

**Minnesota State Colleges & Universities**  
**Special Expense Approval/Authorization**  
Prior Approval Required – All Funding Sources

The following expenses are covered where the benefits of the employee's attendance or participation will accrue primarily to the state:

1. Full cost of a meal when it is part of the structured agenda of a conference, workshop, seminar or meeting which the chancellor has authorized the employee to attend, whether or not the employee is in travel status.
2. Meals and related expenses, or non-alcoholic refreshments and food served when conducting business with clients; members of boards, commissions, task forces or workgroups; foreign, federal, state or local government officials and/or employees.
3. Registration and tuition fees for conferences, seminars, workshops or education courses. Education courses provided through a tuition waiver are not special expenses. Prior approval is required only if the cost exceeds \$1,000.00 per participant.
4. Non-alcoholic refreshments and food for system-, board-, college- or university-sponsored meetings, receptions for speakers, performers and commencements; conferences; workshops; and other similar system-, board-, college- or university-sponsored meetings or activities that have predominantly non-state employees.
5. Non-alcoholic refreshments, food and other conference costs for system-, board-, college- or university-sponsored events where registration fees are charged and the majority of the participants are non-state employees.
6. Non-alcoholic beverages and food for meetings that consist primarily of state employees when the non-alcoholic refreshments and food are an integral part of the event and are necessary to sustain the flow of the meeting and to retain captive audience and meet one of the following criteria:
  - a) A meeting with participants from many geographic locations where the majority of the participants are in travel status;
  - b) A department-wide or division-wide annual/quarter/semester meeting for all employees;
  - c) A department or division senior management planning or organizational meeting;
  - d) A department, division, system or Office of the Chancellor-wide meeting regarding a topic(s) with department-, division-, system- or Office of the Chancellor-wide impact;
  - e) A structured training session, available to employees generally and conducted by persons outside the Minnesota State Colleges & Universities system, provided it has been approved by the Office of the Chancellor.
7. Non-alcoholic beverages and food may be provided during official meetings or other functions of the Board of Trustees.
8. Lodging if an employee is not in travel status:
  - a) When weather conditions or other unforeseen occurrences warrant lodging;
  - b) When Office of the Chancellor business or contract negotiations prevent the employee from returning home; or
  - c) When the Chancellor authorized overnight participation in an approved event. Authorization should be based on the benefit of such participation to the Minnesota State Colleges & Universities.
9. Expense reimbursement for lodging, travel and meals for one attendant for an employee with a disability that requires daily assistance in performance various personal tasks or who has special mobility needs.
10. Expenses as follows for employees assigned to work at the State Fair:
  - a) Fees and admissions to the fairgrounds;
  - b) One meal during each shift of fewer than ten hours or two meals during each shift of ten hours or more, subject to the meal allowances for in-state travel collective bargaining agreements or compensation plans;
  - c) Taxi fare for employees with a disability who are unable to drive or use other means of public transportation between their normal work station and the fairgrounds.
11. Expenses as follows for individual employee or Board member awards and System and Board recognition events:
  - a) Awards for individual or group achievements, which are limited to non-cash/non-negotiable items of nominal value as provided for under IRS guidelines. Items of nominal value are those that have no market value or retail value such as promotional or advertising items;
  - b) Up to 100% food and non-alcoholic refreshment reimbursement for employees being recognized at annual employee recognition events. Reimbursement for travel in accordance with System Procedure 5.19.3. Reimbursement for alcoholic beverages is prohibited.

## Minnesota State Colleges & Universities Special Expense Approval/Authorization

Prior Approval Required – All Funding Sources

**Definition:** Special expenses are expenses incurred in connection with work-related responsibilities or official functions not generally supported with public funds. Special expenses are further defined in MnSCU Board Procedure 5.20.1, found at [www.mnscu.edu/board/procedure/520p1.html](http://www.mnscu.edu/board/procedure/520p1.html). **Special expense payments may be made only if a “Special Expense Approval/Authorization” is approved and attached to the payment/-reimbursement document.**

**Policy:** Except in emergency situations, approval is required before any special expense is incurred and before commitments involving special expense are made. Requests received after the event or too late to provide a proper review must include an explanation why the request was not provided in a timely manner.

**Expenses Not Covered:** Refreshments or meals for routine staff meetings; private club memberships; alcoholic beverages; entertainment, employee parties (including holiday parties) and weapons of any kind.

Employee Name or Group:	Phone #:	Date of Request:
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**Approval is requested for the following events: (check all that apply)**

	1. Full cost of a meal for employees at a conference, workshop, seminar or meeting, etc.		7. Food/refreshments for Board of Trustees/President meetings or functions.
	2. Food/refreshments for business with citizens, board members, etc.		8. Lodging if employee is in non-travel status.
	3. Registration fees for conferences, seminars, workshops, etc. over \$1,000.00		9. Expenses for employee’s attendant.
	4. Non-alcoholic refreshments/food for events with non-state employees		10. State Fair expenses.
	5. Non-alcoholic refreshments/ food where registration fees are charged		11. Employee awards/recognition events.
	6. Food/refreshments for meetings consisting primarily of state employees.		

Meeting Name and Event Location:	Date(s) and time(s) of event:
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LODGING	\$ _____	x	_____	x	_____	=	\$ _____	
	Per night per person		# of nights		# of people			
MEALS	\$ _____	x	_____	x	_____	=	\$ _____	
	Per day per person		# of days		# of people			
REGISTRATION FEE	\$ _____	x	_____		Number of people	=	\$ _____	
	Per person							
**MEETING MEAL EXPENSE	\$ _____	x	_____		Number of people	=	\$ _____	
	Per person							
OTHER (specify)	\$ _____					=	\$ _____	
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</b>							=	\$ _____

\*\*List the anticipated number of attendees from the following groups (attach names/attendees separately) :  
 System Office employees \_\_\_\_\_ State employees \_\_\_\_\_ Non-state employees \_\_\_\_\_

Explain the business purpose and how it furthers the mission of your unit/department.

**Department Approvals:**

I certify I have read the MnSCU Board Procedure 5.20.1 regarding special expenses and confirm the above expenses comply with this policy.	Approved												
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Requestor Name (print)</td> <td style="width: 25%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Signature</td> <td style="width: 25%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Phone</td> <td style="width: 25%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Date</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Unit Approval (print)</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Signature</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Phone</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Date</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Business Office Approval (print)</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Signature</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Phone</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Date</td> </tr> </table>	Requestor Name (print)	Signature	Phone	Date	Unit Approval (print)	Signature	Phone	Date	Business Office Approval (print)	Signature	Phone	Date	Not Approved because:
Requestor Name (print)	Signature	Phone	Date										
Unit Approval (print)	Signature	Phone	Date										
Business Office Approval (print)	Signature	Phone	Date										