costs are reasonable.
2. A complete and approved Payment Authorization form must be submitted through Gov's E-shop for each meal or event. Credit card receipts will be accepted as documentation for reimbursement, provided the vendor name is legible and charges are itemized on the receipt.
3. Each event must be submitted for payment on a separate payment authorization through Gov's E-shop.
4. The department head is responsible for ensuring the legitimacy of the business and/or recognition event purpose. The department head is also responsible for determining the availability of funds. Though prior approval is not required, departments should communicate clearly to employees the acceptable business purposes and recognition events that will be approved.

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**Revision Dates**

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APSU Policy 4:010 – Rev.: August 17, 2018  
APSU Policy 4:010 – Rev.: February 2, 2017  
APSU Policy 4:010 – Rev.: July 1, 2016  
APSU Policy 4:010 – Rev.: April 26, 2006  
APSU Policy 4:010 – Issued: September 20, 2005

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**Subject Areas:**

Academic	Finance	General	Human Resources	Information Technology	Student Affairs
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**Approved**

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President: signature on file

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