



Catering and hospitality procedure

Version: 2.2 | Version effective: 11/06/2021

Audience

Department-wide and Parents and Citizens' Associations

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidance to all staff about when catering and hospitality is and isn't appropriate for departmental staff, customers and stakeholders.

Overview

Catering is a form of hospitality and, as such, is regarded as a gift according to the [Gifts and Benefits Directive 22/09](#) with the exception of:

- meals provided to staff working over normal meal times or away from their usual place of work; and
- catering and refreshments provided to recognise services provided by volunteers.

Decisions about accepting/declining hospitality and catering offered to departmental staff

Refer to the [Receipt of gifts and benefits by employees of the department procedure](#), other than for the exceptions noted above.

Providing hospitality and catering

Catering must be commensurate with the circumstances of the meeting, function or event. Gain an appropriate [delegate's](#) approval for all expenses. Delegates should use their judgement when making decisions about whether to offer catering and the nature of that catering. When determining what, if any, catering is appropriate, delegates must consider:

- **Attendees:** If the only attendees are departmental staff, keep catering to a minimum.
- **Purpose:** Will providing catering support the objective of the event, such as building community goodwill?
- **Duration:** The longer the duration, the more appropriate it may be to provide refreshments in order to maintain attendees' energy levels and attention spans.
- **Timing:** Where events are held over normal mealtimes, it is acceptable to offer reasonable catering as participants will not otherwise have access to meals.

It is also acceptable, and in some circumstances an entitlement (such as for staff undertaking

official travel or working approved overtime), to provide reasonable catering where participants are attending to official business outside of their normal working hours.

- **Location:** Where attendees do not have access to normal facilities, it is acceptable to provide catering. Do not choose offsite venues as a substitute for meetings which would ordinarily be conducted in the workplace.

Staff who are required to travel for official purposes (including teachers supervising students on school camps and excursions) are entitled to meal allowances (unless meals are already provided) and incidental expenses in accordance with Public Service directives [09/11 Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses](#) and [10/11 International Travelling, Relieving and Living Expenses](#).

Other considerations:

- Choose catering options that support a healthy working environment. When providing food and drinks for students, refer to [Smart Choices – Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland Schools](#).
- Do not intentionally over-cater.
- Approval from an appropriate [delegate](#) (DoE employees only) is required for the purchase of alcoholic beverages.
- [Catering guidelines](#) provide help for delegates in deciding what catering is appropriate for different types of functions.

Responsibilities

All staff

- Adhere to all relevant whole-of-Government and departmental policy requirements.

Expenditure delegates

- Adhere to [responsibilities of delegates](#) (DoE employees only).

Process

When offered hospitality:

1. Refer to the [Receipt of gifts and benefits by employees of the department procedure](#), other than in the exceptions noted above.

When considering catering for an event or function:

1. Determine whether or not catering is appropriate, based on the considerations outlined above.
2. Obtain approval from a delegated officer before placing any orders.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Volunteer	A person who performs work for the department without payment, except for a meal or refreshment in accordance with this procedure.

Legislation

- The [Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 \(Qld\)](#) (ss4 – 9) requires that we demonstrate integrity and impartiality, including the primacy of the public interest. This includes accepting and valuing the duty to manage public resources effectively, efficiently, economically and transparently.
- The [Financial Accountability Act 2009 \(Qld\)](#) (s61) requires that value for money be obtained by ensuring the operations of the department are carried out efficiently, effectively and economically.
- The [Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019 \(Qld\)](#) (s6) requires a governance framework is in place that incorporates openness, integrity, accountability, due care, public defensibility and ethics principles.

Delegations/Authorisations

- Refer to the [Finance delegations](#) (DoE employees only)

Policies and procedures in this group

- [Appropriate and ethical use of public resources policy](#)

Supporting information for this procedure

- [Catering guidelines](#)

Other resources

- The Queensland Public Service [Code of Conduct](#) and the department's [Standard of Practice](#) require us to abide by four principles:
 - Integrity and impartiality
 - Promoting the public good
 - Commitment to the system of government; and
 - Accountability and transparency.
- The Code of Conduct points to the appropriate and defensible use of public funds only for the purpose of the public good. Two of its provisions specifically demand it:
 - 2.1 – Public service agencies are entrusted with public funds to develop and deliver services to the community on behalf of government; and

- 4.3 – Ensure appropriate use of official resources, public property and facilities.
- Public Service [Directive 22/09 Gifts and Benefits](#) and related [Guideline](#) define catering and hospitality as a gift unless the receiver is providing a service to the department in return for the catering (e.g. volunteering).
- [09/11 Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses](#) and [10/11 International Travelling, Relieving and Living Expenses](#)
- [Smart Choices – Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland Schools](#)
- [Domestic travel procedure](#)
- [Receipt of gifts and benefits by employees of the department procedure](#)
- [Reporting fraud and corruption procedure](#)
- [Guidelines for the appropriate and ethical use of public resources](#)
- [Fringe Benefits Tax Entertainment Guidelines](#) (DoE employees only)
- [Treasurer’s Guidelines for the Use of the Queensland Government Corporate Purchasing Card](#)
- [Purchasing and Procurement Services](#) (DoE employees only)
- [Integrity and Employee Relations](#) (DoE employees only)
- [International travel](#) (DoE employees only)

Contact

For further information, please contact:

Finance Branch through the [Services Catalogue Online](#) (DoE employees only).

Customers and users external to the department should email financialpolicy.finance@qed.qld.gov.au

Review date

24/04/2022

Superseded versions

Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.

1.0 Catering and hospitality

2.0 Catering and hospitality

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