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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 23, 2015

TO: Carla Beam, VP University Relations
Brandi Berg, BOR Executive Officer
Kit Duke, AVP Facilities and Land Management
Mike Hostina, GC
Karl Kowalski, CITO
Dianne Milke, Executive Assistant to President
Michelle Rizk, Strategy, Planning and Budget Officer
Ashok Roy, VP Finance and Administration/CFO
Erik Seastedt, CHRO
Nancy Spink, CRO
VP Academic Affairs and Research

FROM: Pat Gamble, President 

RE: Food, Beverage and Travel Expense Reductions

Along with the evaluation of other cost saving initiatives, we've given a closer look at general fund expenditures related to catering, other food and beverages, and travel. A change in the current culture at UA Statewide is in order – effective immediately and for the foreseeable future – due to the current fiscal situation of the university and the State of Alaska.

Travel

- Conference travel requires close scrutiny and approval at the vice president and chief level. Additionally, no more than one Statewide staff member attends a particular conference¹, and the employee is obligated to report out – in writing – on the conference through their vice president or chief, to the president within 14 days of returning to work. That report needs to explain the specific impact to UA derived from the conference. Future conference travel already booked needs to be immediately re-evaluated at the vice president and chief level.
- Staff should travel to BOR meetings only if their physical presence is demanded. Otherwise use video conferencing. BOR committee chairs will make the determination of which staff members need to be present physically for their committee meetings.

¹ The exception is continuing education required to maintain certification and/or licensing required by the employee's position description, when adequate continuing education is not available locally or online.

- Use of OIT Video Conferencing and other types of video conferencing platforms is encouraged in lieu of travel. Arrange video set-up with OIT well in advance.
- Choose less expensive webinars for development and training opportunities instead of in-person attendance. Contact SWHR Training and Development for a list of offerings.
- Plan and manage your travel budgets closely in real time. Money will not be shifted internally from “have to have not” departments to cover shortfalls. When department travel budgets become exhausted, that’s it.

Catering, Food, and Beverages

- Avoid general fund expenditures for catering and other food and beverages. The best way to reduce general fund food and beverage expenses is to not provide food and beverages in the first place. Food and beverages should not be provided as an enticement for attendance or a “nice to have.”
- Avoid scheduling any meetings that run through a meal period.
- UA Statewide general fund expenditures for catering and other food and beverage purchases must have **prior** approval of a vice president or chief – using a representational expense form – through the controller, except for BOR meetings and BOR retreats. A business necessity must be demonstrated to expend UA general funds of this nature. More information is available in R05.02.070 – Representational Expense.

The Office of Public Affairs and Controller Dosch are developing a message to UA Statewide employees conveying the intent behind these reduction measures and the processes that need to be followed, including specifics for how to obtain advance approval through the controller to expend general funds on food and beverages.

PKG

cc: Myron Dosch, Controller
Kate Wattum, OPA