

CALS Meal and Alcohol Guidelines

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences operates under significant public scrutiny and policy constraints. In order to advance business and development goals there are times when the purchase of meals or alcohol is necessary. These guidelines are in addition to and shall not supersede existing reimbursement policies and requirements.

We must all be sensitive to our stewardship obligations when state or donated funds are expended. All expenses must have an identified budget source and be approved by the unit head in concept prior to spending.

Meal Guidelines (excludes alcohol):

- All meal and tip purchases/reimbursements must be reasonable in purpose and dollar amount. Reasonableness should be applied to both the per event cost and the annual total cost for meals and tips. Reimbursement of the costs associated with non-UA employees, such as family members, are rare and should be justified. Family are usually disallowed under UA policy.
- Invitees to each event should be specific to the business purpose and expected outcome, for instance, it would be exceptional to send an entire search committee to a dinner with a candidate.
- The UA and UA Foundation require food to be prepared by a commercial establishment; food cannot be reimbursed that is prepared at home due to liability concerns. UA approved caterers should be used for business events at a residence.
- As a rule of thumb, reasonable food purchases/reimbursements should be limited to no more than \$40 per attendee per meal (excluding alcohol and tip).
- UA limits tips to no more than 20% of the total bill. Tips in excess of this amount will be denied.
- When traveling on University or College business, meals are capped at the UA per diem rates for the specific location (rates vary by location), regardless of funding source, unless:
 - Obligatory meal(s) provided by the conference/event cost more than the per diem rate; or
 - The event is funded by a sponsored grant/contract, and where food is an allowable expense under the grant terms and budget.

Alcohol Guidelines:

- UA/state funds can never be used to purchase or reimburse alcohol. If your funding source is from the University (as opposed to the UA Foundation), alcohol and bartending services cannot be purchased or reimbursed.

- UA Foundation-funded events require the use of a licensed and insured bartending service or caterer for alcohol to be purchased or reimbursed. It is never acceptable to have guests serve themselves or to have students, staff, or volunteers serve alcoholic beverages due to liability.
- All bartending service costs must be reasonable in purpose and dollar amount. Reasonableness should be applied to both the per event cost and the annual total cost for alcohol and bartending services.
- Prior to procuring bartending services, please be certain that your funding source will allow reimbursement.
- Alcohol and related costs can only be reimbursed, regardless of the fund source, if it is served and consumed for the primary purpose of furthering business or development activities. Alcohol consumed outside of this requirement will not be reimbursed.
- As a rule of thumb, bartending service and alcohol costs should be limited to no more than \$25 per attendee.

The unit head has the delegated authority, responsibility and accountability, to ensure state and Foundation funds are used appropriately and in the best manner to achieve College and unit goals. **UA expenses are a matter of public record.**