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Understanding the differences between Hospitality, Travel Meals and Sustenance

Quick Reference Guide

Hospitality versus Sustenance



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Hospitality versus Sustenance

Hospitality and sustenance are both related to the provision of food and beverages, but they serve different purposes and contexts.

Hospitality

Hospitality primarily revolves around providing food and refreshments in social or business settings to enhance the experience of guests or attendees. It is often associated with events, meetings, or occasions where individuals gather for a specific purpose, such as employee meetings, recognition events, or donor cultivation. The focus of hospitality is on creating a welcoming and enjoyable environment for guests, and it is often used as a means of building relationships or recognition that serve a purpose consistent with the mission and fiduciary responsibilities of the University.



Sustenance

On the other hand, sustenance refers to the provision of food and nourishment for basic needs. Sustenance programs are aimed at meeting essential nutritional requirements rather than providing for social or ceremonial purposes. Sustenance is often provided in situations where individuals require nourishment for their well-being or as part of a program or service aimed at supporting specific groups, such as students facing food insecurity, athletes during training sessions or competitions, or patients in the Student Health Center. Unlike hospitality, sustenance is primarily focused on meeting fundamental needs rather than social or business objectives.



Travel Meals

Travel meals, as outlined in the travel policy, fall under subsistence rather than hospitality. When an employee is traveling on behalf of the university, providing meals is necessary to ensure their well-being and ability to perform their duties effectively while away from their usual place of work.

In summary, hospitality involves providing food and beverages to enhance social or business interactions, often in the context of events or gatherings, whereas sustenance focuses on meeting basic nutritional needs in various settings, such as the Student Health Center, the Child Care Center or support programs for vulnerable student populations.

Hospitality versus Sustenance

Let's break down the examples provided to illustrate the differences between hospitality and sustenance:

Hospitality:

- **Employee Meetings:** Providing meals or light refreshments for employees during meetings are considered hospitality. These meals are typically aimed at enhancing the meeting experience and fostering a positive environment for collaboration and engagement.
- **Recognition Events:** Offering food and refreshments during recognition events for employees is a form of hospitality. It acknowledges their contributions and creates a celebratory atmosphere to honor their achievements.
- **Meals for Employment Candidates:** Providing meals or refreshments for employment candidates during interviews or recruitment events falls under hospitality. It demonstrates the organization's hospitality and care for potential employees, making them feel valued and welcome.
- **Meals for Donor Cultivation:** Offering meals or refreshments when cultivating donors is another example of hospitality. It creates a conducive environment for building relationships with donors and expressing appreciation for their support.

Sustenance:

- **Student Health Center:** Providing food to patients at the Student Health Center when medically necessary is a form of sustenance. It is essential for meeting the nutritional needs of patients, particularly if they are undergoing treatment or recovery.
- **Infant/Toddler Lab, Childrens Center:** Purchasing snacks, luncheon foods, and other nourishing items for children attending the center is sustenance. It ensures that the children receive proper nutrition while in the care of the center.
- **Athletics Department:** Feeding student athletes during practices or games is considered sustenance. It provides them with the energy and nutrients they need to perform at their best and recover effectively.
- **Dietary or Culinary Education:** Purchasing food to prepare as part of a course to train students in dietary or culinary education is considered sustenance. It allows students to learn and practice their skills while being able to sample their prepared foods.
- **Campus Obershaw Den:** Providing food to students facing food insecurity through programs like the Obershaw Den is a prime example of sustenance. It addresses the fundamental need for nourishment among vulnerable student populations and supports their well-being.

Hospitality versus Sustenance

Business Related Travel:

Travel meals, as outlined in the travel policy, fall under subsistence rather than hospitality. When an employee is traveling on behalf of the university, providing meals is necessary to ensure their well-being and ability to perform their duties effectively while away from their usual place of work. Here's how travel meals align with subsistence:

- **Travel Policy:** The university's travel policy outlines specific guidelines and allowances for meal expenses incurred during business travel. These guidelines typically include reimbursement limits, eligible meal types, and documentation requirements.
- **Subsistence:** Travel meals are considered a form of subsistence because they are essential for meeting the nutritional needs of employees while they are traveling for work purposes. They enable employees to maintain their health and energy levels, thereby supporting their ability to fulfill their responsibilities during the trip.
- **Compliance with Policy:** Adhering to the travel policy ensures that meal expenses are incurred in a reasonable and appropriate manner. Employees are typically expected to follow the policy's guidelines regarding meal expenses, including selecting reasonably priced options and obtaining proper documentation for reimbursement.
- **Travel Expense Reimbursement:** Employees may be required to submit receipts or expense reports to claim reimbursement for eligible travel meal expenses. The university's Travel Department will typically review these expenses to ensure compliance with the travel policy before processing reimbursement.

Resources

- CSUSB Travel Policy: <https://www.csusb.edu/travel/forms-policies>
- CSUSB Hospitality Policy: <https://www.csusb.edu/accounts-payable/procedures>
- CSUSB and Auxiliary Hospitality Forms: <https://www.csusb.edu/accounts-payable/forms-documents>
- Corporate Card Handbook: (Required Single Sign On (SSO): <https://csusanbernardino.sharepoint.com/sites/CorporateCard2?market=en-US>

This guide has been created to aid campus departments; however, it may not encompass every conceivable scenario. For comprehensive assistance, we recommend consulting your campus department or reaching out to the Office of Accounts Payable, Travel, or Procurement.