



**ACCOUNTING POLICY AND PROCEDURES (APP) MANUAL**

TOPIC: Section 12 – Travel 1.3	EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/24/1983
TITLE: Special Eligibility for Reimbursement of Meal Expense	REVISION DATE: 8/7/200
AUTHORIZED BY: Deputy Director, Bureau of Fiscal Services	

**BACKGROUND**

The Department of Health Services (DHS) Policies provide the following criteria for reimbursement of meal expenses:

“Breakfast - the employee must leave from the office or, if going direct, from home before 6:00 A.M.

Lunch - the employee must leave the headquarters city before 10:30 A.M. and return after 2:30 p.m.

Dinner – the employee must leave directly from work and return home after 7:00 P.M.

**NOTE:** These time periods will be modified to the extent necessary to provide equitable treatment to employees whose work schedule requires shift work on other than a day shift basis.”

Specific guidelines have been established for determining reimbursement eligibility for other than day shift employees. Reimbursement criteria have also been established for meal expense incurred by employees when required to control residents (inmates, patients, etc.) away from institutions at any time. In such situations, employees are expected to pay for the resident’s meal(s), and resident’s meals may be paid with a P-Card. However, due to IRS rules regarding individual meal expenses, employees will be reimbursed for the cost of their own meals on a Travel Voucher.

**POLICY**

Procedures established herein convert the meal reimbursement eligibility time restrictions for regular day shifts to other scheduled shifts. Staggered or flex-time hours and deviated work weeks do not qualify as other scheduled shifts.

Meal expense for resident and employee incurred at any time by employees controlling residents away from any DHS institution will be reimbursed if they comply with **one or more of the following criteria:**

1. The employee paid for the resident’s meal because the resident could not be returned to the institution during the period a meal is being served.
2. The employee’s supervisor directed the employee to accompany the resident and maintain control while away from the institution during the employee’s regular meal time.
3. The meal expense was incurred outside of the headquarters city (15 mile radius of the employee’s permanent work site). Any exception to the headquarters city condition requires prior written approval by the Division Administrator per authority delegated in DHS APP Business Standards 5.0 (Delegation of Authority).

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Employees**

1. To claim a lunch (mid-shift or noon meal) that does not qualify under the 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. limitation, the employee should submit a **Travel Voucher** indicating the beginning and ending time of the shift and the regularly scheduled lunch period.
2. If the employee has a paid lunch period, lunch expense may be claimed on a Travel Voucher if the employee leaves the headquarters city one hour and fifteen minutes before the start of the lunch period and returns two hours or more after the end of the lunch period.
3. If the employee has a paid lunch period and works an eight-hour shift, lunch expense may be claimed on a Travel Voucher if the employee leaves the headquarters city one hour and fifteen minutes before the mid-point of the shift and returns later than two hours before the end of the shift.
4. Regular Travel Vouchers will be used by employees to claim reimbursement for meal expenses while controlling residents of any institution.
5. The supervisor of any employee who claims meal reimbursement under item 4 will be responsible for ensuring compliance with relevant criteria.

### **Residents**

Any meal expense for residents arising from one or more of the circumstances outlined under Policy (above) may be paid by P-Card or paid by the employee to be reimbursed on a Travel Voucher.

## **REFERENCES**

[DHS APP Section 1 – Business Standards 5.0](#) (Delegation of Authority)

## **CONTACTS**

[Purchasing Card Auditor, Expenditure Accounting Section](#)

[Travel Hotline, Expenditure Accounting Section](#)

[Deputy Director, Bureau of Fiscal Services](#)