

Introduction

This document sets out MaPS' Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

Policy Summary

The policy applies to all colleagues and Non-Executive Directors. If you find that you are not able to fulfil the requirements of your role within these policies, please raise this in advance with your line manager and Director. Our aim is to ensure all reasonable requirements are met.

Please also refer to MaPS' Expenses Policies on how to claim hospitality. Please include the evidence of a Director's agreement (for example their email or signed authority) with your expenses.

Publication

Board Member hospitality information are published quarterly.

Money and Pensions Service is also subject to Freedom of Information requests, so routine publication eases this and also increases transparency.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles that underpin this policy are:

Value for Money

As a public body, MaPS operate to the principles of Managing Public Money and Cabinet Office Spend Controls. Any spending should be reasonable and justifiable. Please remember that we are funded by levy and by taxpayers, and the customers we serve often have limited financial resources, so an expense claim may be judged in that context.

Reasonable and Justified

This policy is for guidance and should be applicable in most circumstances, but we recognise that that this will not always be the case. Requested variations this policy will be reviewed on an individual basis by travel budget holders, always with a view to a common-sense solution for you.

Safety and Security

You should always feel safe and secure when travelling or staying overnight on MaPS business. Always raise any concerns you may have about future travel or accommodation arrangements at the earliest opportunity so we can ensure your safety and wellbeing.

Providing Hospitality on Our Premises

Hospitality should not be provided for MaPS colleagues for internal meetings and in-house training outside of the guidelines below.

Subsistence to a maximum value of £5 per-head can be provided for internal staff meetings that last more than 3 hours and completely cover the core lunchtime hours of 11:30am – 2:30pm. Spending must be pre-approved by your Director.

Working lunches for conventional office-based activities will not be reimbursed.

Budget Holders can approve the provision of a lunch for a formal external MaPS event for MaPS

colleagues if there is a business justification, value for money and a requirement in the structure of the event timetable.

The cost of refreshments purchased outside MaPS offices for members of the public who are assisting MAPS will be eligible for reimbursement e.g. tea/coffee. Claims for hospitality must state who was entertained, the reason and be supported by a receipt.

Hospitality expenses for meetings e.g. working lunches that include external stakeholders (not Public Sector) will be reimbursed. The claim must state who was entertained, the reason for the meeting, be supported by receipts and have been approved by a relevant Budget Approver (include a copy of the approval).

Alcohol will not be paid for under any circumstances.

Who Can Provide Hospitality?

The Chair, Chief Executive Officer, Non-Executive Directors and Directors may offer hospitality to external parties.

Hospitality to external parties may only be offered by other colleagues if they have been pre-approved to do so by their Director.

How Much is Appropriate?

Any spending should be reasonable and justifiable.

'Reasonableness' will depend on circumstances and discretion should be exercised: your line manager or the Head of Governance can advise.

£30 a head would be considered reasonable in most situations for a working lunch or breakfast, and £50 a head for a working dinner or for events/conferences with external stakeholders and for yourself.

Depending on the nature of the hospitality and context, a higher expenditure may be permissible as approved by the Accounting Officer.

You can claim the cost of your own meal as well as for guests

Working breakfast/lunches/dinner should not include alcohol. If they do the alcohol cannot be reclaimed.

You should also consider the appropriate frequency and remember that this may be judged in the context of all hospitality provided to a particular external organisation (i.e. to other guests from the organisation and from other hosts from Money and Pensions Service) – please check Money and Pensions Service's hospitality register if necessary.

Leaving gifts or other presents to staff cannot be funded via expenses.

How to Reclaim Hospitality Costs

To recoup the cost, an expense claim should be completed for the total (including the cost of your own meal) and claimed on Concur.

In addition, you must report the hospitality to the Head of Governance to record in the Money and Pensions Service hospitality register. You should attach the receipts (which may be published) and it should be authorised by the appropriate Director. Please make sure that you do not include the cost

of any alcohol in your claim.

Receiving Hospitality or Gifts

Hospitality or gifts to MaPS colleagues must be reported whether or not these are accepted

It's important that Money and Pensions Service's impartiality is not perceived to be compromised, so please consider carefully whether it is appropriate to accept hospitality or gifts. If in doubt, discuss with your line manager or the Head of Governance.

It is not appropriate to accept gifts such as cash, vouchers, tickets for sporting events or concerts.

Please record promptly all hospitality (over £5) or gifts offered, and whether or not it was accepted, in Money and Pensions Service's hospitality register, maintained by the Head of Governance.

In general, there is no need to record hospitality where attendees (personally) contribute equally or reciprocate. However, you should consider whether the other party is likely to be claiming the costs as a business expense rather than a personal cost. If so, you should report this as hospitality