

COUNTY OF VENTURA	2018 ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY MANUAL	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CHAPTER VII (C) Employees' County Business Expenses
Originating Agency: A-C	Last Issued  2018	Revised  2019
Policy No. Chapter VII (C) -1		
REIMBURSEMENT OF EMPLOYEES' COUNTY BUSINESS EXPENSES		
Policy Change Requires:	<input type="checkbox"/> Board of Supervisors Approval <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CEO Approval	
Forms Change Requires:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CEO Approval	

## POLICY

The County of Ventura will only reimburse employees for actual, reasonable, and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official duties for the benefit of the County. If an officer or employee is uncertain as to whether an expense qualifies as reasonable and necessary, advance clarification should be obtained from the Auditor-Controller's Office. Due to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations, reimbursement of certain meal expenses not associated with overnight travel must be treated and reported as taxable income to the employee. (See Item 4920, Meals.)

Members of the Board of Supervisors and all members of County boards, committees and commissions that are legislative bodies as defined in the Brown Act must also comply with the policy set forth in this Manual under Policy VII (C) -2, *Expense Reimbursement and Stipend Policy for Members of County Boards, Committees and Commissions; Ethics Training*. All elected officials must comply with the provisions of that policy addressing ethics training. Should there be a conflict between this policy and the aforementioned policy, then Policy VII (C) - 2, *Expense Reimbursement and Stipend Policy for Members of County Boards, Committees and Commissions; Ethics Training*, will control for members of the Board and all members of County boards, committees, and commissions.

All County expense claims that require prior Board approval must receive Board authorization in advance.

## DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

1. "Reasonable" means that the expenditure was for an amount normally to be expected. As an example, the County will not pay for first class plane fare if suitable lower cost plane fare is available at a lower rate. Governmental or group rates for transportation and lodging should always be requested and used when available. Meal and lodging costs will and are expected to vary depending on the areas involved and continue to be subject to periodic review by the agency/department head for reasonableness.



2. "Necessary" means that there was a clear nexus, or connection, between incurring the expense and the performance of official duties.
  - A. There is no problem in determining if expenses are necessary when they are incurred in connection with an out-of-County trip. The purpose of the trip is usually quite clearly defined and, therefore, identifiable as County business. The expense of getting to and from the destination and the length of time outside the County determines what travel and meal expenses are "necessary."
  - B. On the other hand, the fact that dinners or other forms of expenses may make meetings more pleasant or facilitate the proceedings is not an adequate reason to convert the expense into a necessary expense. See Item 20, Meals.
3. "Performance of official duties" means activities directly related to the legal functions of Ventura County government. To be eligible for reimbursement, the claimant's job responsibilities must be directly and significantly involved with the subject matter of the claim. For questions about what constitutes performance of official duties, consult with the Auditor-Controller who will coordinate with County Counsel when necessary.
4. "Authorized personnel" means personnel eligible for reimbursement of expenses incurred for the County as follows:
  - A. Officers and employees of the County.
  - B. Board-designated members of commissions and advisory boards of the County including any County employee performing duties related to the commission or board.
  - C. Individuals performing volunteer services for the County as designated by the Board or by a member of the Executive Committee for Board approved programs.
  - D. Non-County employees who have been designated by the Human Resources Director to assist in employment selection interviews.
  - E. Professional independent contractors in the medical, legal, religious, educational, engineering, administrative, accounting, or information services professions for activities not specifically stated in the contract, but related to the contract, with the approval of the sponsoring Executive Committee member.
5. "Allowable expenses" include expenditures incurred while traveling or otherwise directly related to the performance of official duties including, but not limited to, items such as:
  - A. Transportation cost.
  - B. Lodging.
  - C. Meals (reimbursement may be taxable; See Item 20, Meals).
  - D. Tuition.
  - E. Registration fees.
  - F. Portage.
  - G. Parking.
  - H. Business telephone calls.



- I. High-speed DSL installation and recurring monthly fees for officers and employees of the County when directed and justified by agency/department head with CEO approval.
  - J. Other items necessary to such travel or to the performance of official duties.
6. "Expenses not reimbursed by the County" include, but are not limited to, items such as:
- A. Airline or other travel insurance.
  - B. Annual premiums for personal property insurance.
  - C. Barbers and hairdressers.
  - D. Suitcases or other luggage purchased for traveling.
  - E. Personal telephone calls except where authorized.
  - F. Traffic and parking violations.
  - G. Doctor bills, prescriptions, or other medical services.
  - H. Alcoholic beverages.
  - I. Fees, service charges, interest, etc., related to personal credit cards even if they are used exclusively in the performance of official duties.
  - J. Travel from home to the normal work site on holidays, weekends, and other scheduled days off.
  - K. Greeting cards and personal stationery.
7. Overtime worked by non-exempt employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) will only be compensated if attendance at conferences and seminars is required by the appointing authority. Overtime worked for exempt employees under the circumstances described below are not compensable hours under FLSA even though they may receive overtime compensation under the terms of a memorandum of agreement.
- A. Travel Time - While on travel status, the officer or employee will be paid as if working normal hours at his or her regular place of work.
    - 1. Travel time from home to work is not counted as hours worked.
    - 2. Travel time will be counted as hours worked in special assignments outside Ventura County, except that ordinary "commute time" from home to the regular job site will be deducted.
  - B. Conferences and Meetings - Time devoted to meetings, conferences, classes, etc., in excess of normal working hours is counted as hours worked. This policy does not include courses/classes, etc., that are a part of an employee's election for career advancement through textbook and tuition reimbursement programs.

If an employee is attending a meeting, conference, etc., at the specific request of his or her superior, the presumption is that the activity is related to the performance of official duties and fully reimbursable. However, if an employee so requests, the agency/department head may authorize travel for performance of official duties on a "salary only" basis. "Salary only"



means that the employee shall receive the salary while traveling for the performance of official duties but shall receive no other reimbursement for such travel or related expenses.

8. "Executive Committee," as used in this policy, means the following officials and includes agency/department heads:

Board of Supervisors (5)	Dept of Child Support Services	Public Defender
Assessor	District Attorney	Public Works Agency
Auditor-Controller	General Services Agency	Resource Management Agency
Agricultural Department	Harbor Department	Sheriff
Area Agency on Aging	Health Care Agency	Treasurer/Tax Collector
County Clerk-Recorder	Human Services Agency	Ventura County Fire Protection District
County Counsel	Information Technology Services	Ventura County Library
County Executive Officer	Medical Examiner	
Department of Airports	Probation Agency	

### **EXPENSE CLAIMS**

9. Justification for reimbursement must include adequate information to justify payment, including:
- A. The date and location;
  - B. Identification and cost of the various items involved, e.g., meals, plane fare, parking, etc.;
  - C. The specific County business involved and exact purpose of the expenditures;
  - D. The individuals involved and their relationship to the matter at hand. If the expense includes meals or travel costs for other County employees, a listing of these employees should be provided. If the claim includes expenses for a non-County employee, the claim should contain an explicit explanation as to why the non-County employee's expenses should be funded by the County (also see section 29);
  - E. Such additional explanation as would serve to substantiate the claim; and
  - F. Information confirming overnight stay was associated with a meal in order to determine if a meal reimbursement is to be reported as taxable income. (See Item 20, Meals.)
10. Claim approval is required by the responsible Executive Committee member before it is submitted to the Auditor-Controller's Office for review and payment. This approval certifies that the claimed amount is correct and the expense is reasonable, necessary, and incurred in the performance of official duties. While approval authority for claims can be delegated, the approving Executive Committee member is personally responsible for the accuracy of the claim. The fact that authority has been delegated to another in no way relieves the official of responsibility to ensure that all claims are reviewed and verified. The Auditor-Controller's Office makes payment in reliance on the certification of the County officer.

For elected officials, attendance at non-County functions or activities is generally presumed to be non-County business unless County benefit can be clearly identified.



The Auditor-Controller's Office performs a general review primarily to determine that the amount and items are reasonable compared with pre-established norms. If there are any unresolved questions, the Auditor-Controller's Office will return the claim to the approving authority for further justification or correction. If the Auditor-Controller's Office finds that the resubmitted claim is greater in amount than is justly due or is not a proper County charge, the amount will be adjusted or the claim will be rejected. Procedures prescribed in Government Code sections 29743 through 29746 will be used as appropriate.

11. Supporting documentation generally should be the actual invoices, itemized receipts, sales slips, passenger coupons, hotel bills, etc. Each instance of expense for non-County employees will be detailed to insure the County and the respective tax authorities' requirements for explanation are met.
12. Frequency of submitting expense claims is at least once each month. If a trip or activity falls in two months, the expense may be delayed until the end of the trip or activity. All claims are to be submitted within 12 months of incurring the expense. Claims submitted after 12 months must have department head approval.
13. Record retention for the County is the responsibility of each County organization. The supporting documentation is to be retained by the employee's agency/department and not sent to the Auditor-Controller's Office. Each individual should retain adequate records for his or her income tax purposes. Board members and members of other County legislative bodies should see Policy VII (C) –2, *Expense Reimbursement and Stipend Policy for Members of County Boards, Committees and Commissions; Ethics Training*, for details on the special supporting documentation requirements that apply to them.
14. Credit cards: The Auditor-Controller may authorize issuance of a County credit card to County officers, employees, or departments when it is determined to benefit the County. The Auditor-Controller will prescribe the terms and conditions governing the use of these credit cards.

Travel credit cards are available for employee travel and can be used for airfare, lodging, on-ground transportation, conferences, meals not reportable as taxable income to the employee, and other incidental expenses. The credit cards can be issued in either department names for employees who travel infrequently or employee names for frequent travelers. Details regarding use of these credit cards are provided in the Travel Credit Card, Cardholder instructions.
15. Travel advances: Advances are no longer available (see Item 14 above).
16. Procurement Card: Procurement cards are issued through GSA Procurement Services for purchases of \$1,000 or less. Details regarding use of these cards are provided in the Procurement Bank Card Procedures.
17. Transportation: When on travel status, officers and employees should utilize the least expensive mode of transportation consistent with time requirements and work schedules. An



exception to this policy will be made for those individuals under a physician's instructions who require special accommodations.

- A. Air travel should be by coach/tourist/economy class if available.
- B. Private/chartered aircraft (i.e., non-scheduled flights) are a permitted mode of travel on County business only in emergency situations or where alternative solutions are not feasible or when such mode of travel provides substantial benefit to the County. For private aircraft, reimbursement will be based on the lower of scheduled airline rates or the County's private vehicle mileage reimbursement. Chartered aircraft will be reimbursed at actual cost. Cost savings, time savings, or employee schedule constraints alone are not sufficient benefit or justification for the use of charter or private aircraft. Except in the event of an emergency, approval by the County Executive Office must be received prior to traveling on a chartered or private aircraft. The County Executive Office has the responsibility to determine whether a particular situation qualifies based on:
  - 1. The nature of the emergency,
  - 2. Necessity and reasonableness and benefit to the County,
  - 3. Flexibility of schedules involved,
  - 4. Alternate modes of transportation available to the specific location, and
  - 5. The number of people involved.

Elected officials are responsible for determining the appropriateness of such travel for themselves and their staff based on the criteria given above.

Written approval of the County Executive Officer or other appropriate official must be attached to claims for use of private or chartered aircraft.

Decisions regarding witness and prisoner transportation are the responsibility of the appropriate Executive Committee member.

Travel by private aircraft piloted by a County employee may be authorized by the County Executive Officer or other appropriate official where all the following conditions are met:

- 1. The pilot is a listed pilot on the County's aviation liability insurance policy, as approved and verified by Risk Management;
- 2. The pilot has in force aircraft liability insurance coverage with limits of liability of at least \$1,000,000 per event, naming the County of Ventura as an additional insured, with evidence of coverage provided with the written request for approval to fly;
- 3. The pilot holds the appropriate airman's certification and possesses a current medical certificate and an instrument rating, all issued in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration regulations applicable to the category and class of aircraft to be flown and the type of flying to be performed, and has a minimum of 250 hours logged flight time in the applicable class of aircraft; and



4. The aircraft has all applicable airworthy certificates and is current on all maintenance and required Federal Aviation Administration inspections and is operated in a manner consistent with these regulations.
- C. Rail travel: First class accommodations will be allowed when traveling by rail.
- D. Car rentals, taxis and other local transportation: The use of a rented car must be justifiable and not a matter of personal convenience. Renters should select the most economical vehicle meeting their business needs.

Agencies and departments must first use those vendors with which the County has established price agreements or contracts. Vendor information may be obtained from the General Services Agency/Procurement Services by phone (654-3750) or from the Procurement Services intranet website.

If/when no such contracts are available, renters should always inquire with the rental company about any available governmental or business use discounts when making reservations.

When renting a vehicle, the collision damage protection (usually stated as "waiver" of CWD) must be declined, unless it is included in the Procurement Services supported price agreements or contracts.

The cost of taxis, shuttles or carfare to and from places of business, hotels, airports, or railroad stations in connection with business activities will be reimbursed. Use of taxis is permitted only when suitable, more economical services are not reasonably available.

- E. Private vehicle: When traveling, employees are encouraged to use County fleet vehicles when available and feasible. If a personal vehicle is used for County business, mileage reimbursement will be at the current IRS-approved rate. Mileage will be calculated as follows:
1. Normal commute (mileage from home to normal work site and back to the employee's home) is not deemed to be miles subject to reimbursement.
  2. Mileage will be reimbursed for miles driven while on County business.
  3. County business travel originating from an employee's home (without going to the normal work site) shall be computed based on the total round trip mileage, less the round trip mileage of an employee's normal commute.
  4. County business travel originating from and/or terminating at the employee's home, where some part of the travel includes travel to the normal work site, will be computed based on the total round trip mileage, less ~~half~~ the round trip mileage of an employee's normal commute.
  5. Mileage will not be reimbursed for the following:
    - a. Commuting to the normal work site on a day off.
    - b. Traveling to a location to take a County test.
    - c. Traveling to a location to interview for a County position.



- d. Traveling to a location for a non-work related medical issue, such as a flu shot.
- e. Traveling to attend a holiday party.
- 6. Mileage to commute to a temporary work location (i.e., when an employee is assigned to a temporary work location for a limited length of time) will be reimbursable for up to six months and be computed based on the total round-trip mileage to the temporary location, less the round-trip mileage of an employee's normal commute. After six months, this location will be considered the employee's permanent work location and the commute will no longer be eligible for any mileage reimbursement.

Note: A "normal work site" means the principal location to which the employee is assigned to work for the County. This may be the place at which the employee spends the largest portion of his or her regular County workday or working time or, in the case of field workers, the assigned location to which the employee returns upon completion of regular or special assignments. An employee may have two "normal work sites" if the employee is regularly assigned to work at one location on certain days of the week/month and another location on other days of the week/month.

While operating a private vehicle on County business, individuals must maintain a record of mileage driven on a monthly basis. Mileage reported on a trip basis must be claimed within 10 working days after returning. A copy of the mileage claimed, recorded on a "Trip Log" form, must be attached to the claim and to the copy of the claim, which is retained by the agency or department. Claims for reimbursement of mileage should include the purpose for each trip in which County business was conducted. Mileage is reviewed for the reasonable number of miles claimed, as well as the correct rate of reimbursement. County employees must have valid auto insurance coverage and provide proof of coverage when requested by their agency/department.

See also Policy III-1, *Management of County Vehicles Including Vehicle Acquisition, Replacement, Assignment and Use*.

- 18. Parking: When on travel status, employees should utilize the least expensive parking available, unless otherwise approved by the employee's department head or appointing authority. Valet parking will not be reimbursed if self-parking is available, unless otherwise approved by the employee's department head or appointing authority. Airport parking will be reimbursed up to \$25 per day. Airport parking expenses exceeding \$25 per day requires department head approval.
- 19. Lodging: The County will pay actual room rental costs for each day that lodging away from home is required for business reasons. Whenever practical, individuals are expected to use good quality but reasonably priced hotels/motels. Most hotels/motels give a discount to governmental employees which should be requested when making reservations or registering. Employees should also inquire about transient occupancy tax (bed tax) exemption.
- 20. Meals: The County will reimburse appropriate meal expenses that are associated with overnight County business travel or are a necessary and ordinary expense of conducting County business based on the following chart. The listed amounts include tax and 15% maximum tip (unless



percentage of gratuity is set by the establishment on the meal receipt). Itemized receipts are required unless the per diem reimbursement method applies and is utilized by the employee.

	<u>Within California (Receipts Required)</u>	<u>Out-of-State (Receipts Required)</u>	<u>Per Day (Per Diem) (No Receipts Required)*</u>
Breakfast	\$14.00	\$16.00	
Lunch	\$19.50	\$22.50	<u>(Total Per Day)</u>
Dinner	\$38.00	\$43.00	\$60.00*

\*This amount is \$71 daily in federally designated high-cost localities.

Note: Members of the Board of Supervisors and members of all County boards, committees, and commissions are not eligible for the per diem rate.

#### Meals Associated With Overnight County Business Travel.

All meals associated with overnight County business travel are reimbursable and are not reportable as income to the employee. Employees on such overnight travel may opt for a per day (per diem) reimbursement with no receipts required in the amount of \$60.00, or \$71.00 daily in federally designated high-cost areas. The per diem amount is for meals and incidentals including all meals, room service, laundry, dry cleaning, pressing of clothing, and fees and tips for persons who provide services such as food servers, porters and hotel staff. This per diem is also available for the first or last day of such overnight travel provided the travel time covers a three-meal period (i.e., breakfast, lunch, and dinner). If a luncheon or dinner meal is included in the cost of the seminar, conference, or meeting the per diem option will not apply for that particular day except in those cases where the employee, with the approval of the employee's supervisor, elects not to take advantage of the provided meal. If a complimentary, limited item breakfast bar is included with the cost of lodging, the per diem or actual reimbursement is still available. If an employee chooses the per diem option, the per diem amount will be paid after the employee returns from the trip. Advances will not be authorized and the per diem cannot be used in conjunction with a travel credit card.

The current per diem rate was established using the High-Low method IRS approved rate as of October 1, 2018 and this methodology can only change on a calendar year basis. The current rate is subject to change by the CEO.

#### Meals Not Associated with Overnight County Business Travel.

Meals not associated with overnight County business travel are generally not reimbursable except as listed below. Claims for reimbursement of meals not associated with overnight County business travel must clearly state the nature of the business conducted to support verification they meet the listed exceptions. Duties that require travel away from the general area of the employee's work and home for the day, except as listed below, are not reimbursable. As indicated, certain reimbursements listed below must be reported as income to the employee.



Reimbursable, non-overnight travel meals which are not reportable as income to the employee:

- Meals that are an integral part of a conference or meeting, i.e., meal is consumed while meeting or included in the cost of the conference.
- Non-routine meals or refreshments which are provided as an integral part of onsite or offsite meeting and approved by an Executive Committee member. (For definition of meetings see Section - 24E Refreshments.)
- Emergencies and mandatory in-place meals: If an employee, or group of employees, is required to remain at his or her or their workstation(s) to accomplish the assigned work, or if it involves public works, fire or police service emergencies, the claim should include the justification for such action. The costs of such meals are exempt from the reimbursement caps set forth above. The full cost for meals prepared by a vendor onsite or brought to the work site during public works, fire or police emergencies shall be at County expense.
- Meals associated with promoting the interests of Ventura County: Members of the Executive Committee or their designees shall be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred while promoting the interest of Ventura County within their particular areas of responsibility. Such meal expenses may include those for persons who are not County employees but who are in a position to significantly benefit the interests of the County of Ventura. Claims for such reimbursement shall be supported by a statement by the claimant showing facts justifying the claim under the provisions of this policy.
- Meals associated with event attendance as an official representative of the County: Members of the Executive Committee or their designees shall be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred for meals at events or meetings attended in their official role as a County official. Claims for such reimbursement shall be supported by a statement by the claimant showing facts justifying the claim under the provisions of this.
- Onsite lunches for members of oral boards qualify for reimbursement under the following conditions:
  - The reimbursement is limited to the oral board members, one Human Resources representative and one departmental representative.
  - It must be in the County's interest to keep the board together for deliberations during the lunch hour.
  - The claims must be approved by the Assistant County Executive Officer/ Human Resources Division or his or her assistant.

Reimbursable, Non-Overnight Travel Meals Which Are Reportable as Income to Employee.



The following meals not associated with overnight travel are reimbursable but must be reported as income to the employee. An employee paying for the meals listed in this section for multiple employees may be reimbursed for the expenditure subject to the individual meal amounts listed previously. However, the full reimbursement amount will be reported as income to the employee claiming the expense.

- Off-site late work meals: Costs incurred for meals when required to work in excess of two hours beyond the normal workday are allowable if approved by the responsible Executive Committee member, and the employee returns for required work after the meal.
  - Off-site weekend and holiday meals: Costs incurred for lunch when required to work a minimum of four hours on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday are allowable if approved by the responsible Executive Committee member, and the employee returns for required work after the meal.
  - Other County meals: Costs incurred for meals in performance of duties that require travel outside the normal work area which do not specifically meet the criteria for non-reportable meals are allowed if approved by the responsible Executive Committee member
21. Tipping is a common commercial practice and payment of tips will be considered as a support of public purpose when it is part of the payment of a meal or other legitimate service. The gratuity for meals may not exceed 15 percent of the charge unless the establishment adds it to the bill. Tips may be reimbursed for other legitimate services such as maid service, portage, and parking valet service paid in the scope of the employee's duty, not to exceed \$10 per day.
22. "Hosted" meetings: For intergovernmental meetings which the County "hosts," the County will pay for the cost of the meeting room rental, refreshments, and other related expenses.
23. Telephone/Fax
- A. Telephone calls from personal telephone: The County will pay toll charges for local and long distance business calls made from a personal phone provided the costs are substantiated by a telephone bill and a toll-free number is not available.
  - B. Telephone charges from cellular telephones: The County will pay for reasonable charges from personal cellular telephones provided a pre-authorization from the department head is obtained and a telephone bill substantiates the charges.
  - C. Telephone/fax charges while traveling: The County will pay for local and long distance business calls and fax charges made provided the expenses are substantiated by a telephone bill or hotel bill.
24. Refreshments: An Executive Committee member may authorize payment for refreshments provided on location in conjunction with official meetings that will extend over the normal "break" periods under the following conditions:



- A. Where it is for the convenience of the County, and
  - B. Where it is to the benefit of the County to keep all the participants together and not have them disperse for breaks. (County employees at their regular workstations are not included.)
  - C. Foods: Includes cookies, doughnuts, bagels, croissants, fruit, sweet rolls, chips, finger-sandwiches, etc. Candy is not included.
  - D. Beverages: This includes coffee, tea, milk, cocoa, carbonated or other soft drinks, water, and fruit juices. Beverages may be served during the meetings. Reimbursement for these beverages includes the cost of the ingredients for preparation.
  - E. Meetings: This includes formal training sessions, conferences, seminars, workshops, study sessions, staff meetings, board and commission meetings, etc. (Cost of coffee and related supplies for meetings with individuals who are not members of the agency/department involved are reimbursable.) An Executive Committee member may authorize payment for beverages in conjunction with other official meetings.
25. Conferences and seminars: Executive Committee members may authorize attendance at conferences, seminars, workshops, etc., if County benefit and necessity can be demonstrated. The following factors should be considered:
- A. Limiting authorized attendees to the minimum number, commensurate with attaining the objectives of the meeting; and
  - B. Selecting sessions that meet professional and technical standards;
26. Office expenses: It is recognized that certain office amenities and functions can assist in creating a particular atmosphere and environment conducive to the conduct of County business. Each Executive Committee member is authorized to expend an amount not to exceed the following amounts within a fiscal year for materials to enhance the convenience, comfort, and function of his or her County office or agency/department morale.

Total Number of Agency/Dept. Employees	Allowable Amount
Less than 1,000	\$1,000
1,001 to 2,000	\$2,000
Greater than 2,000	\$3,000

27. Legislative representation: The officers and employees of the County designated by the Board of Supervisors as their legislative representatives, and elected officials or their designees, are authorized to incur necessary and incidental expenses in connection with attendance at sessions of the state or federal legislature or meetings of state or federal legislative committees.



Expenses incurred on behalf of or for the benefit of any person shall not exceed the amount permitted by law.

28. Emergencies: Expenses incurred by a County officer or his or her authorized representative as a result of action taken to prevent a catastrophe, such as a flood, or to prevent or reduce harm that would be caused by such a catastrophe are eligible for reimbursement.
29. Non-employees' expenses: To be eligible for reimbursement, claims of non-County employees (other than those covered by Sections 4 and 4920 of this policy) must be authorized by the CEO in addition to meeting the reasonable, necessary, and County benefit requirements. Reimbursement of expenses incurred for or by constituents or citizen observers who are not official participants at an authorized activity is prohibited. The IRS requires that specific details of guests entertained, cost, date and place, business purpose, and the business relationship of individuals be supplied.
30. Group expenses: While Government Code section 29708 states in part, "Except for his own service, no county officer or employee may present any claim for allowance against the county..." the phrase does not prevent reimbursement to a County employee for payment of a legal County expense incurred with another employee in situations such as when two or more County employees attend a meal meeting, etc. Under such circumstances it may be desirable or more convenient to make a single payment. The employee paying for all employees may be reimbursed for the expenditures subject to the limits outlined in item 20 of this policy. Precaution must be taken to see that only the payer is reimbursed and in the proper amount. County officers should require presentation of proof of payment with adequate details.
31. Combining business and personal activities: - When personal activities are combined with County business, the County will reimburse only the actual business expenses and then not more than normally would have been incurred. As an example: If an employee drives to Denver for a business meeting and combines the trip with a vacation, and if he or she would normally have flown, the employee may only be reimbursed the cost of plane fare (assuming flying is less expensive). If the total cost of driving were less, that would be the amount reimbursed. Precaution must be taken to see that only the payer is reimbursed and in the proper amount. County officers should require presentation of proof of payment with adequate details.
32. Retirement/Voluntary Separation Activities
  - A. Official representation: Functions related to retirement and voluntary separations are an accepted method of recognizing the services of the individual and as such attendance by certain County officials becomes almost mandatory. In such cases, these individuals are acting in their official capacity and the expense would be both necessary and incurred for the benefit of the County. Individuals authorized to represent the County at these functions are the Chair of the Board or his or her designee; other elected officials and the County Executive Officer, or their designee, as appropriate; and other Executive Committee members or their designee, when attending such activities for members of their



agency/department or state/federal and other local agencies with which they have working relationships.

- B. Retirement Gifts: Expenses for mementos, awards, or retirement gifts can be paid out of the employee's departmental budget (see limitations set forth below). If multiple items are awarded, the total for all items presented to the retiree may not exceed the following limitations: (for the purposes of this section, "years of county service" is based on total years of service).

<u>Years of County Service</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1-5	\$50
5+ to 10	\$100
10+ to 20	\$250
20+	\$400

Expenses must be in compliance with the regulations established by the IRS for retirement/length of service awards. The item must be an award of tangible personal property and cannot be cash or cash equivalents, gift certificates/cards, stocks, bonds, vacations, meals, lodging, or tickets to theater or sporting events.

Each department is responsible for purchasing retirement gifts for its employees. Employees who purchase their own retirement gift will not be reimbursed for the cost of the gift.

- C. Fire Protection District: The Fire Chief may, at his or her discretion, provide plaques and/or medallions and/or badges to individuals retiring from the Fire Protection District or to individuals from outside agencies or entities that contributed to the Fire Protection District.
- D. Sheriff's Department: The Sheriff may, at his or her discretion, provide plaques and/or medallions and/or badges to individuals retiring from the department or to individuals from outside agencies or entities that contributed to the department.
- E. County Executive Office: The CEO may, at his or her discretion, provide plaques and/or medallions and/or badges to individuals leaving office or retiring or to individuals from outside agencies or entities that contributed to the County of Ventura.
- F. The value of such plaques, medallions, or badges mentioned in Section 32. C, D and E above is separate from the value limitations referenced in Section 32. B.
- G. Other retirement expenses: Other expenses related to invitations, dinner costs, entertainment, etc. are not deemed proper County charges and are usually paid from the proceeds collected for the retirement dinner.
33. Official Functions: There are activities that require the participation of the County related to the legal functions of Ventura County government. These include presenting Board of



Supervisors' resolutions or certificates, representing the County on a speaker's panel, or representing the County at a community event for the purpose of engendering good will, developing positive community relations, or supporting economic development, among other official functions and duties listed in Policy VII (C) - 2, *Expense Reimbursement and Stipend Policy for Members of County Boards, Committees and Commissions; Ethics Training*, section 2f. Appropriate representatives include Board members, and other elected officials, or their designees, and Executive Committee members or their representatives for representation on a speaker's panel. In all the above cases reimbursement is only after actual attendance at the event. Any charitable donation that is part of the cost of admission shall not be reimbursed.

34. Special ceremonies or events: There are occasions when recognition of an event merits special ceremonies. Examples are completion of a major construction project, open house or recognition of a significant County event that advances the cause of County government business through outreach activities to the public. Expense reimbursement for such activities (e.g., decorations, refreshments, entertainment, informational materials, etc.) requires approval of an Executive Committee member up to \$1,000. Prior approval by the County Executive Officer is required for expenses over that amount.
35. Tokens of appreciation: There are times when it is appropriate to recognize members of the public at large who have by action or deed served the people of the County of Ventura. Tokens of appreciation will not qualify as an appropriate County expense, eligible for reimbursement, unless the following guidelines have been met:
  - A. Tokens in the form of framed resolutions, plaques, and other such items require prior approval of the County Executive Officer or elected County officer.
  - B. The presentation of such tokens must be made at an official function.
  - C. Specific identification of the service to the County and the approval must appear on the claim form.
  - D. Cost is limited to \$250 per individual or organization recognized.
36. Other expenses: Other items must be reasonable and necessary for the conduct of business in order to be considered reimbursable. They could include necessary laundry, dry cleaning, and pressing services away from home.
37. Travel insurance: All County officers and employees traveling on County business are automatically covered under workers' compensation. Coverage applies only to trips on County business, not the individual's personal business. Any additional accident insurance purchased by the individual when traveling on County business will be at his or her own expense.

Baggage, clothing, and other personal effects necessary for business that are lost or stolen while traveling on County business will be reimbursed in accordance with the "Personal



Property Reimbursement " policy elsewhere in this manual (Policy IX - 4, *Personal Property Reimbursement*. Details may be obtained from the Risk Management Division of the County Executive Office.

38. Equipment allotment: Search and Rescue Volunteers, working for the Sheriff's Department, will be entitled to \$200 annually for miscellaneous equipment which is not purchased by the Sheriff's Department but is necessary to perform search and rescue functions.
39. Uniform allowance: Reserve Deputy Sheriffs will be entitled to a uniform allowance. The amount will be the same as that authorized for Sheriff's deputies.
40. Advertising/promotional costs: There are occasions when the County needs to advertise or promote resources. Costs relating to advertising, such as booth rental and banners, will be reimbursed as long as these expenses are reasonable and necessary and are incurred for the benefit of the County. Costs for items such as candy favors, balloons and promotional items including pens, coffee cups, etc., will be reimbursed up to \$500 per fiscal year per department, or in the case of Enterprise Funds and CEO/Human Resources Recruitment/Outreach, their approved annual budget for Marketing and Advertising as specifically reflected in object 2193. Enterprise Funds may send seasonal greeting cards to volunteers and other stakeholders as a customary part of doing business throughout the year as long as these expenses are reasonable.
41. Memberships: Memberships in professional organizations such as the State Bar Association shall be paid in accordance with the relevant union memorandum of agreement or management resolution.

There are times when it is appropriate for department representatives to become members of Chambers of Commerce to promote relationships with the business community. This is true for certain Enterprise Funds as well as departments. Membership in Chambers of Commerce deemed necessary in the conduct of County business shall be reimbursable when the appropriate Executive Committee member has approved such application in advance. Memberships approved under this section must have a direct benefit to the County and only those employees who have direct responsibility to represent the County are eligible.

Departments may not have more than one membership in an individual Chamber of Commerce. Memberships in service organizations such as Kiwanis, Rotary, Masons, etc. are not reimbursable.