

City of Richmond
ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL

SUBJECT: Employee Meal and Food Purchase Policy

SECTION: Finance Department

POLICY NUMBER: AP 521

INITIAL DATE PREPARED: January 1, 2010 **LAST DATE REVISED:** December 1, 2023

I. Purpose

To establish guidelines for the provision of food and refreshments for meetings, seminars and other authorized City of Richmond functions.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the City of Richmond that food and refreshments will not be provided for routine, regularly scheduled departmental meetings. Food includes meals, beverages, snacks, drinking water, etc. Under no circumstances is alcohol an allowable food expense.

City funds are not to be expended on events, milestones, parties or celebrations that are primarily personal in nature, where employees may choose to acknowledge or celebrate with other employees. These types of occasional short department celebrations are permitted, but the use of City funds is not allowed. Examples of these types of events include:

- Birthday celebrations
- Baby showers/ or new baby congratulations gifts
- Graduation gifts/acknowledgements
- Engagements or wedding showers, gifts or parties
- Holiday parties (Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc.) and similar events

The following are allowed exceptions to this policy:

- A. Meals/food purchases necessary for the City's convenience and provided on City premises where business is normally conducted. Examples include: Emergency situations such as natural disasters or significant public safety events, but may also include intra-departmental meetings or training sessions, where the meeting or training session continues during the meal period and the employees are not permitted to leave the premises of the meeting site. Meals should be provided only to facilitate the effective and efficient operations of the department involved.

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- B. Off-site business meals for a clear business reason. When submitted for reimbursement or paid with a CAL-Card, an itemized receipt is required along with documentation showing the business purpose, attendees (**must include non-city participants**), and location. Restaurant business meals solely between City employees are not reimbursable except when the business meal has been approved by the City Manager (City Manager must sign Food and Meal Expense Documentation Form AP521-1)
- C. Refreshments for breaks and off-site lunches for interview panel which include external members.
- D. Food for City Council Meetings and Advisory Committees.
- E. Meetings with the public including community/customer partnerships.
- F. Lunches with Councilmembers are limited to Department Heads.
- G. Food for City sponsored employee events.
- H. Meal allowance for Local 1021 employees under MOU Section D and Local 21 employees under MOU Article 8.
- I. Meals/food during travel – Refer to AP 508 Travel Expense Policy and Procedure.

Requests for food other than meetings listed above must be approved, in writing, by the City Manager.

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III. Required Documentation

Food purchased by the City in conjunction with its official business or for City sponsored events must include an itemized receipt along with documentation showing the purpose of the business being conducted, and a list of attendees and affiliation. Meals should be appropriate and consistent with the maintenance of a reasonable living standard.

Please attach required documentation to Food and Meal Expense Documentation Form (AP 521-1).

IV. Authorization

The Department Head shall provide approval for all food purchases for City sponsored functions prior to the cost being incurred.