# PROCUREMENT OF MEALS, REFRESHMENTS, AND SPACE FOR BUSINESS MEETINGS PROCEDURES

**\*\*Please allow at least 7 business days for processing a complete packet\*\***

**Approval Process**

The request to purchase meals, refreshments, and/or to reserve space for business meetings process **shall begin as soon as it is evident food and/or space are needed**. Programs shall conduct MDE business in a fair, competitive, and transparent manner to prevent steering business to the same vendors. *Vendors reaching a $5,000 cumulative total within the program, for a fiscal year,* ***must*** *provide a competitive quote for the remainder of the fiscal year.* Approval is required from the Bureau Director or above of the requesting office and the Director of Procurement before conducting a MS Department of Education business meeting.

Cumulative lead times associated with the meeting will vary dependent upon the level of approvals required and the number of packet revisions. Program offices are responsible for planning the anticipated dates in conjunction with submitting documents in compliance with procurement guidelines and in accordance with all applicable lead time requirements.

Adequate justification is required to validate that meeting space and/or food is necessary for meeting the goals and functions of the Department. The justification should include detailed information on whether business will be conducted during the meal or a written explanation in which it has been determined that it is more efficient to provide food on site rather than leave the premises is required.

**During all business meetings**, a sign-in sheet/list of the attendees must be completed. The sign-in sheet should indicate the entity each participant represents and contain the location, time, date, and purpose of the meeting. The sign-in sheet should not include social security numbers or any other personally identifiable information.

Meetings that require refreshments such as coffee, soft drinks, cookies, and fruit may be provided during meetings where it is determined that the meeting is reasonably related and incident to the goals or functions of the Department. The meeting should be scheduled for a minimum of three (3) hours. For a shorter meeting time in which refreshments are requested, a justification letter authorized by the Chief Officer must be attached to the request to explain why refreshments must be served for a meeting time of less than three (3) hours. Prudent judgment should be utilized in the selection of the refreshment items.

For all meals, prudent judgement must be utilized on the menu selection and on the cost of the meal. The total combined daily cost of meals, refreshments, and associated fees (service fees, gratuities, catering, etc.) should not exceed a **daily maximum meal allowance of $75** per person.

No expenditure for alcoholic beverages shall be allowed for any business meeting.

*NOTE:* Personal or professional services such as security, labor for special technicians, or a separate agreement for other services shall not be included on the form for meals and space for a business meeting. For these services, the venue generally will sub-contract these services using their own procurement. **In this instance,** **please submit an MDE contract packet via the** **grantsandcontracts@mdek12.org****, attaching a copy of the approved Mississippi Department of Education - Office of Procurement Request to Purchase Food and/or Space for Business Meetings Form for support.**

The Office of Procurement will review each food and space request for reasonableness and to ensure it is adequately justified. If necessary, additional information may be requested from the office submitting the **Request to Purchase Food and/or Space for Business Meetings Form.**

The Request to Purchase Food and/or Space for Business Meetings Form should be completed and forwarded to Procurement at the following email address **purchasingrequests@mdek12.org**and should include the following documents. *Packets that do not conform to the below required support will incur delays in processing and may hinder a timely approval for your event.*

**Required Support**

* *MDE Quote Form* – Agency request
	+ - $1 to $5,000 One (1) written quote
		- Over $5,000 Two (2) written quotes
		- Over $50,000 Three (3) written quotes
* *Vendor(s) Bid Response/Agreement* - Banquet Event Order (BEO)/Agreement attached, signed by the Bureau Director or above and Grants Management, if applicable.
* *Question & Answers* document attached, if applicable.
* *Vendor Addendum*, if applicable
* *A copy of the meeting agenda* - To include name of meeting, activities, break(s), and lunch.
* *A list of targeted participants* - To include notation of the entity the participants represent and the number and name of MDE employees.
* Justification Memo
* The meeting is reasonably related and incident to the goals or functions of the Department.
* The majority of the attendees **are not** Department employees.
* The meal itself will encompass a normal mealtime hour and business will be conducted during the mealtime, or the determination is made that it is more efficient to provide food on site rather than leave the premises.
* Working meals notated on the agenda should explain the need to feed attendees in the justification if attendees work during the meal.

Upon approval by the Director of Procurement, one copy of the Request to Purchase Food and/or Space for Business Meetings Form will be returned to the requesting office, one copy will be forwarded to the Accounting Office, and one copy will be retained in Procurement.

**Payment Process**

Any invoices received by the program offices shall be submitted to Accounting immediately. Accounting will match the invoice with the Request to Purchase Food and/or Space for Business Meetings Form and send a copy of the invoice to the requesting office for approval. The requesting office should authorize payment by signing the invoice, completing and attaching a requisition along with the sign in sheet/list of attendees for the meeting, and returning the documents to Accounting.

**Note: Please review the grant/fund eligibility for requesting approval of food and space for a business meeting.**