



70.15 Meals with Meetings

70.15.10

July 1, 2008

Reimbursement for meals with meetings

70.15.10.a

RCW 43.03.050(3) provides for reimbursement for meals, for certain business meetings (includes conferences, conventions, and formal training sessions) involving elective and appointive officials and state employees. Additionally, other statutes may authorize agencies to provide reimbursement for meals for other individuals regardless of travel status.

70.15.10.b

The agency head or authorized designee may authorize reimbursement for the allowable cost of meals (refer to Subsections 10.40.40 and 10.90.20) for elective and appointive officials and state employees regardless of travel status, and without regard to the Three Hour Rule of Subsection 10.40.50.(1). This authority is intended for use when the agency requires a person to attend a meeting where business meals are served, and where:

- The purpose of the meeting is to conduct official state business or to provide training to state employees or state officials; and
- The meals are an integral part of the business meeting or training session, and
- The meeting or training session takes place away from the employee's or official's regular workplace, and
- The agency obtains a receipt for the actual costs of the meals with meetings, and
- The agency head or authorized designee approves payment for the meals **in advance** of the meeting by defining in the agency internal policies and procedures (Subsection 10.10.10) those meetings where attendance by **agency** employee(s), official(s) or others as authorized by statute, and reimbursement for the meals regardless of travel status, is advantageous to the state.

Approvals must be in writing (Subsection 70.15.30). One-time approvals for recurring meetings can be made at the time of the initial request.

70.15.20

April 15, 2004

Expenditures for meals with meetings are prohibited in some cases

Agencies **may not** make expenditures for meals in the following situations:

- For anniversaries of agencies, receptions for new, existing, and/or retiring employees or officials, election celebrations, etc.
- Any "hosting" activities. "Hosting" includes, but is not limited to, those activities that are intended either to lobby a legislator or a governmental official, or are to be a social rather than governmental business event, and include expenditures for meals for those whom agencies are not legally authorized to reimburse.

70.15.30

April 15, 2004

Documentation of advance approval for meals with meetings is required

Agencies must document the request and approval in advance for expenditures for meals with meetings. Agencies may use a Travel Authorization (form A40-A) or agency equivalent form, an Invoice Voucher (form A19-1A), or a formally written agency memorandum for this purpose. The documentation should provide support for the authorization, including:

- The names of the state organizations or persons attending the meeting (includes conferences, conventions, and formal training sessions), **and**
- The purpose or accomplishments of the meeting.