

GGSE Business Meal/Refreshments¹ Reimbursements Process

Relevant Documents

University policy BUS-79 outlines the requirements for claiming reimbursement for business meetings.

Campus Unit Responsibilities

Business and Financial Services (BFS)

BFS reviews and pays expense vouchers prepared and approved by UCSB department personnel. The review of expense vouchers includes: making sure forms are properly completed, signed, documented and policy limits have not been exceeded.

GGSE

Preparation and approval of expense vouchers submitted by employees.

The following is a list of some of the factors that are considered prior to authorizing or approving the reimbursement of business meeting expenditures:

Policy

- Departmental staff authorizing and approving business meeting expenditures should have read and understood the terms and conditions of BUS-79.

Business Purpose

- University policy requires that meals or light refreshments provided in the course of a business meeting must be a **necessary and integral** part of the business meeting, not a matter of personal convenience.
- The expense must be directly related to or associated with the active conduct of official business. An agenda including specific language about the purpose of the meeting will facilitate processing of this request.
- Documentation should support whether the employee engaged in business discussions during the meal.

Audit

- Is there sufficient documentation to justify the expense?

Reasonableness

- Could this expense be publicly justified and seen as reasonable for the circumstance?
- Does the expense represent reasonable value for the money?
- Frequency: As a guide, BUS-79 states that the frequency of reimbursement requests “should be limited to no more than once a month or twelve times per year, per group” for meals and light refreshments.

If a request for reimbursement of business meeting expenditures does not meet the requirements of BUS-79, then the request can be either: (1) denied or (2) returned to the employee for additional documentation supporting the business purpose of the meeting.

¹ “Light refreshments include coffee and other beverages, snacks, hors d’oeuvres, pastries, cookies, crackers, chips, fruit, etc. A Meal is a catered or restaurant-provided breakfast, lunch, or dinner at which employees, students, or other individuals are present for the purpose of conducting substantial and bona fide University business.”

Business Meeting Meal/Refreshment Documentation Requirements

It is the responsibility of the GSGE as a campus control point to “ensure that appropriate documentation is provided to substantiate such expenditures.”

To facilitate the processing of your request for reimbursement for business meeting meals/light refreshments, please consider the following items.

- Date of Meeting
- Time Started
- Time Ended
- Location
- List of all Participants/Affiliations
- Amount
- Are purchases of alcoholic beverages on a separate receipt/invoice or clearly noted on the receipt/invoice?
- What is the “substantial and bona fide University business” purpose of the meeting?
- How did UC benefit from this meeting?
- How are meals/refreshments necessary and integral to the meeting and were reasonable alternatives considered?