

**POLICY: REFRESHMENT/MEAL EXPENSE**

- I. INTRODUCTION - The purpose of this regulation is to establish a policy and procedure regarding use of City funds for refreshments and/or meals. It is the City's policy that City funds are not to be used to provide refreshments or meals during the conduct of City business except in situations defined in Sections III of this policy. Prudent use of taxpayer funds is required. The median household income in the City is considerably below that of the average City employee. When in doubt the City employee should assume the meal expense is personal and not reimbursable by the City. **No City funds are to be used for alcoholic beverage expense.**
- II. BUDGET – Expenditures must be within the budgeted allocation.
- III. ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

The City allows reasonable payment for refreshment and meals for the activities listed below. Generally, the cost of meals should not exceed the amount allowed in the City's travel policy.

The following expenses are permitted:

- a. Refreshments or meals for out-of-town business guests.
- b. Special meetings in City facilities involving a majority of non-public employees while conducting specific City business.
- c. Unique events in City facilities to which the public is invited.
- d. Meetings of City boards and commissions including attending City employees.
- e. Luncheon or dinner banquets that are directly tied to City economic development are permitted only with the approval of the Commissioner of Neighborhood and Business Development. If other City departments wish to send representatives at City's expense to a luncheon or banquet they must obtain the approval of the Commissioner of Neighborhood and Business Development to limit the total number of City employees attending general economic development luncheons, e.g.: Downtown Development Corporation, Rochester Business Journal and Greater Rochester Enterprise events.
- f. Luncheon or dinner banquets directly tied to a departmental mission at which a City employee is presenting and acting as a representative of the City. Only one City employee may attend such a function on this basis, unless additional employees are authorized by the Department Head in advance.
- g. Refreshments for recreation center clients, library patrons or other citizens, provided as part of a City program.
- h. Food or refreshments for an annual training or planning meeting if the participants meeting are outside of their normal work location.
- i. Refreshments or meals to recognize volunteers.
- j. Meetings attended by the, Mayor, Deputy Mayor and/or Commissioner of Neighborhood and Business Development or Department Head approved by the Mayor with individuals in restaurants where the meeting is necessary to promote City economic development and where there is an anticipated return on investment for the City.
- k. Refreshments for employee work recognition or safety award ceremonies.
- l. Refreshments for annual department convocation with the City share no more than 50%.

#### IV. EXAMPLES OF DISALLOWED REFRESHMENT EXPENSES

- a. Deputy Mayor and City School District Chief of Intergovernmental Affairs meet for lunch to discuss cooperative opportunities.
- b. Budget Director and Commissioner of Neighborhood and Business Development meet for lunch to discuss City business.
- c. Professional association lunch meetings to discuss common issues.
- d. A community association event where lunch is provided.

#### V. EXCEPTIONS

For any activity not listed in Section III, an exception may be requested. The written request for approval of the use of City funds must be made in advance of the event to the Budget Director with copies to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The Department Head must submit a memorandum or email to the Budget Director with the following information:

- a. The purpose of the activity.
- b. Names of persons attending.
- c. Date, time and location of the event.
- d. Estimated cost to the City.
- e. Source of funds (budget line).
- f. An area for the Budget Director's approval or disapproval.

#### VI. PURCHASING/PAYMENT PROCEDURE

Purchase orders or call numbers are required for standard food purchases that do not include catering services and that are over the petty cash limits e.g. pizza. Professional service agreements are required for food and refreshments provided as catering services and that exceed \$300. All expenses must be submitted on a claim voucher and accompanied by an itemized original invoice or receipt. The voucher or attachment should indicate the function, date, location, attendees, and include a copy of prior approval if required.

The Director of Accounting has the authority to deny payment of any expenses that do not meet the requirements of these policies.

#### VII. FOOD PREPARATION/STORAGE EQUIPMENT

The City will not purchase items to prepare or store food for employee consumption such as coffee pots, microwaves, or other kitchen equipment. However, this provision does not apply to employees whose regularly scheduled work expressly prohibits them from leaving the work site during their meal break.

#### VIII. SOLICITATION

The City does not allow solicitation of food or beverages from outside vendors for employee picnics and parties or other social events.