Note Sent to PS Finance and PS Travel List on Monday, January 12, 2004

This note is intended to clarify when a meal is eligible for reimbursement and the related documentation requirements. These changes are designed to meet the requirements of revised System policies.

Eligibility for meals per BPPM 2:090

For overnight travel **within the fifty United States and the District of Columbia**, the meal expense allowance is not to exceed $42.00 per day for three meals, including tips. If fewer than 3 meals per day are subject to allowance, amounts (including tips) should not exceed the maximum reimbursement for the total of the eligible meals that day:

- Breakfast – $10.00
- Lunch – $10.50
- Dinner – $21.50

For example, if a traveler is eligible for reimbursement for both lunch and dinner, a total of up to $32.00 can be claimed for actual expenses for those two meals, regardless of the distribution between the two meals. If only $5.00 is spent at lunch, an expenditure of up to $27.00 may be claimed for dinner.

Allowable expenses for meals per BPPM 2:090

Prescribed maximums are not to be treated collectively as per diem allowances nor are they to be used individually without regard to the actual and necessary expenses. If actual expenses are less than the prescribed maximum, reimbursement is allowed only for actual expenses.

Day Trip

For any meal to be reimbursed on a day trip, you must have been in continuous travel status at least 12 hours. You must state your **Departure/Return Times** in the Comments box.

Non-Overnight Trip

For any meal to be reimbursed on a non-overnight trip (continuous travel status of less than 12 hours), the meal must be part of a meeting or activity that includes other individuals to discuss University business. The reimbursement request must include the business purpose and the other individuals or group present.
To be eligible for more than one meal, you must state your Departure/Return Times in the Comments box.

**Overnight Trip**

To be eligible for a meal on the first or last day of travel, you must state your Departure/Return Times in the Comments box.

**Departure/Return Times**

Departure Time is the time you leave your home or office to begin the trip and Return Time is the time you return to your home or office to end the trip. On the day you depart, you are eligible for your first meal that day if you begin your trip at or before:

- Breakfast – 6:00 a.m.
- Lunch – 11:00 a.m.
- Dinner – 7:00 p.m.

On the day you return, you are eligible for your last meal that day if your trip ends at or after:

- Breakfast – 7:00 a.m.
- Lunch – 2:00 p.m.
- Dinner – 8:00 p.m.

**Meals Provided or Combined**

If a meal is provided as part of the meeting/conference, covered by other University payments, or paid by others, you must mark it as “P”. You are not eligible to claim reimbursement for this meal.

If you are eligible for a meal, but you are not claiming an expense for it because you are combining this eligibility with another meal that day, you must mark it as “E”.

Marking meals as “P” or “E” facilitates the review process and helps avoid delays in your reimbursement.

**Review Process**

Accounting Services will review travel reimbursements as submitted. If it is not clear from the form that the employee is eligible for a meal, Accounting Services will attempt
to resolve by phone or e-mail. If this is not feasible, the amount claimed will be deducted from the form and the form will be processed for the reduced amount. A copy of the adjusted form will be returned to the division Fiscal Officer and the employee. If the individual was eligible for the meal, it can be resubmitted on a new voucher with the documentation of eligibility.

As needed, Accounting Services may request a copy of the conference/meeting itinerary to verify meal eligibility.

**Implementation**

We will be adding this information to the BPPM sections on meals and travel, **effective February 2, 2004**. We will provide a one month grace period for the implementation, during which we will do courtesy send backs. That is, we will inform the department that the submitted form did not comply with the revised policy, but we have processed it. Any forms received after **February 29, 2004** may be adjusted to comply with this policy.