



Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District

10545 Armstrong Ave., Suite 200 • Mather, California 95655 • Phone (916) 859-4305 • Fax (916) 859-3715

ADAM A. HOUSE
Fire Chief

POLICY COMMITTEE – REGULAR MEETING AGENDA Thursday, OCTOBER 12, 2023 – 5:30 PM

Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District
10545 Armstrong Avenue, Boardroom, 2nd Floor
Mather, California

&

Remotely Via Zoom

Webinar ID: 827 3461 0232 #

Passcode: metro2101

Phone: 1 (669) 444-9171 or 1 (669) 900 6833

☎ Passcode: 838771796 #

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82734610232?pwd=SFILQ1Znd25RSmlhdXZVQVh4d1VWZz09>

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Director John Costa

Director Grant Goid

Director Cinthia Saylor

Director Jennifer Sheetz - Alternate

CALL TO ORDER

PUBLIC OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST WITHIN COMMITTEE'S SCOPE INCLUDING ITEMS ON OR NOT ON AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda is acted upon with one motion unless a committee member requests separate discussion and/or action.

- | | <u>Page No.</u> |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Action Summary Minutes
Recommendation: Approve the Action Summary Minutes for the meeting of August 10, 2023. | 2 |

PRESENTATION ITEM

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Meal and Refreshment Policy (CFO Dave O'Toole)
Recommendation: Review the Meal and Refreshment Policy and refer to the full Board for approval. | 4 |
|---|---|

NEXT MEETING DATE: November 9, 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Posted on October 9, 2023

Marni Rittburg, CMC
Clerk of the Board



DAN HAVERTY
Interim Fire Chief

Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District

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ACTION SUMMARY MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING

POLICY COMMITTEE THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2023 AT 5:00 PM SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN FIRE DISTRICT & Remotely Via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 pm by Director Costa. Committee members present: Costa and Saylor. Committee members absent: Gould. Staff present: Interim Chief Haverty and Board Clerk Rittburg.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CONSENT AGENDA

Action: Moved by Saylor seconded by Costa, and carried unanimously by members present to adopt the Consent Calendar as follows:

- Action Summary Minutes**
Recommendation: Approve the Action Summary Minutes for meeting of June 8, 2023.
Action: Approved the Action Summary Minutes.

ACTION ITEMS

- Purchasing & Contracting Policy** (*Purchasing Agent Courtney Moore*)
Recommendation: Approve the Revision to the Purchasing & Contracting Policy and Refer to the full Board for Approval.
Action: Moved by Saylor seconded by Costa approving the revision to the Purchasing & Contracting Policy and refer to the full Board for approval.

PRESENTATION ITEMS

- Reinstatement Policy** (HR Manager Melisa Maddux)
Recommendation: Review the revised policy for informational purposes only, no further action required.
Action: Received presentation.
- Financial Planning and Budget Policy** (*CFO Dave O'Toole*)
Recommendation: Review the revised policy for informational purposes, no further action required.
Action: Received presentation. This is a new policy to improve transparency and it will go to the full Board at a future meeting per the request of Committee member Costa.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:17 pm.

Director Costa, Chair

Marni Rittburg, CMC, CPMC
Clerk of the Board



Dan Haverty
Interim Fire Chief

Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District

10545 Armstrong Ave., Suite 200 • Mather, CA 95655 • Phone (916) 859-4300 • Fax (916) 859-3702

DATE: October 12, 2023
TO: Policy Committee Members
SUBJECT: New Board Policy – Meal and Refreshment Policy

TOPIC

Review new Board Policy: Meal and Refreshment Policy.

DISCUSSION


Attached is the new Meal and Refreshment Policy. The Meal and Refreshment Policy provides direction to all District employees and members of the Board of Directors on the acceptable use and expenditure of District resources for meal and refreshment purchases, excluding those pertaining to travel outside of Sacramento County. This policy seeks to ensure that food and refreshment purchases are reasonably based on a public purpose and are necessary for the conduct of the District's business. The new policy is attached for your review.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend the Policy Committee review the Meal and Refreshment Policy and refer to the full Board for approval.

Submitted By:

Approved By:



Dave O'Toole
Chief Financial Officer



Adam House
Fire Chief

Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District

BOARD POLICY

POLICY TITLE: Meal and Refreshment Policy

OVERSIGHT: Finance

POLICY NUMBER: XX.XXX.XX

EFFECTIVE DATE: Xx/xx/xxxx

REVIEW DATE: Xx/xx/xxxx

Background

This policy sets forth the standards to determine what meal and refreshment expenses may be paid with Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (District) funds, and describes the related approval and payment processes.

The District and all California government agency meal and refreshment policies are guided by the “gift of public funds” law, which is set forth in the California Constitution, Article XVI, Section 6. This law prohibits the giving or lending of public funds to any person or entity, public or private.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to all District employees and members of the Board of Directors (Board) on the acceptable use and expenditure of District resources on meal and refreshment purchases except those related to travel outside of Sacramento County. A special district through its elected Board may authorize expenditures for a public purpose. This Board policy reflects a legislative determination that the expenditures described in this policy are reasonably based on a public purpose, and are necessary for the conduct of the District’s business.

Scope

This policy applies to District employees and members of the Board.

Definitions

1. **Budgeted Funds:** Funds that have been approved in the budget for food purchases through the budget approval process.
2. **Conference:** For purposes of this policy, a conference is a meeting that brings together participants from various locations, may charge a registration fee, and has a published agenda.
3. **Official Guests:** An official guest is a person, not an employee of the District, that is invited to a facility or function for a specific purpose that benefits the District. Official guests include, but are not limited to, dignitaries, guest speakers, outside interview or examination panelists and volunteers. A vendor or contractor is not considered an official guest.

4. **Meals and Refreshments:** Meals include breakfast, lunch, or dinner, while refreshments include beverages (including water bottles), and snacks. Meals and refreshments do not include alcohol, which is not an authorized use of District funds.
5. **US General Services Administration (GSA):** An agency of the federal government that sets prescribed per diem rates by city and region in the United States.

Policy

1. General Rule
 - a. As a general rule, the District must limit the use of budgeted funds to provide meals and refreshments to its employees or other individuals to select occasions necessary to achieve the public purpose of the District. Personal meals and refreshments, including break time coffee, tea, soda, and meal service) are a personal expense that a District employee is expected to bear from his or her salary.
2. Permitted Uses of Public Funds for Meals and Refreshments
 - a. Generally speaking, meal and refreshment expenses for internal District meetings, including regularly scheduled staff meetings and items for employee personal use (e.g., break time coffee, tea, soda, snacks and food service supplies normally self-funded or funded by house funds) are not permissible uses of District resources. However, there are exceptions when meals and refreshments may be provided. In all of the following cases, the cost of the meals, including any tips, must conform to the applicable GSA per diem limits and funds must be allocated in the division budget for meals and refreshment expense. In addition, unless otherwise specified, budgeted funds must only be used for meals and refreshments for District employees.
 - b. District-Provided Training and Meetings
 - i. Meals may be provided to a District employee if the employee is participating in a training program or staff retreat with a documented agenda so long as:
 - A. the training program is ongoing while meals are being served and consumed, *and*
 - B. there are substantial functions occurring before and after meals are served and consumed.
 - ii. On a case-by-case basis, the Fire Chief or their designee in writing may approve in advance refreshments special meetings of District staff.

- c. Award Ceremonies and Graduations
 - i. The District may provide meals and refreshments to attendees, including non-District employee and Board attendees, at the annual District-wide employee recognition event to honor employees and academy graduations.
 - ii. GSA purchase limits will not apply provided sufficient budget authority is available.
- d. Official Guests from Other Agencies
 - i. The District may pay for meals and refreshments for official guests from other agencies so long as the expenditure contributes materially to the achievement of a specific District objective and public purpose, and the meal or refreshments occur during the course of meeting with public officials on matters related to the business of the District. Meals and refreshments provided simply to generally develop morale and working relationships are not allowed.
- e. Lunch for Interview or Examination Panels
 - i. A meal or refreshment for lunch may be brought in for panelists participating in interviews or examinations, provided:
 - A. the interviews cross the lunch hour and due to timing, staff is not able to take their lunch break, and
 - B. the lunch break is used to discuss the candidates (i.e., a “working lunch”).
 - ii. The District may also pay for meals and refreshments for official guests from other agencies invited to form part of an interview or examination panel. Notwithstanding the purchasing limits delineated below, when 12 or more panelists are participating in an examination or interview, the General Services Administration limit may be exceeded by up to 30 percent if prior written approval is obtained by the Fire Chief or their designee in writing. This exception is established in recognition that the number of official guests on an interview or examination panel may not be known when meals and refreshments are ordered.
- f. Meetings with Representatives of Other Agencies
 - i. Sharing a meal with regional, state and federal officials is an opportunity for a more extensive, focused, and uninterrupted communication about District policy matters. The District may pay for meals and refreshments for these business meals with the written approval of the Fire Chief or their designee in writing, subject to the requirements of paragraph 2 (c)(i).

g. Emergencies

- i. Meal and refreshment purchases may be permitted under emergency circumstances. Emergencies are only those where the provision of meals and refreshments is incidental to the protection of human life or property in the course of an extended incident.
- ii. Emergency circumstances do not include situations where employees are only required to remain on duty beyond their regular working hours.
- iii. The decision to treat an incident as an emergency meriting meal and refreshment purchase will be in accordance with procedures adopted by the Operations Branch and, at a minimum will, be determined by an Assistant Chief. Supplying apparatuses with water bottles for emergencies is always permitted.

h. Board Meetings

- i. The District's Board of Directors meets at a time intended to be convenient for the general public. Meetings routinely span the normal dinner hour and later into evening. Serving meal and refreshments to board members and staff required to attend the regularly scheduled board meetings is permissible.

i. Volunteer Events

- i. District funds may be used to pay for meals or refreshments necessary to provide for the needs of volunteers while working at or participating in an event authorized by the District, including volunteer appreciation events. Documentation is required on who was provided the meals and for what purpose.

j. District-Sponsored Events

- i. Meals and refreshment purchases may be permitted for District-sponsored public events such as Fire Camp and media events.
- ii. GSA purchase limits will not apply provided sufficient budget authority is available.

k. Water

- i. District employees shall have unfettered access to water provided at District expense.

3. Other Circumstances

- a. On a case-by-case basis, any other expenditure for meals and refreshments not specifically identified in this policy may be approved by the Fire Chief or

their designee in writing, if determined to be reasonable, have a valid public purpose, further the mission of the District and are deemed necessary to further specific policy goals and operational matters of the District.

4. Gratuities and Tips

- a. When a meal expense is allowed, a gratuity up to 15 percent of the charge is acceptable as long as it is within the allowable meal allowance based on the GSA limits. Any tip given over 15 percent is not allowed and the difference must be paid for, or reimbursed by, the employee that incurred the expense. The 15 percent limit does not apply when the establishment adds a service charge in lieu of gratuity. In that case, the amount of the service charge is not within the control of the customer.

5. Budget Constraints

- a. Under no circumstances may funds be spent for meals and refreshments in excess of the responsible division's budget.

Procedures

1. Responsibility

- a. It is the responsibility of each employee and manager to ensure only prudent and appropriate expenditures of District funds. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the approver of food and refreshment expenditures to ensure that the purchase was necessary and provides a direct benefit to the District and its constituents.

2. Expense Report Content and Submission Deadline

- a. All expense reimbursement requests for meal and refreshment costs must be submitted on a Miscellaneous Expense Reimbursement Form. Expense reports must document that the expense in question met the requirements of this policy. Expense reimbursement requests must be submitted within 30 days of an expense being incurred, accompanied by receipts documenting each expense.
- b. Regardless of how the purchase was made (e.g., District-issued credit card or check, or out-of-pocket), the documentation for meals or refreshments must specify the following:
 - i. For whom the meals or refreshments were purchased
 - ii. Business reason (e.g., issues discussed, promotional interview, etc.)
 - iii. Specific exception claimed in the policy (e.g., Section 2.c, "Award Ceremonies and Graduations")

- c. Failure to provide such documentation in a timely fashion may result in the expense being paid by the employee.

3. Purchase Limits

- a. Unless otherwise specified in this policy, all meals must follow the appropriate GSA limits. Information regarding GSA standards, limits, or requirements can be obtained from the District's Finance Division and any questions regarding any expenditure should be directed to the Finance Division before the expense is incurred.

4. Violation of This Policy

- a. Violation of this policy may result in any or all of the following:
 - i. Loss of reimbursement privileges / credit card privileges
 - ii. Demand for restitution to the district
 - iii. District reporting the expenses as taxable income to the employee to state and federal tax authorities
 - iv. Internal disciplinary action

5. Examples

- a. The following are illustrative examples of when a meal or refreshments may be provided or reimbursed by the District. It is not an exhaustive list:
 - i. An employee attends a meeting of a local professional organization that meets once monthly for a seminar at a local restaurant. A registration fee is paid to the professional organization, which includes a meal.
 - ii. A department has been working on the new project all day and, due to unforeseen difficulties, several hours of work remain before they are done. There is little time available in the coming week that allows for completion of the project. The division manager has dinner delivered as staff works through the evening in order to complete the budget.
 - iii. A natural disaster occurs which results in activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Staff is required to be at the center around-the-clock. Meals are brought in to the EOC for those on duty.
 - iv. A meeting that takes place over an extended period and the event agenda includes a working meal where there is a scheduled speaker during the meal period or the participants work through the meal period.

- v. An all-day training program is sponsored by the District (such as the L-280), when providing lunch during the program will enhance the objective of the program and the participants work through the meal.

References

1. Purchases of meals and refreshments related to travel outside of Sacramento County is covered by Travel and Conference Policy #01.013.01
2. www.GSA.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates.