

UConn Business Meals

Summary of Policy and Procedure Changes

October 2026

Topics

Meal Expense Limits	Employee only meals	Meals involving University Students	Student Employees
Refreshments	Ratio of attendees	University Conference Services	Student Organizations

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Meal Expense Limits

Previous Policy/Procedures	New Policy/Procedures

• 3X GSA meal per diem rate
  • Exceeding 3X needs approval from Provost or President's Office
	• 2X GSA meal per diem rate
	  • Exceeding 2X needs pre-approval from Dean or Vice President

Additional Information:

- ✓ Example of 2X GSA limit – Hartford is $33 for dinner. 2X GSA rate = $66. Exclude 7.35% meal tax and 20% gratuity = $51.83 for meal and non-alcoholic beverage on the menu
- ✓ If the Dean or Vice President will attend the Business Meal that is over 2X GSA meal per diem rate, pre-approval must be obtained from the Provost or Presidents Office.

Employee Only Meals

Previous Policy/Procedures	New Policy/Procedures

• Employee only meals were within policy	• Employee only meals are only allowed if the following criteria are met
	  • Not routine or recurring – not associated with regularly schedule meetings (weekly, monthly or quarterly meeting)
	  • Event last more than 2 hours
	  • Event could not be reasonably scheduled outside of mealtimes
	  • Pre-approval from a Dean within Academic Affairs or VP outside of Academic Affairs
	• Annual events for business retreats or formal recognition is allowed when they do not occur more than once a year and would need Pre-approval from a Dean within Academic Affairs or VP outside of Academic Affairs

Meals Involving University Students

Previous Policy/Procedures	New Policy/Procedures
• Meals involving University Students were within policy	• Meals involving University Students are not permitted for routine or recurring classroom or program meetings

Additional Information:

✓ Meals involving University Students may be reimbursable up to the applicable limits when directly connected to institutional objectives, including academic program activities, recruitment, belonging, career development, retention, training or student success. Meals must be integral to the activity and not provided merely for convenience.

Student Employees

Previous Policy/Procedures	New Policy/Procedures
• Student Employees were not specifically defined as a University Employee	• Student Employees are now defined as a University Employee

Additional Information:

- ✓ Example of Student employees are student workers, interns, Graduate Assistants, Postdoctoral researchers and other undergraduate or graduate students receiving wages or stipends for services performed for the University
- ✓ Will now follow the same policy for Faculty and Staff. Example is Student Employees will be consider when determining Employee Only Meals and not just Faculty or Staff.

Refreshments

Previous Policy/Procedures	New Policy/Procedures
• Refreshments, such as snacks or nonalcoholic beverages, were **not** subject to the Meals Policy	• Refreshments, such as snacks or nonalcoholic beverages, are now subject to the Meals Policy

Additional Information:

✓ Coffee, bagels, etc. will follow the same policy as any other business meal. Most likely affect recurring meetings where under the new policy this is not allowed.

Ratio of Attendees

Previous Policy/Procedures	New Policy/Procedures

• No recommendation on a reasonable ratio of attendees	• A reasonable ratio between University Workforce Members and external guests or University Students is expected. A general guideline as follows:
	  • Meals with guests – 3 employees to 1 guest
	  • Meals with Students – 1 employee to 3 students

Additional Information:

✓ This is not a policy but rather a guidance for departments to use and refer to. It is recommended to consult with the department when these recommended ratios are exceeded.

University Conference Services

Previous Policy/Procedures	New Policy/Procedures
• Events administered by the University Conference Services were subject to the Meals Policy	• Events administered by the University Conference Services may **not** be subject to the Meals Policy if they meet the requirements below in Additional Information.

Additional Information:

- ✓ Must meet the following requirements in order to not be subject to the Meals Policy
  - ✓ Full Cost Recovery: All direct and indirect costs associated with the event, including food, beverages, venue, staffing, service charges, and applicable fees, are fully funded by the external client.
  - ✓ No Institutional Subsidy: No University or Foundation funds are used to subsidize, support, or absorb any portion of the event costs.
  - ✓ Pass-Through Expenses: Conference Services may temporarily advance payment for goods or services for operational purposes, provided all such costs are invoiced to and fully reimbursed by the external client.
  - ✓ Formal Agreement: The event is conducted under a formal rental, license, or service agreement with the external client.

Student Organizations

Previous Policy/Procedures	New Policy/Procedures
• Previous policy was silent on Tier I and II Registered Student Organizations	• Tier I and II Registered Student Organizations are **not** subject to the Meals Policy unless they are using UConn's systems • Any Tier III business meals that require a pre-approval will be by the appropriate Fiscal Officer

Additional Information:

- ✓ Tier I and II Registered Student Organizations would most likely have their own bank account and record keeping where it would be unlikely for UConn to hold them to the Meals policy. We defer the oversight on their applicable guidelines.
- ✓ We included in this policy for full transparency

Athletics Business Meals Policy

Previous Policy/Procedures	New Policy/Procedures
• There were no references on specific meal requirements for Prospective and Current Student Athletes in the previous Business Meal Policy. Exceptions to the policy were approved by the Athletic Director.	• Specific meal requirements for Prospective and Current Student Athletes were incorporated into a separate Athletics Business Meal policy.

Additional Information:

✓ Athletics Business Meal Policy is only for recruitment and team travel. Outside of these specific situations the University Business Meal Policy applies.