

CHELAN DOUGLAS REGIONAL PORT AUTHORITY WORKING MEAL AND LIGHT REFRESHMENT POLICY

Purpose

This policy is based on a Washington State Attorney General Opinion, entitled "Eating and Drinking at Public Expense," which states, in relevant part, "the consumption of nourishment is . . . [a] personal and not public activity," so "to pay for food and drink with public money is very much the exception rather than the rule." The purpose of this policy is to provide a process and procedure for payment of necessary expenses for meals and refreshments at certain meetings, trainings, and other authorized events conducted by the Chelan Douglas Regional Port Authority ("Port Authority"). Payment of such expenses is necessary and appropriate due to the increasing necessity to conduct important Port Authority business at meetings, trainings, and events scheduled during normal meal times or for an extended duration.

Limitations & Exceptions.

- (1) This Policy does not supersede applicable state laws (RCWs) and regulations, as existing or hereafter amended.
- (2) This Policy does not obligate the Port Authority to provide meals or light refreshments under any circumstances.
- (3) This Policy does not apply to payment or reimbursement of meals related to Port Authority travel. In the event of any conflict between this policy and the Port Authority's applicable travel reimbursement policy, the travel reimbursement policy shall be applied.
- (4) This Policy does not apply to employees that, as part of their regular work schedule, are required to work through meal periods. In those cases, if any, employees are compensated for work performed during meal periods.
- (5) Exceptions to requirements and procedures set forth in this Policy must be pre-approved by the Chief Executive Officer or Board of Directors.
- (6) The Board of Directors must authorize expenditures for staff recognition meetings or events by separate policy. Any such policy may provide for regular, annual events, or may provide for single events from time to time. The policy must be adopted in advance of the meeting or event.
- (7) Under NO circumstances may alcohol be provided at Port expense.

Light Refreshment Policy and Procedure.

- (1) Definition: "Light refreshments" are defined as non-alcoholic beverages and snacks that may be served between meals, including but not limited to coffee, tea, juice, soda, donuts, pastries, cookies, fruit, nuts, cheese, crackers, etc.
- (2) Light refreshments may be provided at Port Authority expense for business meetings, events, and training sessions where the following requirements are met:
 - (a) The person responsible for the meeting, event or training receives prior approval for the serving of light refreshments as documented and approved by the Chief Executive Officer or authorized designee; and
 - (b) The purpose of the meeting or event is to conduct official Port Authority business or

- (c) The meeting, event or training is a special situation or occasion outside of the normal daily business of Port Authority employees.
- (3) The Port Authority must obtain an itemized receipt for the actual cost of the light refreshments.
- (4) The added amount for a tip, gratuity, or other delivery service charge may not exceed 20% of the cost of the food, excluding tax.
- (5) The following are examples of meetings and events when light refreshments may be provided using Port Authority funds.
 - (a) Cookies, coffee and tea are provided for citizens and staff in attendance at a Port Authority Board of Directors or special committee meeting.
 - (b) An advisory committee meets quarterly for two hours. The committee is comprised of Port Authority Board of Directors, Port Authority staff, community business leaders and interested citizens or volunteers. Cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers, and beverages are provided.
 - (c) A department holds an emergency after-hours meeting to address recent important developments. Snacks and beverages are provided.
 - (d) An annual employee recognition event is held in which Board members and Port Authority staff are invited to celebrate the outstanding contributions and accomplishments of staff (Note: such an event may require adoption of special Resolution by the Port Commissioners to authorize the event).
- (6) The following are examples of when coffee and light refreshments may not be provided using Port Authority funds:
 - (a) A Port Authority department has a regular staff meeting the morning of the 2nd Thursday of each month; no participants from outside the local area are present. Donuts, fruit, and juice are provided.
 - (b) A new staff member is welcomed at a staff reception where cookies and punch are served.
- (7) The examples set forth in sections 5 and 6, above, are illustrative and are by no means exclusive of all situations in which refreshments may or may not be provided.

Working Meal Policy and Procedure.

- (1) Payment may be authorized for the actual cost of meals for Port Authority employees, Board members or other officials or participants, regardless of travel status, for business meetings, events or training sessions where attendance is advantageous to the Port Authority, and where the following requirements are met:
 - (a) The purpose of the meeting or event is related to the conduct of official Port Authority business (including Port Authority sponsored event where Port Authority staff or volunteers are expected to provide services) or to provide training to Port Authority employees, Board of Directors, officials, or volunteers; and
 - (b) The meals are necessitated by emergency or unavoidable conditions, or are an integral part of the business meeting, event, or training session. Integral is defined to include: "essential to completeness or participation; part of the curriculum or event; occurring during typical meal periods to avoid conflicts;" and
 - (c) The meeting, event, or training is a special situation or occasion outside of the normal daily business or assignments of Port Authority employees.

- (2) Approval must be obtained prior to the meeting, training, or event by the Chief Executive Officer or authorized designee.
- (3) The amount paid for each individual meal, including tax and gratuity, must not exceed the applicable meal allowance for the location of the meeting, training, or event as provided under “per diem” on the General Services Administration web site at <http://www.gsa.gov>. This requirement does not require the purchase of individual meals in lieu of group catering, however, when group catering service is provided, a per-person breakdown must be used to ensure compliance with this section.
- (4) Any added tip may not exceed 20% of the cost of the food, excluding tax.
- (5) The Port Authority must obtain an itemized receipt for the actual cost of each meal or catered service.
- (6) The following are examples of when a meal may be provided using Port Authority funds:
 - (a) An employee attends a meeting of a local professional organization that meets once monthly for a seminar at a local restaurant. A registration fee is paid to the professional organization, which includes a meal.
 - (b) The Port Authority hosts a community event and uses employees from other local agencies to provide volunteer services at the event in lieu of paying for services.
 - (c) Local department staff or a committee have been working long hours on time sensitive project, but several hours of work remain before they are done. The Port Authority may provide a meal (i.e. dinner) in order to enable participants to work through the evening in order to complete the project.
 - (d) A committee comprised of Port Authority staff, volunteers and stakeholders from outside the local jurisdiction meet bi-monthly to work on specific Port Authority projects or assignments. To allow time for travel from outside the jurisdiction, the meetings are scheduled from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm with participants working through the lunch or regular meal period. The Port Authority may provide a meal to the meeting participants so long as they remain engaged in the performance of work for the Port Authority.
 - (e) Employees must work continuously, without break, during a major local emergency. Meals may be provided at reasonable meal period intervals or schedules to enable employees to continue working during the emergency.
 - (f) Due to scheduling conflicts, a meeting involving Port Authority employees, Board of Directors, volunteers or stakeholders to address Port Authority business is required to be scheduled during a regular meal period. A meal may be provided for the meeting participants.
 - (g) An annual employee recognition lunch event is held in which Port Authority Board of Directors, employees, and volunteers are invited to celebrate the outstanding contributions and accomplishments of Port Authority staff. (Note: per limitations below, such an event may require adoption of special Resolution to authorize the event).
- (7) The following are examples of when meals may not be provided using Port Authority funds:
 - (a) A Port Authority department has a meeting from 11:30 – 1:00 on the first Tuesday of every month. Pizza is provided to encourage all staff to attend. There is no emergent need to schedule the meeting during the lunch hour and the meeting is not intended to address time sensitive or critical project needs.
 - (b) A staff member who has been with the Port Authority for 30 years is retiring and a dinner party is held in their honor. This event benefits a single employee or former employee and does not serve a public purpose.
 - (c) A department manager takes an employee to lunch at a local restaurant in order to discuss recent developments in the department and develop a plan on how to handle

added responsibilities. There has been no attempt to schedule a meeting at the office during regular work hours.

Checklist or Formula.

The examples included within this Policy are illustrative, but not exclusive. To determine whether working meals or light refreshments may be provided, Port Authority staff and officials may use the following considerations as additional guidance:

- (1) The expense must ultimately be reasonable and necessary under the facts and circumstances. The following questions can help determine whether an expense is reasonable and/or necessary. The more "reasons" that can be identified to have the meeting during a period when meals or refreshments would typically be provided, the more likely the expenditure would be deemed to be reasonable:
 - (a) Is there a reason the meeting or event needs to be scheduled during a meal period?
 - (b) Is the duration of the meeting reasonable to accomplish the project or assignment?
 - (c) Has a shorter or alternate meeting schedule that would reduce or eliminate need for meals or refreshments been considered?
 - (d) Is the meeting necessitated by emergency?
 - (e) Does the meeting or event involve participants other than local staff?
- (2) The expense must be related to the conduct of Port Authority business and/or legitimate public purpose.
- (3) The expenditure must not be for purely routine staff meetings or social purpose.
- (4) When in doubt, seek approval from the Port Auditor or other authorized authority.

Adopted by the Chelan Douglas Regional Port Authority Board of Directors

on September 10th, 2019.