



Use of District Funds for Meals and Refreshments, Gifts, Gift Cards, and Student Incentives

In accordance with 8.30.010-P, this Administrative Directive sets forth the rules and procedures for the use of District funds for purchases of meals and refreshments, gifts, gift cards, and student incentives.

- I. **Food and Beverages while Traveling:** Food and beverages cannot be charged to a District PCard while participating in District-approved travel. Employees are eligible to receive a per-diem reimbursement for meals purchased for themselves while traveling. Once travel is completed, employees must complete the Travel Training Reimbursement Request Form <https://www.pps.net/Page/2917> to receive per-diem funds.

If travel-related meals are purchased with a District PCard, the employee will be required to reimburse the District.

- II. **Meals and Refreshments:**

1. **Definitions:**

Meals mean food and beverages provided at breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Refreshments include beverages and snack items that are less extensive than full meals.

2. **Meals for District Staff.** District funds may be used to provide meals for staff only in the following instances:

- a. A single meal may be provided at a District-sponsored group training session or workshop requiring in-person attendance, attended by a minimum of ten staff members, and lasting five or more hours. A meal period cannot be added to the beginning or end of a training session or workshop to meet the minimum time requirement unless business is conducted during the meal period.
 - b. Meals may be provided to staff in the Emergency Operations Center or whenever a significant District emergency reasonably prevents staff from procuring their own meal.
 - c. A meal may be provided to staff if they are required to work more than two hours beyond a standard eight-hour workday with no meal break provided and the work is held over a normally scheduled meal period. For example, if staff are asked to work a ten-hour day to meet an immediate or urgent District need, a breakfast or dinner meal may be provided.



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- d. District funds may be used to provide a meal at an annual staff appreciation meeting as directed by the Human Resources Department or the Office of the Superintendent.
 - e. District funds may be used to provide meals for staff when attending working business meals with non-District parties such as community groups or agency or industry partners. Business must be conducted during the meal period and a benefit to the District must be gained by attendance of District staff.
 - f. A meal may be provided to School Board members and staff participants of a School Board meeting when the meeting is held over a normally scheduled meal period and the meeting is scheduled to be at least two hours long.
 - g. District funds may be used to provide meals for staff when the meals are included as a non-separable portion of the cost of renting a facility.
 - h. District funds may be used to provide a meal for staff when the funds are from an employee wellness grant that explicitly provides for such meal purchases in order to support employee wellness.
 - i. Permission may be granted by the Chief Financial Officer or Superintendent to provide a meal to staff engaged in training or workshops, such as annual budget or staffing workshops that require extensive staff engagement but do not otherwise meet the minimum time criteria above. Permission must be sought and granted in writing in advance of such meal purchase.
 - j. Per person expenses for allowable meals under 2(a) through 2(i), including any taxes and gratuity, should not exceed the United States General Services Administration per diem rates for meals in Portland, Oregon.
<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>
3. **Refreshments for District Staff.** District funds may be used to provide refreshments for staff only in the following circumstances:
- a. Refreshments may be provided at a District-sponsored group training session or workshop requiring in-person attendance and lasting four or more hours or scheduled outside of the normal work day.
 - b. Refreshments may be provided at District-sponsored employee



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recognition programs.

- c. Refreshments may be provided to staff where the refreshments are included as a non-separable portion of the cost of renting a facility.
- d. District funds may be used to provide refreshments for staff when the funds are from an employee wellness grant or other grant that explicitly provides for such refreshment purchases in order to support employee wellness.
- e. Per person expenses for allowable refreshments under 3(a) through 3(d), including any taxes and gratuity, should be significantly below the United States General Services Administration per diem rates for a breakfast or lunch meal in Portland, Oregon.

<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

4. Meals and Refreshments for Unpaid Volunteers and Community Members

- a. Meals may be provided for meetings involving members of the community who are voluntarily assisting the District in its mission or providing input or feedback to the District at the District's request, when the meeting is held over a normally scheduled meal period.
- b. Refreshments may be provided at business meetings with industry representatives (other than paid contractors) or the public, such as task forces or advisory committees.
- c. Refreshments may be provided at training events held for the purpose of instruction or dissemination of information to the general public.
- d. Refreshments may be provided at District-sponsored community events.
- e. Refreshments may be provided to volunteers as a gesture of appreciation during or after volunteer work is performed or at volunteer recognition events.



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5. **Meals and Refreshments for Students.** Meals or refreshments may be provided for students at the discretion of the administrator. Food purchases for students must comply with the requirements of the District Wellness Policy 3.60.060-P and applicable local, state, and federal law.
6. **Prohibited Meals and Refreshments Purchases.** It is not permissible to use District funds for the following purposes:
 - a. **Staff meetings.** District funds may not be used to provide meals or refreshments for regularly scheduled staff meetings.
 - b. **Contractors.** District funds may not be used to provide meals or refreshments for meetings between staff and the District's paid contractors when such meetings are within the contractor's scope of work for the District, unless the contractors are participating in training or workshops with staff for which staff are provided meals or refreshments under the guidelines above.
 - c. **Staff Social Events.** District funds may not be used to provide meals or refreshments for office social events or voluntary social events (either off-site or in the office), such as celebrating holidays, birthdays, retirements, etc.
 - d. **Water.** District funds may not be used to purchase bottled water (other than as part of a meal or refreshment permitted above), water dispensers, or water purifiers, except in the following circumstances:
 - i. Where unexpected temporary water unavailability necessitates an immediate purchase of bottled water to meet the urgent, short-term needs of students or staff; or
 - ii. In other cases of permanent or temporary water unavailability, only with advanced approval of the Facilities Department.
 - e. **Alcohol, Cannabis, and Other Controlled Substances.** District funds may not be used to purchase alcoholic beverages, cannabis products, or other controlled substances.

III. Required Documentation for Food or Beverage Purchases: For each meal or refreshment purchase, information must be included with your original itemized receipt submitted with your PCard reconciliation or with



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your request for reimbursement sufficient to show that the food or beverage purchase is allowable under a specific provision in Section II above:

- 1. Employee Workshops/Trainings.** Documentation must include:
 - a. A robust agenda and/or written summation that contains:
 - i. The date and starting and ending times of the event (demonstrating event length and whether the event covered a meal time or was outside of normal work hours);
 - ii. The purpose of the event and topics covered;
 - iii. The location of the event; and
 - b. An employee sign-in sheet or other record of all attendees.
- 2. Student and Community Activities and Events.** Documentation must indicate the title or purpose of the event, the intended participants (students or community members), the date and time of the event, and the number of students or community members who attended the event.

In addition, for any meal or refreshment purchase with Student Body Funds, the school must keep documentation at the school as required by the Student Body Funds manual.

For any grant-funded meal or refreshment purchase, schools and departments must keep any additional documentation required by the grantor.

IV. Gifts, Gift Cards, and Student Incentives:

1. Gifts and Gift Cards for Staff Prohibited

It is prohibited to use District funds to purchase gifts for staff. According to Oregon ethics rules (ORS 244.040), gifts to employees are considered financial benefits. Financial benefits are included in employees' established benefits package. If they are not included in employees' established benefits package, they are not allowable. This prohibition includes flowers and holiday and birthday gifts or cards. These items must be paid for by staff with personal funds.

According to the IRS, gift cards are equivalent to cash and accordingly considered wages that are subject to taxation. Therefore, gift cards may never be purchased for employees.



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PPS or school logo items, such as t-shirts or water bottles, given to staff to be used in the scope of their work in order to demonstrate PPS or school spirit or identify themselves as PPS or school personnel, are not considered prohibited gifts within the meaning of this directive.

Similarly, small tokens of appreciation provided by the Department of Human Resources to honor an employee's retirement, years of service, or significant contributions are not considered prohibited gifts within the meaning of this directive.

2. Gifts and Gift Cards for Students

District funds may not be used to provide gifts or gift cards to students except in the following circumstances:

- a. To meet the urgent needs of a homeless student for food, clothing, toiletries, and other necessities, with prior approval of the District's McKinney-Vento Homeless Program Director;
- b. To meet an urgent need for support of any other student, with prior approval of the Chief Financial Officer; or
- c. As student incentives solely in accordance with Section 4, below.

3. Gifts and Gift Cards for Volunteers and Community Members

District funds may be used to provide small (valued at \$50 or less) gifts or gift cards to community members to show appreciation for significant volunteer involvement with the District only with prior approval of the Chief Financial Officer.

It is prohibited to use District funds to provide gifts to the District's paid contractors.

4. Student Incentives:

District funds may be used to purchase rewards ("student incentives") used to support and incentivize student behavior as long as the school has a clearly stated purpose for the incentive such as improved academic achievement, improved attendance and school engagement, or reduced dropout rates. The following guidelines must be observed:

- a. Student incentives may not include gift cards except with the prior approval of the Chief Financial Officer;
- b. Student incentives may not include cash gifts;
- c. The incentive should be one of several tools used to achieve a



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desired outcome in a program of behavioral supports;

- d. The incentive should not exceed \$50 per student except with the prior approval of the Chief Financial Officer;
- e. The incentive should be related to the desired behavioral patterns; and
- f. Schools should keep data on the effectiveness of the incentive program.

5. Required Documentation for Gift Cards Purchases: For any allowable purchase of gift cards, the following documentation and recordkeeping is required.

- a. The Chief Financial Officer's written approval must be attached to the PCard transaction reconciliation, employee expense reimbursement request, or purchase order.
- b. Gift cards must be secured and handled using existing District cash handling policies and procedures.
- c. Gift card distribution must be tracked using the Gift Cards Purchase Tracking Form supplied by the Office of the Chief Financial Officer.
- d. After distribution, the Gifts Cards Purchase Tracking form must be saved in a clearly labeled, accessible location for at least three years.

Approved 4/2020, Revised 8/2021, 12/2025.