

# COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY

## OFFICIAL AND TRAINING FUNCTIONS AND FOOD PURCHASES PROCEDURES

### I. AUTHORITY

Colorado Mesa University Fiscal Rules govern any transaction of any kind in any media that involves the commitment or expenditure of University monies or resources, and are applicable to all University employees.

#### **RULE 2-7: OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS AND TRAINING FUNCTIONS**

Official functions and training functions shall be held to achieve program objectives and shall be limited to reasonable and actual costs. The attendance of University employees at official functions shall be kept to a minimum and shall include only those individuals directly related to the purpose of the function. Expenditures shall be kept to a minimum as they have the potential of being perceived to be for personal benefit and an abuse of public funds. Expenditures incurred for official functions shall be approved in advance by the President, appropriate Vice-President or by the University Controller.

### II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to communicate the procedures for the purchase of food and other items for Official Function and Training Function events. Costs incurred shall be necessary, reasonable and in compliance with Colorado Mesa University Fiscal Rules. Events shall only be held to achieve University program objectives and shall be limited to reasonable and actual costs. Attendance of University employees at these functions shall include only those individuals directly related to the purpose of the function.

This policy applies to all University employees. Any exceptions to these guidelines may be presented to the University Controller for consideration.

### III. DEFINITIONS

**OFFICIAL FUNCTION** - A meeting, conference, meal, or other event hosted by the University, attended by guests and/or University employees, and held for official University business purposes.

**TRAINING FUNCTION** - A meeting, conference or other event hosted by the University for the purposes of enhancing staff knowledge or to educate University guests about University business and operations, or to educate staff and guests about other relevant University business issues and practices. Training functions shall only be held when it is in the University has a bona fide business interest. Training Functions should have a written agenda, study materials, and be led by an identified presenter.

The phrase “Official Functions” includes both Official Functions and Training Functions in this document.

### **EXCEPTIONS**

1. This definition does not include student club functions, student organization functions, or student resident life functions, which are defined as events that sustain ordinary resident life activities, such as resident hall town hall meetings and other resident hall events. Food purchased for scheduled Outdoor Program trips are excluded from the Official Function requirement.
2. Expenditures from club accounts for the purchase of food for student events are generally exempt from this procedure. However, it is the nature of the event or function rather than the sponsoring organization that determines whether approved Official Function forms need to be submitted with the payment documentation. To be exempt from this procedure, event expenses need to be for legitimate student-sponsored activities.
3. Incidental expenditures such as coffee, light refreshments, etc. incurred as a result of recruitment, special project, and other activity are not defined as an Official Function. These expenses are stated on the Travel Authorization form and as such, are approved and encumbered by the appropriate department.

### **IV. RULE**

All purchases of food and other related expenses for Official Function events using University funds require a properly approved Official Function Form.

Exceptions from use of the Official Function Form include:

1. Food purchased for classroom exercises (supplies) does not require an Official Function Form, but should be explained on payment documentation submitted to Accounts Payable.
2. Meals purchased through University Food Services (University Center cafeteria, Bookcliff Café, Sandella’s, etc.) for search candidates interviewing on campus do not require an Official Function Form. ***Meals provided for candidates from any off-campus establishment shall have a properly approved Official Function form in the payment documentation.***

### **V. ACTIVITIES GOVERNED BY OTHER RULES**

1. Meals provided to student athletes and potential recruits on campus are governed by NCAA bylaws which regulate functions related to student athletes.
2. Grant sponsored activities are covered by Federal and other sponsor requirements.

When rules and regulations related to allowable expenses are more restrictive than University Fiscal Rules, Official Function expenses shall comply with those conditions. In all cases, however, Official Function expenses must be in compliance with University Fiscal Rule constraints and other University policies.

## **VI. PLANNING AND APPROVAL PROCEDURES**

1. Consider the following before arranging for or incurring food expenses related to University Official Functions:
  - Is the event for official University business purposes only?
  - Is the event necessary to meet or further the program objectives?
  - Are the costs reasonable and appropriate under the circumstances?
  - Is attendance by University associates or employees limited to a minimum?
  - Does the event include only those necessary to, and directly involved with, the objectives of the program?
  - Is the proposed Official Function more than just University associates or employees discussing state business during a meal?
  - Would you be comfortable justifying the expenditures to a reporter or an auditor and being associated with the expenditures of taxpayer money in a newspaper article?

If the answer is “no” to any of the above questions, the event should not be held.

2. The Official Function form is available from the Accounts Payable Office and is posted on the Accounting and Financial Services forms folder on the H drive.
3. Official Function Forms should be completed and **APPROVED IN ADVANCE** of the event. The form requires all of the following information.
  - a. The event date
  - b. Description of the event
  - c. Statement of the purpose to be achieved by the function
  - d. Number of expected attendees
  - e. Identification of the attendees as a group or by name - employee training must be listed by name
  - f. Specific location of the event
  - g. The estimated maximum total cost
  - h. Department account number to be charged
  - i. Authorized signature (budget authority) for the above account number
  - j. Approval signature of person authorized to approve functions.
4. Approval of Official Function events requires the signature of the President or the responsible vice president or designee. Designees must be approved in writing.

5. The policy is that approvals should be obtained in advance of the Official Function event. If it is impractical to get advance approval, the approving authority may ratify Official Function events after-the-fact only if he or she determines the event is in the best interest of the University. If the approving authority declines to ratify the event expenses, the employee who sponsored the event is subject to personal liability.

## **VII. PAYMENT AND REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES**

1. Expenses for Official Functions purchased from vendors shall be paid in accordance with CMU procurement guidelines at <http://www.coloradomesa.edu/purchasing/procure.html>.
  - Up to \$5,000 - use the University Procurement Card and reallocate within Procurement Card procedures. Itemized original receipts and the approved Official Function form are required.
  - Over \$5,000, call Purchasing and follow Purchase Request procedures. An approved Official Function form must be submitted with the Purchase Request.
  - If official function expenses are incurred in conjunction with approved travel, reimbursement may be claimed on the Travel Expense Voucher Form properly coded to the appropriate account with the required approved Official Function Form and itemized original receipts.
2. Receipts from restaurants and/or caterers must be detailed. Summarized documentation, e.g. ticket stubs or credit card receipts, are not sufficient documentation and the employee may be held personally liable for transactions without proper documentation.

## **VIII. ACCEPTABLE OFFICIAL FUNCTION ACTIVITIES**

The following are examples of acceptable Official Function events. The list is not all-inclusive and is intended only as a guide.

- University hosted events to welcome non-employee guests and visitors for the benefit of the University
- Commencement ceremonies and associated receptions and events
- Festive office decorations for highly visible departments that are frequently visited by non-employee guests
- Employee or student recruitment activities
- Events designed to generate alumni, legislative, donor, and business or community support for University programs
- Formal gatherings such as award ceremonies that acknowledge employee achievements or non-employee accomplishments that benefit the University
- Employee recognition functions – events in which the University recognizes or honors faculty or staff members for long and/or outstanding service
- Departmental or divisional retreats

- Occasional (not daily, weekly, or monthly) lunch meetings of employees and official guests of the University when the primary purpose is to conduct University business
- Nominal gifts and awards to students in recognition of outstanding service are allowable
- Student orientations

## **IX. ACTIVITIES NOT ACCEPTABLE AS OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS**

The following are examples of activities do not qualify as Official Functions:

- Lunches, dinners, receptions, and other gatherings where the primary purpose is for University personnel (faculty, staff, and students) to informally gather for social or personal purposes, including Christmas parties or receptions, going away receptions for non-retiring employees, student employees, and similar events
- Gifts and gatherings recognizing occasions of personal importance to employees, non-employees and students, including birthdays, weddings, engagements, death or birth in an individual's family, illness or hospitalization of an individual, holidays, retirement gifts, or other "special days"

This policy should not discourage employees or departments from taking up a collection and making unlimited private gifts to colleagues in appreciation for their services or in recognition of events of personal importance.

## **X. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

Reimbursement from University funds for alcoholic beverages should only be approved where the alcoholic beverages are served in conjunction with a meal or at a reception. Federal funds cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages. Alcoholic beverages should not be served and payment will not be made in conjunction with the following functions:

- University staff or committee meetings
- University employee training or professional development sessions
- Other gatherings held on or off campus on weekdays during customary working hours, attended only by University personnel
- Official Functions for students who are under the legal drinking age in Colorado. The CMU Student Handbook prohibits possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages by students under the legal drinking age. Refer to the handbook for further information on the University's alcohol policy