



State of Arizona Accounting Manual

Topic 80 Miscellaneous
Section 10 Food and Beverages
at State-sponsored Events

Issued 06/18/18
Page 1 of 2

INTRODUCTION

Article IX, Section 7 of the Arizona Constitution, the “gift clause,” prohibits the giving of gifts, loans, etc. to individuals. In addition, the notes to this article state that “Public funds are to be expended only for public purposes and cannot be used to foster or promote purely private or personal interests of any individual.”

An event for the purposes of this policy is a public or semi-public gathering of citizens, stakeholders, or other interested parties convened for a specific purpose of value to the public and consistent with the charter of the sponsoring agency.

An event as discussed herein is not merely a meeting, particularly a meeting the attendance to which is limited to State employees, or to State employees and interviewees, or to State employees and lobbyists, contractors, bidders, etc.

In this section of SAAM, “to provide food and/or beverages,” means to furnish such comestibles at the expense of the State, no matter the funding source.

A State-sponsored event is one that is hosted by, arranged by, or organized by an agency. A State-sponsored event is one in which the State directly or indirectly pays the vendor or vendors who provide meals and/or beverages and/or the facilities in which the event is held, even when the original funding source is an entity or entities other than the State.

This section of SAAM does not deal with food and/or beverages served in conjunction with board meetings, certain training activities, or emergency situations, which are dealt with respectively by SAAM Sections 8011, 8012 and 8013. Nor does it deal with refreshments served at employee recognition ceremonies, which are addressed in SAAM Section 5557.

POLICY & PROCEDURES

1. In general, the State should not provide food and/or beverages at State-sponsored events.
2. An agency may provide food and/or beverages at a State-sponsored event when:
 - 2.1. It demonstrably serves a public purpose, and
 - 2.2. The “gift clause” is not violated.

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Page 2 of 2

3. That the provision of food and/or beverages serves the public purpose and does not violate the “gift clause” must be determined before providing food and/or beverages. Such determination must be documented and the documentation retained and available for audit in accordance with the LAPR’s retention guidelines for accounting records.
4. The cost of any food and/or beverages provided shall not exceed the per-person-per-meal reimbursement limits set forth in SAAM 5095.
5. If the participant receiving food and/or beverages is a State employee in travel status and would qualify for a meal reimbursement, the appropriate reduction of the daily reimbursement limit for the meal provided, as set forth in SAAM 5025 and 5095, must be applied.
6. Public hearings are quasi-judicial gatherings that do not normally include the serving of food and/or beverages. Therefore, food and/or beverages should not be provided at hearings.
7. Food and/or beverages served at meetings are not to be paid for with State funds. When in travel status, an employee may file a claim for a meal reimbursement when a meal or meals at a meeting have been purchased at the employee’s expense. Such a reimbursement is subject to the terms and conditions contained in SAAM 5025 and SAAM 5095.
8. Monies spent for alcoholic beverages or drugs, whether the purchase of such items is legal or not, will not be reimbursed.
9. Food and/or beverages provided to participants in State-sponsored events that are mandated by statute or required by the provisions of a grant are subject to the meal limitations provided in SAAM 5025 and SAAM 5095.
10. Food and/or beverages may be paid for by the participants themselves in a State-sponsored event. In such cases, while the amount of the purchase is unlimited, the amount of reimbursement to employees or others such as contractors, vendors, interns or volunteers is subject to the limitations of SAAM 5025 and SAAM 5095.
11. The provision of food and/or beverages is subject to all other conditions and/or limitations that may appropriately apply in other Sections of SAAM, including, but not limited to SAAM 8011, SAAM 8012, SAAM 8013, SAAM 5557, SAAM 5025 and SAAM 5095.