

Key Guidelines for Using Public Funds for Meals:

- **Official Business:** Meals must be for official college business, like meetings with external partners, board functions, or approved conferences/workshops.
- **Documentation is Key:** Must have itemized receipts, meeting agendas, flyers, or emails showing participants and the business purpose.
- **Not for Convenience:** "Working lunches" for only college employees just for convenience, even with business discussed, are generally prohibited.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Policies emphasize using taxpayer money judiciously and following state financial guidelines, with potential discipline for violations.
- **Travel Expenses:** Separate rules exist for travel, allowing meal reimbursement for reasonable, authorized travel expenses.

Key Kansas Statutes & Regulations

- [K.S.A. 46-237a](#) (**Gifts to Public Officials**): Prohibits state employees (including community college employees as state entities) from accepting gifts, including meals, unless they fall under exceptions, such as:
 - Meals at public events attended in an official capacity.
 - Meals when your presence serves a "legitimate state purpose" (e.g., speaking, official meetings, agency-approved events).
 - Gifts under \$40 from specific sources (no public funds).

Using Funds for Receptions

- **Local Control & Policy:** While statutes cover core benefits, local Boards of Trustees manage day-to-day operations, including event spending.
- **Reasonable & Prudent Use:** Funds must be used "reasonably and prudently," meaning events like receptions need justification as a legitimate cost of doing business or honoring service, not just a party.
- **Potential Conflict:** Using general tax dollars (like those from the general fund/postsecondary, or capital outlay) for non-essential celebrations might be questioned as an inappropriate use of public funds, even if related to retirement.
- **Alternative Funding:** Seeking private donations or having employees contribute can circumvent legal challenges to using public money for retirement parties