

Institute for Public Service Procedure: FI0715-IPS	
Group Arranged Events and Retirement Receptions	
Version:0001	Effective Date: 06/10/2025

## Objective

This procedure states the Institute for Public Service's thresholds for prior approval under the System Fiscal Policy FI0715—Entertainment.

## Scope

This procedure applies to all Institute for Public Service Employees.

## Procedure

Group-Arranged Events are hospitality events that IPS hosts primarily for its employees when such take place for a University business purpose. Generally, one meal, such as a box lunch or a similar inexpensive meal, and refreshments, may be provided subject to the approvals and thresholds below, for pre-planned group working meetings of IPS employees. These are typically more efficient than breaking and reconvening. A meeting agenda and list of participants must be attached to the invoice in the ERP system.

- I. Per-event threshold:
  - A. Agency Directors may approve expenses for Group-Arranged Events up to \$9,999.99 per function/event.
  - B. Group-Arranged Events valued at \$10,000 or more fall under FI0405—Procurement and FI0420—Contracts.
  - C. Departments must comply with FI0405—Procurement and FI0420—Contracts at all times, even for events under \$10,000.
- II. Per-person threshold:
  - A. Regardless of the per-event cost, Agency Directors may approve for Group-Arranged Events that will cost up to \$99.99 per person.
  - B. If a Group-Arranged Event will cost \$100.00 or more per person, the department must obtain prior written approval from the IPS Vice President or Chief Business Officer before scheduling the Group-Arranged Event.
- III. Nature of thresholds:
  - A. The approval thresholds are based on the total anticipated cost of the event and not the cost of each expenditure, if the event will incur multiple expenditures.

IV. Alcoholic Beverages:

- A. Alcoholic beverages may be purchased only on gift accounts and where the gift fund agreement, if applicable, does not prohibit the purchase of alcohol.
- B. No federal, state, or local appropriations, tuition, or student fees may be used to pay for alcoholic beverages (TCA § 49-7-3003).
- C. No sponsored project funds may be used to purchase alcoholic beverages, unless specifically allowed by the award document; or explicitly approved in writing by the sponsor.

V. Retirement Receptions:

- A. The maximum amount spent on a Retirement reception may not exceed \$1,000.00, whether from one or several University accounts. For clarity, the maximum possible amount that a department can spend is \$1,000 per retiree, regardless of the funding source(s). Please refer to System wide Fiscal Policy [FI0715](#) for further information.
- B. The University may not make a charitable donation on behalf of the retiree. State law does not allow the University to make financial donations to non-profits.

VI. Unallowable transactions on University funds, including restricted gift funds include but are not restricted to:

- A. Taking your team out for lunch or dinner even if there is a business purpose with the exception of cost for lunch for the IPS HR Manager and new employees on their first day of work at IPS;
- B. More than one meal with the same one-day business related group-arranged event, for example both breakfast and lunch, or both lunch and dinner. This does not apply to meals for those that are on business travel status;
- C. Ordering in a meal even if it is inexpensive, when there is no business purpose;
- D. Christmas parties;
- E. Birthday parties;
- F. Charging partial cost of the events to different accounts to keep the total amount or amount per person under the respective thresholds of \$10,000 per event and \$100 per person.

These restrictions do not apply to, and IPS employees may pool their personal money together to contribute toward one of these events or a gift to another employee.

## **Penalties/Disciplinary Action for Non-Compliance**

Violations of this procedure might result in adverse human resources consequences. -

## Responsible Official & Additional Contacts

Subject Matter	Office Name	Telephone Number	Email/Web Address
Policy Clarification and Interpretation	Rumira Xhaferaj	865-974-0968	<a href="mailto:rumira.xhaferaj@tennessee.edu">rumira.xhaferaj@tennessee.edu</a>