



ECU[®]

FINANCIAL SERVICES

**Basic Spending Guidelines
by
Fund Source**

January 31, 2023

East Carolina University
Basic Spending Guidelines by Fund Source
Table of Contents
January 31, 2023

Introduction	4
All Sources of Funds.....	4
Appearance and Reasonableness Tests	4
Exceptions and Interpretations	4
Department Head Responsibilities	4
Payments and Reimbursements to Employees	5
Travel Reimbursements	5
Moving Expenses – New and Existing Employees.....	6
Sponsorships	6
Fund Codes.....	7
Organization Codes.....	7
Expenditure Account Codes.....	7
Program (Purpose) Code Attributes	7
Funding Sources	7
General Fund (State).....	7
State Budget Codes - General Operating Funds.....	7
Unallowable Purchases from State Budget Codes.....	8
State Appropriated Carryforward Funds.....	9
Institutional Trust Funds (General Statute 116-36.1)	9
Auxiliary and Student Fee Trust Funds.....	9
Overhead Receipts Trust Funds	9
Receipts from Vending Facilities Trust Funds.....	10
Sponsored Programs Trust Funds	11
Residual Funds Related to Grants and Contracts Trust Funds	12
Gift and Endowment Income Trust Funds.....	12
Endowment Principal Trust Funds.....	12
Endowment Spendable Trust Funds	13
Patent Royalty Trust Funds.....	13
ECU Health Trust Funds	13
ECU School of Dental Medicine (SoDM) Trust Funds	13
Discretionary Trust Funds	14
Employee Achievement or Recognition Awards and Retirement Gifts	14
Non-travel Related Restaurant Charges	14
Contributions and Donations	15
Special Funds (General Statute 116-36.2).....	15
Intercollegiate Athletic Funds.....	15

Agency Trust Funds	15
Foundation Funds	16
Additional Information.....	16
Expediting Fee for H-1B Visa Forms (Form I-907)	16
Contact Information for Questions	16
Resources	16
Appendix	18
Appendix A: Quick Reference Guide of Spending Rules by Fund Source	18

Basic Spending Guidelines by Fund Source **January 31, 2023**

Introduction

The University has a wide variety of sources of funds, each of which has its own spending characteristics. No set of guidelines can be written that addresses every possible expenditure decision which may arise. These guidelines provide some basic standards, instructions, and precedents to guide an employee in making wise spending decisions. They are provided to ensure that faculty/staff can carry out the University's mission effectively, while ensuring that fiscally wise, politically sound, and legal spending practices are followed. At all times, employees are required to follow basic purchasing guidelines for the procurement of goods and services.

All Sources of Funds

Appearance and Reasonableness Tests

For all potential expenditures from all sources of funds, the "appearance test" should be used, i.e., how would this purchase look to external constituents if placed on the front page of a newspaper. Another test that is useful is to ask the question, "Is this expenditure necessary for a faculty/staff member to do his/her job or for the University to carry on its normal business?" The use of these tests should help to guide faculty/staff members in their decision-making. At all times, faculty/staff are expected to manage funds wisely.

Exceptions and Interpretations

If a case occurs in which an individual believes an exception should be made to the guidelines, he/she should request from their division business officer that an individual determination be made on a particular item. The division business officer or designee will work with the University Controller to determine the latitude available on the request, the University business purpose of the request, and other options which may be available.

Department Head Responsibilities

The department head (individual responsible for the funds in a fund/org, including the principal investigator for a research project) has the responsibility to ensure that proper documentation procedures are followed for funds/orgs that he/she controls and that only authorized expenditures are charged. Furthermore, the department head is responsible for ensuring that any funds/orgs which he/she may control are reviewed at least monthly and any errors found are corrected. Finally, the department head is responsible for ensuring all trust funds maintain a positive or zero cash balance.

The department head may delegate authority to approve and sign direct payment forms, budget

forms and/or position changes forms by the proper completion of a Delegation of Authority Form located in [Pirate Port](#). Delegation of authority to approve and sign pre-travel and post-travel forms is accomplished by the proper completion of a [Team Dynamix Service Request](#) for Chrome River. Delegation of authority to approve and sign journal entry forms for funds/orgs requires the proper completion of a [Team Dynamix Service Request](#) for Journal Entry Approvals.

Payments and Reimbursements to Employees

Regardless of funding source, payments to employees are limited to authorized reimbursements, authorized awards (see [pag14](#)) or authorized salaries. Payments to employees for compensation for work must follow guidelines published by ECU Human Resources and must be initiated through the payroll system.

According to IRS regulations, the University must have an “Accountable Plan” for reimbursing employees for business related expenses on a tax-free basis. This “Plan” must apply to all funding sources. Expenses must have a business purpose and must be reported within a reasonable period of time. IRS requires that any payments made to employees NOT in compliance with this policy be treated as supplemental wages and subjected to income tax withholding and payment of Social Security, Medicare, and FUTA taxes.

Reimbursements for items such as supplies, travel, or meals to an employee must be for a valid business purpose and must be approved by an individual at a higher level of authority in the employee’s reporting structure. Employees must use the Chrome River Reimbursement System. (See the [Chrome River Website](#) for additional information.) The purchase of items for personal use is prohibited regardless of funding source. Any non-travel purchases should normally be made with prior planning and through one of the following preferred [purchasing methods](#): ProCard, on-line orders for office supplies from contract vendor(s) as designated by Materials Management, PORT purchase requisitions/orders (including campus storerooms), or blanket order. Note that all purchases using grant funds must comply with regulations from the granting agency and/or in the contract. Any purchases utilizing foundation and institutional trust funds must comply with any restrictions applicable to the particular fund. For purchases that cannot be processed by one of the preferred purchasing methods listed above, the Direct Payment Form may be used for reimbursement. Utilization of the Direct Payment Form should be infrequent and only when other disbursement methodologies are not available. Any such approved reimbursement must be documented appropriately for the expenditure. An original, detailed, itemized receipt is the preferred documentation for reimbursement requests. Reimbursement should be requested within 30 days of the date on which the expense was incurred.

Travel Reimbursements

Comprehensive travel reimbursement procedures may be found in the [Travel Procedures Manual](#). This manual includes requirements and procedures for reimbursement of costs for conferences, training sessions and management retreats even when travel is not involved. Chrome River, accessed through Pirate Port, must be used to request and document all authorizations to travel for employees, students, residents and fellows (regardless of payment method). Non-employee (speakers, candidates, etc.) travel authorizations should be processed via Manual Travel

Reimbursement form.

The University's travel policies and procedures are based on the State Budget Manual, [section 5](#), which sets forth travel policies and regulations relative to securing authorization and reimbursement of expenditures for official state travel. The administration and control of travel is in accordance with the provisions of General Statutes (G.S.) [138-5](#), [138-6](#), and [138-7](#).

All University travel is contingent upon availability of funds. The travel policies and procedures as stated in the State Budget Manual apply to all University funds deposited with the State Treasurer, whether derived from state appropriations or non-state funds (e.g., Institutional Trust Funds, Contracts, Grants, or other sponsored research funds, and receipt supported programs/activities).

Moving Expenses – New and Existing Employees

The hiring approval process may include payment of reasonable moving/relocation expenses in accordance with the University's Policy on [Non-Salary and Deferred Compensation for Employees Exempt from the State Human Resources Act.](#) When authorized, moving expenses for *new* and existing employees may be paid and should be carefully documented. The following criteria must be met.

- A change of residence is deemed to be in the best interests of the University when such a change is required as a result of a promotion within the University or by a change in assignment involving the transfer of the employee for the advantage and convenience of the University, or if authorized by the Chancellor or designee, a new hire that is considered in the best interests of the University.
- Move is accomplished within 90 days. The department head or designee may approve an extension of an additional 90 days.
- For an existing employee, the new duty station is 50 miles or more from either the employee's existing (or prior) duty station or residence, whichever is closer to the new duty station.
- For new hires, 50 miles or more from their existing residence.

Additional conditions and limitations on moving/relocation expenses may apply. – See State Budget Manual [sections 6.8 and 6.9](#).

All payments and/or reimbursements for moving expenses are taxable to the employee. Reimbursements to employees should be coded to account code 61250, processed on a direct payment form, and sent to Accounts Payable. Payments to a vendor via ProCard or PORT should be coded to 73086. Reimbursements to employees will be paid via payroll and the appropriate withholdings will be deducted at the time of reimbursement. The value of the payments made to third parties will be added to employee paychecks as a noncash benefit and withholdings will be deducted accordingly. The payment amount will determine the number of payrolls the noncash benefit will be deducted.

Sponsorships

External sponsorships may be allowed from state and/or nonstate funds if there is a clearly written,

documented benefit to the University or to the sponsoring department. For example, the ECU Regional Development Office sponsors the North Carolina Eastern Region Entrepreneurship Summit. The Office of Undergraduate Research sponsors the State of North Carolina Undergraduate Research and Creativity Symposium. Undergraduate students who participate in this annual event benefit by presenting their own research as a representative of the University and observing the presentations of other undergraduates. If a sponsorship is paid from either state fund 111102 or state fund 111103 and a department desires to share the cost, split-code the invoice. If this cannot be done, reclassify the expense by journal entry. State funds cannot be used to pay for sponsorships to 501(c)3 organizations under any circumstances.

Fund Codes

The fund code identifies the “owner” of the fund. The [University Fund Types Report](#) lists fund types and contact information and is located on Financial Services Controller’s Office website.

Organization Codes

The organization code is the designation for departmental subdivisions within the University which identifies a unit of budgetary responsibility and is used to define “who” spends the money.

Expenditure Account Codes

Expenditure account codes are codes that must be used when processing financial transactions to identify various classes of expenditures, for example, salaries, travel, supplies, equipment, etc. The actual codes will provide even more detailed breakdowns of these groupings. This coding scheme gives the University the ability to create reports that include, or are broken down by, the various classes of expenditures.

Information regarding expenditure account codes for coding expenditures may be found by logging into the [Banner e~Print System](#) and viewing the account code listing report, FGRACTH (Account Hierarchy Report).

Program (Purpose) Code Attributes

Program (purpose) codes are codes that help to classify financial activity by its function, for example, instruction, institutional support, research, or public service. With the exception of a few grants, these codes should not be used to code a financial transaction but are built into the financial system for each fund at the time the fund is created. Because of the need to report financial activity by function, a fund may not be classified into more than one function.

Funding Sources

General Fund (State)

State Budget Codes - General Operating Funds

The University has two state budget codes. Budget code 16065 (funds 111xxx) is for all of campus except for the dental and medical schools which use budget code 16066 (funds 112xxx). These funds consist of state appropriated funds and receipt supported funds in the state budget codes. With the exception of a small percentage of appropriation that is statutorily allowed to be “carried forward” to the subsequent fiscal year, general operating funds must be expended by the end of the fiscal year. The University follows the rules, regulations and guidelines set forth in the Budget Manual prepared by the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM).

Unallowable Purchases from State Budget Codes

There are some purchases that are specifically not allowable from state funds. Examples include the following:

- Alcoholic beverages, “setups”, drinks, or food items;
- Contributions and donations;
- Decorations (seasonal or otherwise);
- Excess per diem for meals on travel status;
- Employee meals/per diem when not on travel status;
- Extra insurance for rental cars – (see Travel Manual);
- Flower arrangements, cut flowers, works of art, paintings, drawings, pictures, plaques, plants, etc. Decorative/aesthetic items may be purchased for public areas such as lounges, hallways, and reception areas.
- Food, coffee, tea, drinks, bottled water, candy, snacks, break refreshments, etc. except for those provided under University and state travel regulations. The State Budget Manual gives specific requirements and limitations for internal and external conferences.
- Get well cards, sympathy cards, birthday cards, thank you cards or holiday cards;
- Gifts or items of recognition (regalia, lanyards, cords, ribbons, plaques, awards, prizes) unless recognizing years of service or items related to the graduation fee;
- Medications (pain relievers, aspirin, etc.), shots, and/or medical supplies for staff/employees other than as may be required by federal or state regulations or for emergency first aid.
- Multi-year agreements not with original purchase and multi-year agreements where vendor requires up-front payment for all years;
- Paper products (cups, napkins, plates, utensils, etc.);
- Penalties or late fees; *
- Personal clothing items or t-shirts which are not part of required uniforms, safety related, or required program-related;
- Personalized or personal use items (Kleenex, hand sanitizer or disinfectant wipes (except in a medical setting or during a pandemic), desk name plates, personal memberships, wireless routers for home use, etc.). Name badges may be purchased with state funds as long as the position requires such identification. The badge must be worn during all work hours.
- Pre-payments;
- Rental fees for non-State owned buildings for retreats, meetings, etc. (Reservation fees

* Note, travel penalties and charges incurred due to extraordinary circumstances like natural disasters, weather events, and pandemic events, are permissible.

charged by Central Reservations Office are allowable on state funds.)

- Rental of portable water dispensers, coffee pots, or tablecloths or the purchase of items related to refreshments;
- Search expenses for travel related to SHRA employees;
- Staff development expenses (Ropes courses, motivational speakers, etc.);
- Student registration fees unless on official state business;
- Window curtains and draperies made of cloth (blinds, shades, etc. may be ordered through Facilities' work order system).

The University may employ a private employment search firm to conduct employment searches for difficult to fill professional and managerial vacancies. Non-state funds shall be used to pay these costs to the maximum extent possible. State funds may be used for EHRA positions only when non-state funds are not available.

State Appropriated Carryforward Funds

State appropriated carryforward funds are State operating funds which have not been expended as of June 30 of a fiscal year and have been approved to “carry forward” as budget in the next fiscal year. Expenditures of these funds follow the same guidelines as normal State appropriated operating funds except that, with the appropriate approvals related to capital improvement budgets, and inclusion in the budget flexibility plan, funds may be transferred to capital improvement codes and used for renovation and/or new construction projects. Once transferred to a capital improvement code, the carryforward funds cannot be transferred back to an operating code.

Institutional Trust Funds ([General Statute 116-36.1](#))

Institutional Trust Funds are Proprietary Funds on deposit with the North Carolina Department of State Treasurer and are considered a type of State funds by G.S. 143C-1-1. They are not subject to the budget process of the State Budget Act; however, these funds are subject to other applicable statutes and session laws such as capital projects, travel, and personnel. Categories of Institutional Trust Funds follow.

Auxiliary and Student Fee Trust Funds

Auxiliary and similar operations include, but are not limited to, the Student Stores, Student Center, University Dining, Parking and Transportation, Campus Living, Student Health Services, University Printing and Graphics, and Central Stores. Expenditures from auxiliary funds and other institutional trust funds must follow the same guidelines used for state funds except when used for certain program related activities as noted in the fund authority for the respective fund. For example, student activity funds can pay for student programs including inflatables, bands, and giveaways. Expenditures must align with the approved fund authority form. No extra benefits, compensation, food, or any other item which could not be paid from state funds may be provided to University employees except as noted in sections below. The purchase of alcoholic beverages from auxiliary funds is prohibited.

Overhead Receipts Trust Funds

These funds are essentially indirect costs earned on grants. The facilities and administrative rate (F&A Rate) is the mechanism used to reimburse the University for the infrastructure support costs associated with sponsored research and other sponsored projects. Expenditures from overhead receipts funds must be related to research unless the receipts are from a grant that is not research related. Examples include public service or educational grants. In those cases, the overhead receipts fund expenditures should be related to those purposes. Under no circumstances may the following costs be charged to Overhead Receipt Funds.

- Alcoholic beverages
- Alumni activities
- Bad debts
- Charitable contributions, donations, gifts
- Commencement and convocation expenses
- Disallowed direct costs
- Entertainment costs
- Fines, penalties, damages, and other settlements
- Fund raising and investment management costs
- Investment costs, borrowed capital, etc.
- Legal costs
- Lobbying costs
- Memberships in country clubs, social or dining clubs and other organizations where purpose is lobbying
- Organizational costs of establishing a new organization e.g., broker's fees, incorporation fees, attorneys, etc.
- Personal use goods or services
- Selling and marketing costs of products or services
- Student activities costs (publications, clubs, athletics, etc.)
- Travel or subsistence or living allowances for Board of Trustees or Board of Governors.

The Office of Research Administration [website](#) has a link to [Policy, Guidance, and SOPs](#) with additional information in the [Section 510 Allowable Costs - Cost Principles](#) document. (Note: Security access is required.)

Receipts from Vending Facilities Trust Funds

Per North Carolina general statutes [N.C.G.S. 116-2. and N.C.G.S. 111-42(d)], the term “vending facilities” includes both of the following descriptions:

- a. any mechanical or electronic device dispensing items or something of value or entertainment or services for a fee, regardless of the method of activation, and regardless of the means of payment, whether by coin, currency, tokens, or other means; and
- b. a snack bar, cafeteria, restaurant, café, concession stand, vending stand, cart services, or other facilities at which food, drinks, novelties, newspapers, periodicals, confections, souvenirs, tobacco products or related items are regularly sold.

UNC Board of Governors [Policy 600.5.1](#) restricts the use of vending receipts. The following uses of net proceeds from the operations of vending facilities are authorized:

- a. Scholarships and other direct student financial aid programs;
- b. Debt service on self-liquidating facilities;
- c. Any of the following student activities if authorized by the Chancellor:
 - Social and recreational activities for students residing in self-supporting Housing & Residence Life facilities. However, expenditures for these purposes shall not exceed the amount of total net proceeds derived from vending facilities located in such facilities;
 - Special orientation programs for targeted groups of students (e.g., peer mentor programs);
 - Operating expenses of scholarships and student awards and honors programs; and
 - Supplementary student center operating support. However, expenditures for this purpose shall not exceed the total net proceeds derived from vending facilities located in such student center facilities.
- d. Specified use of net proceeds as a condition of certain gifts, grants, or bequests. For example, a condition of a gift of a vending facility to the University might be that proceeds are to support some specific segment of the University.
- e. Retention to provide for working capital, replacement of facilities and equipment, and other purposes to support the continuing, orderly operation of the particular self-supporting service operation.
- f. Transfers to other self-supporting student service operations and authorized capital improvement projects, upon the written recommendation of the University's Chancellor and subject to the written, advance approval of the UNC President. [N.C.G.S. 116-36.4]

Sponsored Programs Trust Funds

Sponsored Program awards are restricted funds received from federal, state, municipal, non-profit, and industrial entities restricted to support a specific use or purpose defined in the award document or agreement. These funds must follow all state appropriated funds guidelines, sponsor specific terms, and conditions noted in the awards documents unless excepted as noted below.

Exceptions to the state funds guidelines must be discussed with/approved by the Chief Research Officer for Research, Economic Development, and Engagement or the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research Administration and Compliance. An example of an exception would include allowances for food costs for seminars or workshops associated with the objectives of the award.

Sponsored Program funds may also be subject to Cost Accounting Standards (CAS) or other

requirements set forth in Title 2 CFR 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, commonly referred to as [Uniform Guidance \(UG\)](#), or other federal regulations or specific sponsor guidelines. Cost Accounting Standards and UG are applicable to Federal and Federal flow through awards. In general, ECU adheres to the UG cost standards on all sponsored programs, regardless of sponsor, unless the sponsor specifically states costs allowability/restrictions. In these instances, ECU costing guidance applies, meaning that if the sponsor allows a certain cost, but ECU does not, the ECU policy applies. All Cost Accounting Standards, UG, and any other sponsor exceptions must be approved by Office of Research Administration (ORA). Refer to ORA's website, [510.01 - Allowable Cost Exception Requests](#), for procedures to seek and approve exceptions to general costing standards.

Sometimes University requirements may be more restrictive than sponsor requirements or sponsor requirements may be more restrictive than University requirements. In most cases, the most restrictive policy will apply to a financial transaction. ORA will work with the sponsor to ensure that appropriate costs are allowed within ECU's policies. Any exceptions must be approved by ORA.

The Principal Investigator (PI) has the responsibility to monitor the budget, ensure that proper documentation procedures are followed and that only authorized expenditures are charged to a sponsored project. The PI is responsible for ensuring that sponsored projects' funds are reviewed monthly, and any errors found are corrected on a timely basis. While processing of transactional documents and forms may be delegated within the unit, that does not relieve the PI of fiscal responsibility and accountability for his/her sponsored project funds.

For additional information on sponsored projects spending guidelines, see the ORA [website](#) for the link to [Policy, Guidance, and SOPs](#) with additional information in the [Section 510 Allowable Costs - Cost Principles](#) document. (Note: Security access is required.)

Residual Funds Related to Grants and Contracts Trust Funds

When the University is authorized by the sponsor to retain unobligated fund balances, expenditures of remaining balances must be related to research unless the fund balances are from grants and contracts that are not research related. Examples include public service or educational grants and contracts. In those cases, the residual fund expenditures should be related to those purposes.

Gift and Endowment Income Trust Funds

Expenditures from gift and endowment income funds must be made prudently with the intent of the donor in mind and follow the restrictions set by the donor as evidenced in the fund authority. The primary purpose of an expenditure must be for the benefit of the University and, therefore, not for the direct benefit of an employee.

Endowment Principal Trust Funds

Endowment principal funds are funds provided to the University, normally in the form of a trust or gift, for investment to generate income. The income may be unrestricted or restricted for a particular purpose.

The request for an endowment fund should include the following:

- Original or copy of the gift agreement, bequest or other gift document;
- Description of the source of funds;
- Purpose of the fund, how the income earned is to be used - in support of what activity or function;
- Any restrictions on the types of allowable expenditures;
- Name of person authorized to spend endowment income;
- Name of fund.

Expenditures are not allowable against these endowment principal funds. All endowment related expenditures must be made from *endowment spendable funds*.

Endowment Spendable Trust Funds

Once the fair market value of an endowment, as a percentage of the corpus value, meets a designated threshold, a spending distribution may be made. The ECU Foundation Board of Directors and the University Endowment Board determine the designated threshold and spending distribution rate for endowment funds under their respective control. This results in uniformity of the threshold and spending distribution rate. The Board of Directors of the other University affiliated foundations determine the threshold and spending distribution rate for their respective endowment funds. All expenditures from an endowment spendable fund must be approved and must adhere to the purpose of the fund as outlined in the fund authority.

Patent Royalty Trust Funds

Patent royalty funds are royalties derived from licensing of a patent. These funds must be used for support of research.

ECU Health Trust Funds

These funds include fees and other payments for services rendered by professionals under the University's approved practice plan. These funds may be utilized to maintain and/or improve the areas of teaching, research, patient care, public service, and support administration of the practice plan. Purchased items may fall outside the state funds guidelines for incentive bonuses, food and beverages for recruitment, Grand Rounds or student and resident events.

ECU School of Dental Medicine (SoDM) Trust Funds

These funds include fees and other payments for services rendered by faculty and clinical staff. These funds may be utilized to maintain and/or improve the areas of teaching, research, patient care, public service, and support administration of the School of Dental Medicine. They also may be used to purchase items falling outside the state funds guidelines for incentive bonuses, food and beverages for recruitment, or student and resident events. Also included in the SoDM Trust Funds are selected student fees which are used for the purposes approved in the University Tuition and Fee approval process.

Discretionary Trust Funds

Discretionary funds are for a specific purpose and can be used to meet a broad range of University needs. The flexibility that is associated with discretionary funds is vitally important to the University. At the same time expenditures of discretionary funds must be consistent with a number of general guidelines as set out below.

Each expenditure of discretionary funds must be for a valid University purpose. These expenditures (whether for meals, travel, lodging, entertainment, official functions, gifts and awards, or memberships) must follow all University policies that apply to that type of expenditure and must be accompanied by appropriate documentation including receipt(s), purpose, date, location, and names of persons involved.

The very flexibility associated with discretionary funds means that determining the propriety of some expenditures will require judgment. In these cases, the prudent person test applies. The individual making the decision about the expenditure must be comfortable with the prospect that the specific expenditure would come under the scrutiny of individuals outside the University.

Expenditures that confer a personal benefit upon the individual authorizing the expenditures are not allowable. Expenditures for items such as employee achievement or recognition awards and retirement gifts that are authorized by one individual to be received by another are allowable as discussed below.

Employee Achievement or Recognition Awards and Retirement Gifts

Awards/Gifts to Employees: Achievement and recognition awards may be purchased for employees. IRS regulations state that employees may accept gifts not to exceed \$25 in value. The award may not be cash or cash equivalent (a gift certificate, gift card, or prepaid tickets). Any awards in excess of \$25 must be reported to the Payroll Office to be included in the individual's Form W-2.

Retirement Awards/Gifts: The IRS will allow employee achievement awards that recognize length of service. The award cannot be cash, or cash equivalent (a gift certificate, gift card, or prepaid tickets). The value of the gift can be up to \$25 for every year of service, not to exceed \$400.

IRS guidelines for employee achievement awards that recognize length of service or safety records state that expenditures:

- Cannot be disguised as wages;
- Must be awarded as part of a meaningful presentation;
- Cannot be cash, cash equivalent (gift certificate, gift card, or prepaid tickets), vacation, meals, lodging, theatre or sports tickets, or securities.

Non-travel Related Restaurant Charges

There are unique requirements for certain purchases, such as restaurant charges, to be paid from discretionary funds. While business purpose justification can be provided for working breakfasts,

lunches, and dinners, IRS guidelines allow this type of reimbursement only on an occasional – not a routine – basis. Restaurant charges may be allowable if documented with an agenda describing the business purpose of the meeting and a list of attendees. Unless ECU employees are participating in an internal conference, meals including *only* ECU employees must be paid for from their personal funds. (Exceptions to this include an occasional holiday or annual event and the case where an internal candidate has a meal related to the interview/search process.)

In the case of a restaurant that does not provide itemized receipts, the requestor must certify in writing that no non-food items were purchased regardless of funding source. Grant and/or contract guidelines and any other fund guidelines all apply.

Contributions and Donations

Use of discretionary funds for donations or contributions to non-profit organizations is not permitted unless a substantial University purpose can be demonstrated and the receipt of the donation by the organization does not threaten the tax-exempt status of the University or its foundations. Political contributions are not allowed.

Special Funds ([General Statute 116-36.2](#))

Special Funds are on deposit with the North Carolina Department of State Treasurer, and although outside of the General Fund and Institutional Trust Funds, are another type of State funds. They are not subject to the budget process of the State Budget Act; but they are subject to other applicable statutes and session laws such as capital projects, travel, and personnel. Categories of Special Funds follow.

Intercollegiate Athletic Funds

These funds are generated by the student athletic fee, gate receipts, and other related revenues and are used to support intercollegiate athletic programs of the University.

Agency Trust Funds

This category includes funds held by the University as fiscal agent for student, faculty, and staff organizations where it has been deemed in the best interests of the University to provide an accounting service. These funds do not belong to the University and the University does not determine what they can be spent for except as follows:

- a. The University requires a formal approval process to ensure, to the extent possible, that funds in these projects are not misused.
- b. The funds should not be spent for any purpose which would be detrimental to the image of the University.

Adequate documentation is required to ensure that an authorized person is initiating an expenditure request.

Foundation Funds

The University affiliated foundations are legally separate organizations and are not subject to the University and State spending policies specified in this document. However, all expenditures from foundation funds must follow restrictions set by the donor and should be supported by appropriate documentation and approvals. See the [ECU Foundation Website](#) under “Governance Documents” for the [ECU Foundation, Inc. Expenditure Policy](#). See the [ECU Medical & Health Sciences Foundation Website](#) under “Governance Documents” for the [ECU Medical & Health Sciences Foundation, Inc. Expenditure Policy](#). For information about the [ECU Educational Foundation](#) (AKA “Pirate Club”) expenditure policy, contact the Athletics Business Office at athleticsbusiness@ecu.edu.

Additional Information

Expediting Fee for H-1B Visa Forms (Form I-907)

Normal processing of an H-1B petition may take between 4-7 months, while paying a premium processing (expediting) fee will ensure a response within 15 calendar days.

Payments for expediting fees for H-1B Visa Forms may track the salary funding source so long as the payment is made for a business reason and for the convenience of the University and not for the employee. Regardless, contracts and grants funds may not be used to pay the fee for any reason. The expediting fee is considered a business expense and is classified as a recruiting expense and/or a retention expense. Some examples of appropriate funding sources are as follows:

Salary Source

Possible Funding Sources for Expediting Fee

State funds

State funds or discretionary funds

Contracts/Grants

Discretionary funds

Gift funds

Gift funds or discretionary funds

Contact Information for Questions

Questions may be addressed to the appropriate Budget Office as listed in the [Funding Source Contacts](#) located on the [Controller’s Office](#) page of the [Financial Services](#) website.

Resources

1. [East Carolina University Policy Manual](#)
2. [North Carolina State Budget Manual](#)
3. [UNC System Code and Policy Manual](#)
4. [ECU Financial Services Website](#)
5. [ECU Materials Management Website](#)

Appendix

Appendix A: Quick Reference Guide of Spending Rules by Fund Source

	State Funds	Institutional Trust Funds			
		Contracts & Grants Funds	Auxiliary & Int. Service Funds	Other Inst. Trust Funds	Discretionary Funds
Moving expenses	Yes ¹	No	Yes ¹	Yes ¹	Yes ¹
Travel reimbursements	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Membership dues	Yes ²	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Passports & Visas	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Employee awards	Yes ³	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) fees	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Food & Refreshments (non-travel related)	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Financial aid/scholarships to students	Yes ⁴	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Promotional items of nominal value	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Alcoholic beverages & set-ups	No	No	No	No	Yes
Medications and/or medical supplies for personal use	No	No	No	No	No
Microwave ovens, refrigerators, coffee pots	No	No	Yes ⁵	Yes ⁵	Yes ⁵
Framed artwork or diplomas	No	No	Yes ⁵	Yes ⁵	Yes ⁵
Party items or decorations	No	No	No	No	Yes
Gifts, flowers/plants, cards	No	No	No	No	Yes
Personal clothing with University logo	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Personal clothing	No	No	No	No	No
Other items for personal use	No	No	No	No	No

- This Quick Reference Guide reflects the rules that generally apply in the **majority** of situations (80% plus). It is NOT all inclusive.
- A **YES** may require: Specific Criteria to be met, adherence to Restrictions, appropriate Documentation, Authorization and Approvals.
- For **NO**, authorized exceptions for specific situations may exist.
- The User of this Quick Reference Guide should always research the Spending Guidelines Document in its entirety, as well as the applicable policies and procedures, before making a final determination of appropriate spending from the various fund sources.
- If your research fails to resolve your spending question, please contact the appropriate Budget Office as listed in the [Funding Source Contacts](#) for further discussion and resolution of your question.

1 Only as allowed by G.S. 138-8 and Section 6.8 and 6.9 of the State Budget Manual.

2 The membership must belong to the “position” and not to the person and/or must have a business purpose such as a discount for CPE and/or resources available for the member.

3 Only Service Awards.

4 Allowed only in programs approved by the Board of Governors (departments are not authorized to give scholarships at will).

5 Allowable in common space but not in an individual office.