





**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
POLICY # FN-06002
EMPLOYEE GROUP MEALS AND HEALTHY
MEETINGS POLICY**

Approval:	 Kate Pfirman, Chief Financial Officer	11/10/14 Date	
	 James C. Howgate, Chief of Staff	11/10/14 Date	

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to promote health and disease prevention by supporting healthy meetings and to provide guidance regarding situations in which the Department of Public Health (DPH) may purchase meals for a group of employees, Board Members, and External Stakeholders who may not be on travel status or otherwise eligible for payment of meals.

1.1 AUTHORITY – The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) Group Meals Policy is published under the authority of DPH and in compliance with the following:

1.1.1 Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA), Sections:

O.C.G.A. §50-5B-5

O.C.G.A. §45-7-21

1.1.2 Statewide Travel Regulations promulgated by the State Accounting Office.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all of the Department of Public Health.

3.0 POLICY

The policy of the Department of Public Health is to provide clear guidance regarding the payment of employee group meals and to encourage and support the provision of healthy food and opportunities for physical activity during breaks at meetings.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 DPH – Department of Public Health

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4.2 FS – Division of Finance, Financial Services Section

4.3 CFO – Chief Financial Officer

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 DPH DIVISION OF FINANCE, FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTION (FS) is responsible for issuing and updating procedures to implement this policy.

6.0 PROCEDURES

6.1 For Employees:

6.1.1 As a part of the Statewide Travel Rules and Regulations, the State Accounting Office has issued specific regulations on when it is acceptable to purchase meals for employees who are not on travel status.

6.1.2 Under certain infrequent circumstances, employees may be required to remain at the work site during mealtime. Such circumstances may include emergency situations, intra-departmental meetings, or training sessions, where the meeting or training session continues during the meal and the employees are not permitted to leave the premises of the meeting site. There is no provision in the policy that allows for the purchase of meals when the meeting occurs **only** during the mealtime period.

6.1.3 Under these and similar circumstances, organizations may purchase meals for the affected employees. Purchase of such meals should be approved by the head of the organization prior to the date of the event. (The Commissioner has designated the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to approve such meals). These expenditures are limited to the purchase of meals only (this does not include snacks), and meal limits in the Statewide Travel Regulations must be adhered to. Meal expenses associated with meetings/training sessions must be accompanied by a copy of the formal written agenda. In all instances, a listing of employees for whom meals were purchased must be retained.

6.2 For Board Members, Advisory Council Members, Committee Members and Other External Stakeholders:

6.2.1 In accordance with OCGA 45-7-21, Board members receive a daily expense allowance of \$105 (currently) per day for attendance at a board meeting as well as reimbursement for transportation expenses. The Board is not entitled to additional reimbursement, such as the actual expense of lodging or meals in conjunction with Board activities; the allowance is meant to cover these expenses. Therefore, the Department will not pay for food for Board members since this expense is covered under the allowance.

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6.2.2 There are occasions where external stakeholders are requested to participate in meetings in an advisory capacity to the Department receiving no compensation for their time and expertise. In these type situations where the department is clearly receiving a benefit from the individual's participation, it is appropriate for the Department to pay for food for the participants if the meeting exceeds four hours in length and the meeting continues through a standard meal time.

6.3 Reimbursement

6.3.1 The *Group Meal Request Form* should be completed, submitted with a formal written agenda, and approved by appropriate Executive Leadership and OFS prior to the event. Once approved, the form should be submitted to the Budget Analyst responsible for the unit requesting the reimbursement. The Budget Analyst will review the estimated reimbursement amount to ensure budgeted funds availability. Upon final approval, the form is stamped and signed by the Budget Analyst. The original should be forwarded to the Travel Section of Accounts Payable, Financial Services and an email confirmation is sent back to the requestor by the Budget Analyst.

6.3.2 The *Group Meal Expense Reimbursement Form* should be completed, approved by the CFO, and submitted with the list of employees for whom meals were purchased to the Travel Section of Accounts Payable, Financial Services.

6.3.3 These expenditures will be subject to special audit scrutiny, to insure that such expenditures are infrequent, rather than routine. All such expenditures should be charged to the expenditure account "Other Operating Expenses – Special Group Meals" (627025).

7.0 PROCEDURES

Where food and beverages are offered:

7.1 Water will be offered as a beverage option and sugar-sweetened beverages (regular soda, sweet tea, and other drinks with sugar) are discouraged.

7.2 The purchase of fruits, vegetables, items that are lower sodium and made from whole grains is highly encouraged.

7.3 Low fat or non-fat dairy and soy products lean or alternative sources of protein will be served when possible.

7.4 Meeting participants should be given an opportunity to inform meeting planners of dietary needs, restrictions, or food allergies before events.

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7.5 Physical activity consisting of a brief exercise period is encouraged if space allows.

8.0 REVISION HISTORY

REVISION #	REVISION DATE	REVISION COMMENTS
0	October 17, 2014	Initial Issue

9.0 RELATED FORMS

FN06002A – Group Meal Request Form

FN06002B – Group Meal Expense Reimbursement Form