

Economics Department Policies and Procedures – Guest Travel Arrangements

Before the visit is finalized send Lynn the following information. The department head will need to review the potential expense before approving the guest.

1. Send Lynn information about the guest
 - a. Name
 - b. Visit Dates
 - c. Email address
 - d. Whether hotel reservations are needed
 - i. Guest speakers usually present on Friday afternoon, therefore they normally arrive Thursday and check-out on Saturday. Department Head approval is needed if they plan on staying longer.
 - ii. Please remember that when the department pays for a guest at The Inn, we ONLY pay for lodging and breakfast at the restaurant. No other meals or room service is included. This is for all guest speakers, individuals here for interviews, etc. This is due to the fact that, unfortunately, The Inn charges above the M&IE rates for the meals. The state will not pay for this overage and then the department has to charge our Virginia Tech Foundation account to cover the overage. We usually take our guests out to lunch and dinner, so that should not be a problem.
 - e. Whether flight arrangements are needed
 - i. Lynn will work with the guest to ensure that the most economical airfare is purchased. The department will make the purchase, unless an economical purchase has already been made.

Lynn will prepare an estimate and send it to the Department Head for approval. Once it has been approved, she will notify the host, who can then finalize the visit.

2. Lynn will contact the guest and send them paperwork
 - a. U.S. Citizen
 - i. W-9
 - b. Non-Resident Alien
 - i. W-8 BEN Form
 - ii. Foreign National Data Form
 - iii. Copies:
 1. Passport - First page of the passport and the unexpired passport expiration date
 2. Visa
 3. I-94 or I-94W card
 4. SSN or ITIN if applicable
 5. Tax treaty documents, if applicable

3. If you want to hold a reception for this event, remember that the reception must be PRE-APPROVED by the Department Head before state funds can be disbursed. The following information is needed and needs to be sent to Amy (astanfor@vt.edu) at least one week in advance of the event.
 - a. Name of speaker
 - b. Date, place, time speaking, to whom, title of presentation, etc.
 - c. Who is invited to reception? (Public, University Community, or department, faculty or students only)
 - d. Date, place, time of reception
 - e. Cost of event
4. If you are intending to claim reimbursement for any meals with the individual, please see the "Business Meals" section of these procedures.
5. Transportation - Please be aware of any travel issues that they may have during their visit. If you cannot provide them with transportation around the area, please advise them to rent a car. **DO NOT** advise them to rent taxis for all travel. While we do reimburse regular taxi fare for getting to and from airports, we cannot reimburse for extra taxi fees. Last year one guest speaker had \$250 in taxi travel expense, the majority of it around Blacksburg. Please remember that you can always ask a graduate student to help provide transportation. We will reimburse them at 56¢ per mile.
6. Airfare – Coach fare only is reimbursable. First class and business class are not reimbursable.

BUSINESS MEALS

Requirements for reimbursement for business meals:

Lynn must receive two things for meal reimbursement:

1. The credit card receipt
2. The itemized receipt (showing what was actually consumed)

These are required for reimbursement of business meal expenses for any meals that are paid out of state accounts. All of our local restaurants should be providing these.

Expenses not reimbursable from state funds:

- Alcohol is not a reimbursable expense
- University employees' spouses involved with an interview
- Meetings for University faculty or staff
- Meals at which all members are part of the same department or college
- Meals/meetings between students and faculty
- Departmental receptions
- Events social in nature

Procedures for business meals:

Official business meals must involve substantive and bona fide business discussions and must be recommended for payment by the Head and approved by the Office of the Controller. Allowable business meal functions cannot consist entirely of university employees from one department or college and they normally include non-Virginia Tech employees. Therefore, departmental committee meetings, etc., cannot be charged to state accounts. Such activity is considered to be an entertainment cost and not an appropriate charge to public funds. If such expenses are to be paid, a foundation account must be used for these types of reimbursements.

Authorized official business meals may be reimbursed up to 50% more per individual based on the allowable amount shown for the applicable meal in the M&IE Rate Table. The M&IE rate used shall correspond to the location in which the official business meal was taken.

For Blacksburg the rate calculations are as follows:

- Breakfast: $(\$7 * 50\%) + \$7 = \$10.50$
- Lunch: $(\$11 * 50\%) + \$11 = \$16.50$
- Dinner: $(\$23 * 50\%) + \$23 = \$34.50$

Meal per diem rates on the individual meal rate table are to be applied to all business meal functions including entertaining University visitors or recruiting new employees. Itemized receipts (showing what was actually consumed) plus credit card receipts (if applicable) are required for reimbursement of business meal expenses. The business purpose for the meal and the names and association of all attendees must be included with the documentation to help show the business necessity of the event. Initials of the representatives are not sufficient to document the attendees at the meeting.