



## KSU Guidelines for Food Purchases

These guidelines are offered in response to questions that frequently arise in connection with the purchase of food for consumption by students, potential students, employees, volunteers and non-employees. These guidelines have been adapted from the Board of Regents *Business Procedures Manual*, sections 19.7 and 19.8, accessed from the following link:

[https://financialservices.kennesaw.edu/business/policies\\_procedures](https://financialservices.kennesaw.edu/business/policies_procedures)

KSU adheres to policies and procedures described in the *Business Procedures Manual*, and if there is any conflict with the *Manual* and these guidelines, the *Manual* governs.

**Important note: Per diem limits apply to all participants in meals provided by the University, with the exception of premium programs. (Please note definition of premium programs in “Definitions” at the end of this document). The KSU Foundation is not subject to the State’s per diem limits.**

### ➤ STUDENTS

University funds may be used to purchase food for students as follows:

1. *Sanctioned Student Events* – events sponsored by recognized student groups and other campus events open to the general student body and designed to further the development and education of students.
2. *Classroom and Academic Programs* – instances where food is an integral part of the instructional methodology (food or cooking course).
3. *Student Recruiting Events* – potential students and their parents may be provided food at an event designed to encourage the student to attend KSU.

**Allowable participants:** Students, volunteers, non-employees and employees whose participation is required.

**Potential Funding:** Institutional Funds, including State-appropriated funds, department sales and service funds and student activity funds, in addition to agency funds and grants, as authorized by the grantor.

**Payment Methods:** Petty cash, AGS request, P-Card\*

**\*P-Card cannot be used for food purchases for volunteer events as State funds are not permissible for this purpose. Food for volunteers on an Advisory Board is permissible -see BOR-BPM Section 19.8.2.**

### ➤ EMPLOYEES GROUP MEALS within an Institution

Food for employees can be purchased for the following categories: safety, academic programs, student events, and educational or business meetings involving predominantly non-employees. The employee’s participation must be required, essential and in furtherance of an official institutional program such as student recruitment. In the matter of safety, water or other hydration products may be purchased insofar as these products are required by OSHA or are necessary to prevent serious harm to an employee (also applicable to students and volunteers). For all other food purchases, the following conditions must be met:

1. Employee group meals should be held only to facilitate the effective and efficient operation of the department.
2. Group meals should only be provided in those instances where the meeting lasts for at least four hours.
3. Group meals held at the start and/or finish of a meeting are not eligible for payment. The purchase of a group meal is authorized solely as a convenience to the employer and in those instances where employees may not leave for a normal meal due to time constraints.
4. Purchase of group meals must be approved by the President prior to the date of the event. **It is recommended that approval from the President be obtained at least 30 days, prior to the event in order to ensure timely processing.** The "Prior Approval for Food Purchases" form should be used for this purpose. Prior approval must include
  - The purpose for the meeting or event
  - A formal written agenda including session times
  - A list of attendees (KSU and non-KSU personnel) with their associated departments. Sign-in sheets are required for events of 50 or less individuals.
  - The expected cost of the meal per person must be less than or equal to the per diem rate.
  - Requests should utilize the "Prior Approval for Food Purchases" form available on the University website and have all documentation attached.
  - Authorized group meal expenditures are limited to the purchase of meals only and do not include snacks.
  - Meal limits outlined in BPM section 4.3, Reimbursement of Meal Expenses, must be followed. However, the meal limits apply to the actual food and drink purchased for the meal. Set-up and delivery costs associated with the group meal shall not be included in the meal limit calculation.

**Note: Group meals for a "lunch meeting" in which the meal and the meeting are one and the same are prohibited. Meals at the beginning or end of a meeting are also prohibited.**

**Allowable participants:** Employees whose participation is required and non-employees whose participation is necessary.

**Potential Funding:** Institutional Funds, including State-appropriated funds, department sales and service funds in addition to agency funds. Student activity funds may only be used for sanctioned student events, where the employee's participation is required as part of their job duties.

**Payment Methods:** AGS requests and P-Card. (Just a reminder: P-Card cannot be used for employees in travel status, BOR-BPM section 3.3.1.)

#### ➤ **EMPLOYEE GROUP MEALS involving multiple Institutions**

Efficient and effective administration of USG institutions may require instances when various groups of university officials, such as presidents, executive officers, or employees representing functional areas such as student activities, academic affairs, business affairs, etc., may be required to meet. The purpose of these meetings must support the official business purpose of the institutions represented.

Purchase of a group meal is authorized solely as a convenience to the employer and in those instances where employees may not leave for a normal meal due to the time constraints associated with the meeting or training session.

1. Group meals held at the beginning or end of a conference event are not eligible for payment under this policy.
2. Purchases for conference events should include appropriate documentation to include:
  - The purpose of the meeting or event;

- A formal written agenda including session times;
  - A list of attendees with their associated institutions; and,
  - The expected cost of the meal per person.
3. Reasonable purchases may be made for refreshment breaks.
  4. Every effort should be made to negotiate reasonable meal costs. However, it is recognized that catered event charges will often exceed the per diem limits outlined in BPM section 4.3. Catered meal events shall be held only to facilitate conference events and not for social or entertainment purposes. Under no circumstances will any institutional funds as defined in Section 19.8 be used to purchase alcohol.

**Allowable participants:** Employees whose participation is required.

**Potential Funding:** Institutional funds, including State-appropriated funds, department sales and service funds and student activity funds, in addition to agency funds and grants, as authorized by the grantor in writing indicating that this waiver is not in violation of applicable federal regulations.

**Payment Methods:** AGS requests and P-Card. (Just a reminder: P-Card cannot be used for employees in travel status BOR-BPM Section 3.3.1.)

#### ➤ **ADVISORY BOARD VOLUNTEERS**

Institutional funds may be used to purchase food for volunteers in those instances where a quid pro quo relationship exists. For example, an academic unit might form a volunteer advisory board for the purpose of obtaining advice, support, and expertise from members of the community as it relates to an academic program. It would be allowable to provide food to those volunteers as part of the advisory board meeting.

**Allowable participants:** Participants must be predominantly non-employees. Employees whose participation is required as part of their job responsibilities and non-employees whose participation is necessary.

**Potential Funding:** Institutional Funds, including State-appropriated funds, department sales and service funds and student activity funds, in addition to agency funds and grants, as authorized by the grantor.

**Payment Methods:** AGS requests

#### ➤ **EDUCATIONAL OR BUSINESS MEETINGS**

Faculty may hold a business meeting and require participation by members and/or officers of student groups. This includes meetings with the public and businesses to promote KSU or develop new programs within KSU. Participants must be predominantly non-employees.

**Allowable Participants:** Students, volunteers, non-employees and employees whose participation is required.

**Potential Funding:** Institutional funds, with the exception of student activity funds. Student Activity Agency Accounts

**Payment Methods:** AGS request, petty cash

#### ➤ **CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS**

KSU units hosting and coordinating conferences and workshops collect registration fees that may be used for food for meals and breaks which are an official and integral component of the conference or

workshop. In general, departments or student organizations may contract with one of the caterers to provide the necessary meals and breaks. Participants must be predominantly non-employees.

**Allowable participants:** Conference and workshop participants, including employees whose participation is required and part of their normal job, and non-employees.

**Potential Funding:** Institutional Funds, excluding Student Activity Funds

**Payment Methods:** AGS Request, P-Card and departmental sales and service

**NOTE: Grant Agreements funded by external entities, i.e., federal government or non-government entity, where food is a written requirement in the executed/approved grant.**

**Allowable participants:** Must be predominantly non-employees

**Potential Funding:** Grant funds

**Payment Methods:** AGS request

## **DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

All food purchases require the following documentation:

- An original receipt or invoice from the vendor
- Flyer, email, agenda, or other documentation substantiating that the event was an official event
- Food purchased at a restaurant or on a per person basis should include a list of participants
- Food purchased for student events on a large scale (more than 50 participants) will not require a list of participants or signatures but **per diem** limits must be followed and supported by documentation
- “Prior Approval for Food Purchases” Form
- While per diem limits apply to group events where food is purchased on a group basis (pizza parties, etc.), institutions are not required to document the actual numbers or names of participants. However, institutions should require employees expending institutional funds for those events to certify that the appropriate per diem limits were followed – see BOR BPM section 19.8.4.

### **Related documents:**

- **Food Reference Chart** – Graphic representation of food policy detailed
- **Prior Approval for Food Purchases Form** – Form required for food purchases funded by Institutional Funds. This form must accompany any check request, AGS- Issue Payment, or P-Card Statement (if P-Card was used for the purchase).
- **Prior Approval for Food Purchases Blanket Form**-Form required for food purchases funded by Institutional Funds. This form must accompany any check request, AGS-Issue Payment, or P-Card Statement (if P-Card was used for the purchase). This form allows departments with multiple events planned to submit food approval requests by semester.

## **ADMINISTERING FUNDS USED FOR FOOD PURCHASES**

Employees with responsibility for administering institutional funds and employees requesting reimbursement should ensure that funds are spent only for legitimate purposes. The misuse of

institutional funds may result in disciplinary actions up to, and including, employment termination and various civil and criminal penalties.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Advisory Board Volunteers:** A group of individuals who have agreed to provide advice to the University, or a department/unit within the university, for no compensation regarding business or academic issues.

**Business or Educational Meeting:** A scheduled assembly or gathering of employees and predominantly non-employees for the expressed purpose (i.e. distributed agenda) of discussing University business which purpose is to advance a goal or mission, or subset thereof, of the university.

**Catering:** Food, including, but not limited to, food set-up, service and clean-up of venue is catering. A food order that is delivered to the campus without any service to the participants is not catering. KSU has contracts with caterers for KSU/institutionally funded events. Please go to the following link for information on campus catering.

[https://financialservices.kennesaw.edu/procurement/buy\\_caterer](https://financialservices.kennesaw.edu/procurement/buy_caterer)

**Contract:** an agreement with specific terms between two or more persons or entities in which there is a promise to do something in return for a valuable benefit known as consideration.

**Employees:** Temporary, part-time, and full-time staff, faculty, administrators, resident assistants, graduate assistants and other student workers.

**Food:** Meals, beverages, and snacks ( but excluding alcohol as an allowable food expense) that may be consumed by students, for potential students, volunteers, other non-employees and employees. This policy covers the use of institutional funds (all funds held in University accounts) while paying for food.

**Grants:** funds disbursed by one party, often a federal government department, corporation, foundation or trust, to the University. In order to receive a grant; some form of "grant writing" often referred to as either a proposal or an application is usually required.

**High Cost Area:** In Georgia, the high cost areas are limited to the following counties: Chatham, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, Glynn, and Gwinnett counties.

**Institutional funds:** All funds to which an institution holds title, such as student fees, auxiliary revenues, state-appropriated funds, tuition revenue, agency accounts, grants, etc. (BOR Business Procedures Manual (BPM) – section 19.8).

**Per Diem for Meals:** The **allowable** cost of a meal, per [State Travel Policy](#) including applicable taxes and tip. Cobb County Per Diem Limits (High Cost Area): \$7.00 for breakfast; \$ 9.00 for lunch; \$20.00 for dinner. In the event that institutional funds used for food exceed the authorized per diem policy then the excess must be reimbursed by the employee making or authorizing the expenditure.

**Premium Programs:** Graduate degree programs for seasoned professionals where most classes are web-based and/or held on weekends. Students pay a premium for additional “concierge-type” services in order to maximize the use of their time in the program for graduate studies only, with minimum time spent on navigating the university system processes.

**Refreshment and Snacks:** Assorted light foods; food eaten between regular meals.

**Students:** Individuals enrolled to take classes at Kennesaw State University, including students enrolled in continuing education programs such as a food appreciation or cooking class. It is expected that the use of student activity fees to purchase food should only include students who have paid the activity fee for the semester in which the event is taking place.

**Student Activity Fee:** These funds may be used to fund food as part of a sanctioned student activity event. However, food purchases must be specifically requested and budgeted for any program or activity funded in whole or in part by student activity fees funds or designated as a funded activity.

**Volunteers:** Individuals that provide benefits to the institution (serving on an advisory board, student mentors, etc) without receiving compensation. Employees working additional hours in their own area, using work time to provide volunteer service, or otherwise participating in activities expected of employees, are not volunteers for the purposes of this policy.