08-11.20 - CATERING AND MEAL COUPON POLICY

I. Policy Statement:

Towson University (the “University”) has established these policies and procedures pursuant to the University System of Maryland Policies and Procedures. This policy defines allowable costs and approval procedures required to charge catering and food costs to University accounts. It applies to all food and catering costs, including coffee service, meeting breaks, lunches and dinners, receptions, meal coupons and beverages and snacks for training programs.

II. Reason for Policy: To establish consistent University-wide procedures regarding catering and food costs.

III. Responsible Executive and Office:

Responsible Executive: Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chief Fiscal Officer

Responsible Office: Procurement Department

IV. Entities Affected by this Policy: All University divisions, colleges, departments and operating units.

V. Procedures:

A. Catering Policy

University funds may be used to purchase food services, where necessary and reasonable, for University hosted meetings, receptions and conferences. Catering for non-sanctioned events requires pre-approval from the department supervisor and the divisional Vice President, or designee, (see Catering Exception Authorization Form which can be found at http://www.towson.edu/financialservices/forms.html). The University has a contractual obligation to purchase catering and food related services from Chartwells Dining Services and Black and Gold Catering for all campus events (Burkshire Marriott handles all events at the Burkshire). To request exception to the contractual requirement, a Food Waiver must be requested from Chartwells. (See Food Waiver information in §V.E.) Food purchased for campus events from
outside sources without a Food Waiver is considered a violation of the campus Catering Policy.

Business meals (meals that are not a part of a conference, meeting, or entertaining candidates and are not related to employee travel) are allowable only to University Administrators who have prior approval by the President's Office. Cost of meals must not exceed allowances approved under USM Policy VIII-11.00, Policy on University System Travel, see Reimbursable Meals, http://www.towson.edu/financialservices/travel/reimbursements.html

Cost of food or catering service provided for conferences, receptions or meetings must comply with guidelines as follows:

1. Lunch or two breaks will be allowed for a minimum 4-hour meeting.

2. One break will be allowed for a minimum 2-hour meeting. The allowable cost for one break will be half of the USM lunch allowance.

3. Dinner will be allowed for pre-approved meetings that begin or extend beyond 5:00 p.m.

4. Breakfast will be allowed for pre-approved meetings that begin before 9:00 a.m.

5. The cost of alcoholic beverages is not allowable under any circumstances.

Note: Conferences booked at the Burkshire as "packages" are exempt from 1., 2., 4. since meals, breaks, and meeting rooms are included in the price per person. Food from outside sources may not be brought into the Burkshire.

B. Meal Coupon Policy

University funds may be used to purchase meal coupons for food services, where necessary and reasonable, for University hosted meetings, conferences and events. Meal coupons provided for meetings, conferences and events must comply with the guidelines listed above.

C. Payment of invoice/voucher for food services

1. The State's General Accounting Division requires that all invoices for the purchase of food or catering, including business meals (IRS mandate) be supported by the name and purpose of the function as well as a list of individuals served, indicating their affiliation with the University/USM/State (employee, visitor, paying guest, prospective student, etc.).
a. The Food Service/Catered Event Attendee Attachment Form must accompany all invoices from University Dining Services (Chartwells; Black and Gold Catering) or any invoice from the Burkshire (Mariott) or other vendor supplying food or catering services.

b. For large groups, where obtaining names is impractical, only the names of University employees are required along with a summarization by type of other individuals served (i.e. 100 students and parents attending admissions open house). Invoices that do not include this supporting documentation are unacceptable to the State Comptroller's Office and will be returned to the department unpaid.

c. Attach a copy of the Event Order Form to all invoices. This form is the official contract for services between Chartwells/Mariott and the University department holding the function. Your Black and Gold Catering authorization online is the official signature of record.

D. Chartwells & Paying by VISA Card

1. The University VISA Procurement Card can be used to pay for catering services ordered through Chartwells. All purchases must be supported by the name and purpose of the function, details regarding the type and length of the function, and a list of individuals served, indicating their affiliation with the University/USM/State (for example, employee, visitor, paying guest, prospective student).

2. At the time an order is placed, if you are paying with the VISA card, Chartwells will require your VISA Procurement Card number and expiration date. Chartwells will:

   a. process payment against the respective procurement card after the event occurs; and

   b. mail the cardholder a copy of the Chartwells Invoice and Event Order Form and a VISA receipt.

3. As supporting documentation for the purchase, the following will be required:

   a. the expenditure must be included on the VISA Procurement Card Purchase Log;
b. a description of the event including its name, details of the type and length of the function;

c. a copy of the Event Order Form and the VISA receipt must be attached; and

d. A list of attendees (Event Attendee Attachment Form) must be included.

E. Food Waivers

Food Waivers must be obtained by University groups when neither Chartwells nor Black and Gold Catering is used to provide the catering services for an event on campus. Food served on campus without a Food Waiver may be a violation of the University’s contractual obligation. All Baltimore County Health and Safety regulations still apply for these events.

Food Waivers may be issued for the following types of events on campus. (Food Waivers are not required for departmental “pot luck” type gatherings). A copy of the food waiver can be found at https://www.towson.edu/campus/planningevents/reservations/foodwaiver.html

1. Events and meetings with less than $250.00 in food value. Typically, these events are small group meetings and cannot be catered cost effectively at this level.

2. Smaller events (less than 20 persons) and student group meetings with “non-production” food items. Non-production items are considered food items that are typically store-bought and require no special refrigeration and/or heating. These items include such items as bottled/canned soda, chips and cookies.

3. Events and meetings with donated food. Towson University often receives food donated from local restaurants as a part of their support to the campus. Health and Safety regulations, including all temperature requirements, apply to all food that is donated.

4. Events and meetings with a unique or special food requirement. Chartwells has an extensive staff of trained chefs on campus that can prepare almost any type of food. Occasionally groups require food or food products that cannot be prepared or obtained by Chartwells.

Other helpful links:

Facility Reservation Form: http://fusion.towson.edu/www/facilityreservations/
Black and Gold Catering Menu: http://towsonu.catertrax.com/
Related Policies:
USM Policy VIII-11.00, Policy on University System Travel

Approval Date: 10/12/2007

Effective Date: 10/19/2007

Approved by: President’s Council 07/23/2007