INTRODUCTION

Reimbursable expenses for UWEX sponsored meetings, conferences and training sessions are determined by policies and regulations contained in Appendix A (http://www.uwsa.edu/fadmin/meetguid/appa.htm) of the UW System Meeting and Planning Guide/UW Sponsored Events.

The purpose of this document is to establish internal operating policies and procedures within the constraints created by the UW System Travel Regulations.

The restrictions outlined in this document do not apply to UWEX sponsored events attended primarily by the general public if participants pay a fee to cover such costs.

GENERAL POLICY

The costs of refreshment breaks, meals and transportation associated with business events, some of which may occur in the headquarters city of participating employees, may be reimbursed if they are actual, reasonable and necessarily incurred in the discharge of official duties in accordance with the requirements stated below.

DEFINITIONS

"HEADQUARTER CITY" includes the area within the city or village limits where an employee’s permanent work site is located and the area within a radius of 15 miles based on odometer mileage from the employee’s permanent work site. The employee’s supervisor in the best interest of the institution shall determine an employee’s permanent work site.

MEAL EXPENSES

A. When Allowable - If the meeting is held in the headquarters city of the majority of the attendees, a provided meal is acceptable only if the business could not be effectively conducted in such a manner so as to avoid the necessity of the meal. With the required approval (see section C), meal costs in an employee’s headquarters city generally can be reimbursed if one of the following conditions are met; 1) a mealtime speaker is scheduled, 2) business is actually conducted during the meal, or 3) facilities are not available near the meeting location for the attendees to eat on their own.

B. Allowable Expenses

1. UW sponsored - Meal expenses, including tax and tip, for UW sponsored meetings/conferences which are attended primarily by UW/State employees must stay within the state maximums. Meal expenses of non-UW/State employees should be reasonable.

2. Non-UW sponsored - Meetings, conferences, etc. involving meal claims in excess of the maximums may be reimbursed if the cost is incurred outside the control of the individual and a receipt supports the claim.
C. **Approval Level** - Approval required by the Department Chair level or above for UWEX sponsored events involving meals for headquarters city employees.

D. **Approval Procedure:**

1. **Group Meals** - Large group meals where the costs are to be charged to one budget may be direct billed. The Low Dollar Order (LDO) process or the Purchasing Card may be used for group meal arrangements at external facilities which involve a cost of $5,000 or less. If the cost will exceed $5,000, an external requisition should be processed. Documentation required includes (1) a meeting agenda, brochure, or instructional approval form, and (2) if a registration fee is not involved, a list of intended participants indicating name and affiliation, i.e. UW institution, state agency, etc. Requisitions should be initiated far enough in advance to assure the Purchasing Department receives it at least 10 working days before the event. Internal requisitions should be used to request meals from University facilities that require this form of documentation. Departments may elect to use the Purchasing Card to pay for Conference Center services or meals from other University facilities that accept this form of payment. Requisitions and LDO’s involving meals for headquarters city employees should be routed through the Department Chair for his/her approval. When meals of headquarter city employees are paid with the Purchasing Card; the Cardholders records should have documentation of the Department Chair’s approval.

Group meals, provided at the UW Conference Centers to headquarter city employees, also require the specific approval of the Department Chair.

Note: It is generally expected that for groups of less then 10, unless UW facilities are being used, each individual will pay for his/her own meal and submit a Travel Expense Report for reimbursement.

2. **Individual Meals** - The approval process for individual headquarters city meals is at the discretion of each department. The Departmental Chair should be contacted to determine if approval is to be obtained in advance by requesting prior written approval from the Department Chair or by routing the employee’s Travel Expense Report (TER) to the Department Chair for post approval.

E. **Documentation Requirements** - The following documentation must accompany the request for payment or if paid by Purchasing Card be included in the Cardholders log records.

1. **Payments to Vendors**
   a. The name, purpose, date and time (beginning/ending) of the meeting. A meeting agenda that includes all the required information is preferred.
   b. Justification for holding the meeting over the meal period.
   c. A list of meeting participants for whom expenses are being paid, indicating name and affiliation, i.e., institution, state agency, business, etc.
   d. Original invoices/receipts itemizing the cost per meal and showing the total amounts to be paid or reimbursed.

Note: The UW-Extension "Sponsored Events" form (see Appendix III) should be attached.
2. **Reimbursement to an Employee**
   
a. Include with the Travel Expense Report (TER) the name, purpose, date and time (beginning/ending) of the headquarters city meeting. A meeting agenda that includes all the required information is preferred.

   Appendix I provides examples which can be used as a guideline in determining circumstances under which meals for headquarters city employees are or are not a reimbursable expense.

**REFRESHMENT BREAKS**

A. **When Allowable:** Refreshments break expenses are allowable only in association with a business meeting that satisfies one of the following criteria:

1. Facilities are not available within the building or immediate area of the meeting where attendees could obtain and consume normal break items within a typical break period (10 to 20 minutes).

2. Having the attendees leave the meeting room would have an adverse effect on the continuity of the meeting, meaning it is expected that break items be consumed while the business meeting or program continues.

3. The majority of attendees are not UW/State employees. For purposes of applying this provision, board members are not considered employees.

B. **Allowable Expenses:** Refreshment break expenses must be limited to one break each morning and afternoon. The break may consist of non-alcoholic beverages such as coffee, tea or soft drinks, and at the discretion of each department, a small food item. The total cost must be reasonable and should not exceed $5.00 per person. Events that include a continental breakfast should not include additional food items at the morning break.

C. **Approval Level:** Approval is required by the Department Chair level or above for UWEX sponsored events involving refreshment break expenses.

D. **Approval Procedure:**

1. Approval for refreshment break costs may be accomplished by routing the requisition or LDO to the Department Chair for his/her signature. Documentation required with the Requisition/LDO includes (1) a meeting agenda, brochure, or Instructional Approval form, and (2) if a registration fee is not involved, a list of intended participants indicating name and affiliation. When payment is made by Purchasing Card, the Cardholders records should have documentation of Department Chair approval.

   Documentation of the Department Chair’s approval of refreshment break costs at UW Conference Centers should be included with the purchasing card documentation or the invoice.

E. **Documentation Requirements:** The following documentation must accompany the request for payment:

1. The name, purpose, date and time (beginning/ending) of the meeting. A meeting agenda that includes all the required information is preferred.

2. A statement indicating which of the criteria outlined in section A above has been met.
3. If the refreshment break is allowed on the basis of A.3 above the total number of UW/State employees and the number of non-employees receiving refreshment breaks must be provided.

4. Original invoices/receipts showing the amount to be paid or reimbursed.

Note: The UW-Extension "Sponsored Events" (see Appendix III) form must be attached.

Appendix I provides examples which can be used as a guideline in determining circumstances under which refreshment breaks are or are not a reimbursable expense.

RECEPTION EXPENSES

A. **When Allowable** - Reception expenses are allowable as part of a UWEX sponsored event where an opportunity for having participant interaction in a setting that is not purely social in nature is important. Like a business meeting, the purpose must be related to or promote the mission of the hosting department.

B. **Allowable Expenses** - Reasonable food and non-alcoholic beverage costs, reception room cost, service charges and gratuity may be paid.

C. **Approval Level** - Department Chair level or above.

D. **Documentation Requirements** - The following documentation must accompany the request for payment or if payment is made by Purchasing Card maintained with the cardholder’s records:

1. A statement or document that substantiates that the reception relates to official business.

2. Original invoices/receipts showing the amount to be paid or reimbursed.

3. If primarily UW/State employees will attend the reception, the provisions outlined below for use of non-UW facilities and retreats apply.

APPLICANT INTERVIEW HOST EXPENSES

The Dean/Director may authorize a UWEX employee to act as a “host” for interview candidates. Reasonable local transportation and meal costs in connection with hosting the candidate may be reimbursed.

NON-UW FACILITIES

Meetings, conferences, and training sessions sponsored by UWEX primarily for the participation of UW/State employees at a non-UW facility are not allowable if additional expenses are incurred by UWEX which would not have been incurred if the meetings were held in a UW facility. Exceptions due to adequate UW facilities not being available at the required time and place should be submitted to the Controller for prior approval.

RETREATS

A. Meetings, commonly referred to as "retreats" primarily for participation of UWEX employees headquartered in the same city are allowable within the following parameters:

1. Meal costs cannot exceed state maximums and refreshment break costs must be reasonable.
2. Prior approval of the Institution Business Representative (Assistant Chancellor for Administration) is required for transportation or meeting room costs associated with a meeting held outside the headquarters city area of the majority of the participants.

3. Related lodging expenses are not allowable.

**LODGING**

A. UWEX employees on travel status attending meetings in Madison are encouraged to stay at either Lowell Hall or the J. F. Friedrick Center.

B. Group travel lodging expenses where there is a significant number involved and the costs are to be charged to one budget may be direct billed. When the lodging involves a very small group it is expected that each individual will pay his/her own lodging costs and submit a Travel Expense Report for reimbursement. For lodging arrangements at private facilities with a total cost of $5,000 or less a Purchasing Card or the LDO process may be used. If costs exceed $5,000 an external requisition should be processed to initiate a Purchase Order. Lodging at University facilities may be paid for by Purchasing Card or by processing an internal requisition.

C. Employees are expected to commute during the same day when the site of the UWEX business meeting is within 50 miles of their home or permanent work site. Lodging expenses within the 50 mile limit may be reimbursed when extenuating circumstances are involved and with the prior approval of the Employee’s supervisor.

D. Lodging expenses are not allowable for off-campus meetings primarily for participation of UW employees headquartered in the same city.

**REGISTRATION FEES**

Registration fees collected by UWEX may not cover any items that are not allowable under UW policies or regulations. All registration fees must be paid to UWEX and deposited into the same funds from which the expenditures are paid. Invoices submitted for payment of meeting related costs must have attached a brochure or registration form that provides an itemized cost breakdown of the fee. The names of the participants and their resident UW Institution must also be provided.

**OFFICIAL TRAVEL STATUS**

The restrictions identified in this document are intended only to limit the refreshment break, meal, transportation and lodging expenses of the headquarters city employees. The appropriate expenses of participants who are in official travel status may be paid even if these restrictions are not met.

**REFERENCE GUIDE**
APPENDIX I
Headquarters City & UW Sponsored Events

UW System Travel Regulations, Appendix A states "Refreshment break and meal costs associated with business events, some of which may occur in the headquarters city, may be reimbursed if they are actual, reasonable and necessarily incurred in the discharge of official duties in accordance with the requirements stated below."

Although this section of the Travel Regulations defines broadly when refreshments breaks and/or meals can be reimbursed to headquarters city employees, further internal guidelines are necessary to provide further clarification.

A. The following examples illustrate both allowable and unallowable refreshment break and/or meal reimbursement situations:

B. Allowable Meals/Refreshment break expenses for Headquarters City Employees

1. Situation: An annual planning meeting of program and administrative staff, the majority of which are headquartered in Madison, is held at the Pyle Center. The meeting begins at 8:00 a.m. and continues to 4:30 p.m. In order to promote continuing discussions among participants, morning and afternoon break items are brought into the meeting room. A group lunch is provided in the Pyle Center cafeteria to facilitate continuing discussions and to allow participants to return to the meeting room within a short (45 minute) time frame.

2. Situation: Divisional staff, the majority of which are not headquartered in Madison meet at a local hotel for in-service training. Morning and afternoon breaks are provided. All participants are also provided lunch and dinner at the hotel. There is a dinner program.

C. Unallowable Meals/Refreshment break expenses for Headquarters City employees

1. Situation: UWEX and other state agency staff meet from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to discuss joint programming issues. During the meeting food was delivered and consumed by the participants.

   Concern: In the above situation it would be assumed that all participants would have had lunch before the meeting began. Furthermore, since the meeting is only for two hours refreshments should not be necessary.

2. Situation: Three UWEX employees, headquartered in Madison, decide to meet at 11:45 for lunch to discuss University issues of mutual interest.

   Concern: The assumption here is that these employees would be eating lunch anyway and that they simply could arrange to have their lunch together. Also, it is expected that employees working in the same city should normally be able to meet during working hours to discuss University business.
See Appendix II for a reference guide for UW-Sponsored Event Financial Transactions.

See Appendix III for a UW sponsored events form