

Richland County Committee

Agenda Item Cover

Agenda Item Name: Amendments to Policy Regarding Meal Reimbursements

Department	Administration	Presented By:	Administrator
Date of Meeting:	July 1 st 2021	Action Needed:	Vote
Disclosure:	Open Session	Authority:	Structure C
Date submitted:	June 28 th , 2021	Referred by:	
Action needed by no later than (date)	N/A	Resolution	N/A, <u>needed</u> , prepared, reviewed

Recommendation and/or action language:

Motion to ... 1) recommend resolution to the County Board to amend the Richland County Rules of the Board #16 (b) policy regarding increase in reimbursement for meals from \$20/day to \$25/day, and language changes (as presented / as amended).

2) Recommend proposed Employee Handbook changes to the Finance and Personnel committee for consideration of increase in reimbursement for meals from \$20/day to \$25/day and language changes (as presented / as amended).

Background: *(preferred one page or less with focus on options and decision points)*

Current Languages with Proposed Amendments:

Rule 16 — Supervisors shall follow the following expense reimbursement policy for supervisors while engaged in County business: ... (b) Policy as to reimbursement for meals:

1. The actual expenses for meals shall be reimbursed in an amount not to exceed ~~\$20.00~~ \$25.00 in any one day (effective January 1, ~~2005~~ 2022).

2. Alcoholic beverage is not a reimbursable expense.

23. The above limitation shall not include applicable sales taxes which shall be reimbursed, and gratuities shall be reimbursed up to a maximum of 15 percent of the amount of the bill.

34. ~~Receipts shall be required in all cases.~~ Detailed, itemized receipts shall be required in all cases. (Lodging invoices indicating “room service” charges will not suffice for reimbursement.)

45. Reimbursement of meals is only warranted when traveling out of the county on county business. All supervisors’ meal reimbursements must be approved by the ~~Audit Committee~~ County Clerk.

Richland County Employee Handbook (Pg. 26)

2. Meals: Policy as to reimbursement for meals:

- Actual expenses for meals shall be reimbursed in amounts not to exceed ~~\$20.00~~ \$25.00/day.
- Alcoholic beverage is not a reimbursable expense.
- The above limitations shall not include applicable sales tax which shall be reimbursed, and gratuities which shall be reimbursed up to a maximum of 15% of the amount of the bill.
- Detailed, itemized receipts shall be required in all cases. (Lodging invoices indicating “room service” charges will not suffice.)

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- Reimbursement of meals is only warranted when traveling out of the county on county business. All employees' meal reimbursements must be approved by the department head.

Administrator's notes:

The following proposed changes are made with desire for consistency and consideration for:

Increasing expenditure — this is a 25% or \$5.00 per day increase.

Leniency — the language allows for discretion within a day and does not stipulate amounts per meal. Considerations of instances of 1) does lodging provide breakfast, and 2) does the venue/registration provide lunch, 3) partial day events, are considered in this amount. Additional weekly leniency of grocery purchasing in bulk on Monday to cover a Monday-Friday event has been considered, but leads to questions on “what if person ends training short?” and “why can't they make daily trips?” Payment of a \$125.00 restaurant bill on Monday may also raise questions on intent of policy. I recommend we leave the leniency set at a daily amount.

Auditing concerns — we still require itemized receipts per day linking expenditures to event.

Approval — Supervisor approval is transitioned from Auditing Committee to the Clerk, as payments or often released prior to audit committee. Employee approval is specified to the department head.

Attachments and References:

None	

Financial Review:

(please check one)

X	In adopted budget	Fund Number	Multiple Budgets Impacted effective 2022
	Apportionment needed	Requested Fund Number	
	Other funding Source		
	No financial impact		

(summary of current and future impacts)

Actual Expenses reimbursed through budget object .5335 Meals:

2021 Expenditures on object .5335 = \$8,459.42 x1.25 =\$10,574.28

2020 Expenditures on object .5335 = \$5,603.59 (COVID year) x1.25 =\$7,004.49

Increasing the amount from \$20.00 to \$25.00 will add an **estimated cost impact of \$2,114 annually**, pending post-pandemic travel and training.

Approval:

Review:

Clinton Langreck

Department Head

Administrator, or Elected Office (if applicable)