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## PART 301-16--CONFERENCE PLANNING

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Authority: 5 U.S.C. 5701-5709; E.O. 11609, 36 FR 13747, 3 CFR, 1971-1975 Comp., p. 586.

### § 301-16.1 Policy.

It is the policy of the Government that agencies shall exercise strict fiscal responsibility by selecting conference sites that minimize conference administrative costs (as defined in [§ 301-16.2\(b\)](#) of this part), conference attendees' travel costs (as defined in [§ 301-16.2\(c\)](#) of this part), and conference attendees' time costs (as defined in [§ 301-16.2\(d\)](#) of this part). It also is the policy of the Government that agencies shall minimize conference attendees' travel costs by authorizing the minimum number of attendees necessary to accomplish the agency's goals.

### § 301-16.2 Definitions.

(a) **Conference.** The term "conference" means a meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, or similar event that involves attendee travel. The term "conference" also means a training activity that involves attendee travel when the training activity is considered a conference under Chapter 410 of the Federal Personnel Manual (Copies may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.) and its accompanying instructional letters.

(b) **Conference administrative costs.** The term "conference administrative costs" includes the cost of conference facilities, registration fees, speaker fees, and conference-related administrative fees paid by the Government for a conference, whether paid directly by agencies or reimbursed by agencies to travelers or others associated with the conference.

(c) **Conference attendees' travel costs.** The term "conference attendees' travel costs" includes attendees' subsistence expenses (including

lodging and meals and incidental expenses (M&IE)) and transportation costs authorized at Government expense.

(d) **Conference attendees' time costs.** The term "conference attendees' time costs" means the cost of employees' time spent at the conference (including time spent while performing en route travel during normal duty hours).

(e) **Conference site.** For purposes of this part, the term "conference site" means the locality or geographic area where the conference is held.

(f) **Conference facilities.** For purposes of this part, the term "conference facilities" means the meeting rooms and lodging accommodations where the conference is conducted.

**§ 301-16.3 Authorization of Government sponsorship or co-sponsorship of a conference.**

(a) **General.** A senior agency official shall authorize Government sponsorship or co-sponsorship of a conference which involves travel by 30 or more employees.

(b) **Prohibition on use of a place of public accommodation that is not an approved accommodation--**(1) *General rule.* As provided in 15 U.S.C. 2225a, an agency, as defined in [§ 301-17.2\(a\)](#) of this chapter, may not sponsor or fund in whole or in part a conference in any State, as defined in § 301-17.2(f) of this chapter, at a place of public accommodation that is not an approved accommodation as defined in [§ 301-17.2\(c\)](#) of this chapter, unless a waiver is granted under paragraph (b) (2) of this section. This prohibition also applies to Federal funds expended by the government of the District of Columbia.

(2) *Waiver of the prohibition on scheduling a conference at a place of public accommodation that is not an approved accommodation.* An agency, as defined in [§ 301-17.2\(a\)](#) of this chapter, may sponsor or fund in whole or in part a conference in any State, as defined in § 301-17.2(f) of this chapter, at a place of public accommodation that is not an approved accommodation when the agency head waives the prohibition in paragraph (b) (1) of this section based on his/her written determination that such waiver is necessary in the public interest for a particular event. The agency head may delegate the authority to waive the prohibition in paragraph (b) (1) of this section to a senior level official if such official is given the authority with respect to all conferences sponsored or funded by the agency.

(3) *Requirement to include prohibition notice on advertisements and applications for attendance at a conference.* As required by 15 U.S.C. 2225a, any advertisement or application for attendance at a conference sponsored or funded in whole or in part by an agency in any State, as defined in § 301-17.2(f) of this chapter, shall include a notice of the prohibition contained in paragraph (b) (1) of this section on holding a conference at a place of public accommodation that is not an approved accommodation. An agency shall not be required to include notice of the

prohibition in any advertisement or application for attendance at a conference, however, when the agency head, or his/her designee, waives the prohibition in accordance with paragraph (b) (2) of this section.

(4) *Notification to non-Federal entities receiving Federal funds of the prohibition on scheduling a conference at a place of public accommodation that is not an approved accommodation.* As provided in 15 U.S.C. 2225a, an Executive agency, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105, which provides Federal funds to a non-Federal entity shall notify the non-Federal entity receiving such funds of the prohibition contained in paragraph (b) (1) of this section.

#### **§ 301-16.4 Selection of a conference site.**

(a) **Agency responsibilities--**(1) *Agency policy.* Each agency shall establish policies governing conference site selection that minimize conference administrative costs and conference attendees' travel costs to be paid by the Government, as well as conference attendees' time costs. Agencies should use Government-owned or Government-provided conference facilities to the maximum extent possible, and generally should avoid consideration of conference sites that might appear extravagant to the public. However, when a true cost savings would accrue to the Government in the selection of a particular conference site (e.g., through the availability of attractive and competitive rates during the off-season in areas having seasonal rates), agencies should avail themselves of the opportunity to save costs in selecting a conference site.

(2) *Authorization of conference site selection.* The authorization to conduct a conference at a selected site when the conference involves travel by 30 or more employees must be granted by a senior agency official.

(b) **Documentation.** When a conference involves travel by 30 or more employees, the agency shall document the cost of each alternative conference site, and retain a record of the documentation for every conference held. The agency shall make the documentation available for inspection by the agency's Office of Inspector General or other interested parties.

(c) **Restrictions on selection of conference facilities--**(1) *Approved accommodations.* When an agency, as defined in [§ 301-17.2\(a\)](#) of this chapter, holds a conference at a place of public accommodation, as defined in [§ 301-17.2\(b\)](#) of this chapter, the agency shall use an approved accommodation as defined in [§ 301-17.2\(c\)](#) of this chapter unless a waiver is granted under [§ 301-16.3\(b\)\(2\)](#) of this part. Any advertisement or application for attendance at the conference shall include notice of the prohibition on using a place of public accommodation that is not an approved accommodation in accordance with [§ 301-16.3\(b\)](#) of this part. In addition, any Executive agency as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105 shall notify all non-Federal entities to which it provides Federal funds of the prohibition.

(2) *Conferences within the District of Columbia.* Agencies may obtain short-term conference meeting space in the District of Columbia in accordance with 41 CFR 101-17.101-4. Direct procurement by an agency of lodging facilities in the District of Columbia without specific authorization and appropriation by the Congress is prohibited (see 40 U.S.C. 34). The provisions of this paragraph shall not be construed to prohibit payment of per diem to an employee who is authorized to obtain lodging in the District of Columbia while performing official business travel.

**§ 301-16.5 Selection of conference attendees.**

(a) **Agency responsibilities--**(1) *Agency policies and procedures.* Each agency shall establish policies and procedures designed to reduce the overall cost of attending conferences. The agency policy and procedures shall:

(i) Limit agency attendance to the minimum number of attendees

necessary for accomplishment of the agency's mission; and

(ii) Provide for consideration of travel expenses when selecting attendees.

(2) *Authorization of attendance.* A senior agency official shall authorize all employee conference attendance to be performed at Government expense.

(b) **Per diem.** Per diem is intended only to reimburse the attendee's individual subsistence expenses. Conference administrative costs are to be paid separately, and are not to be included in the attendee's subsistence reimbursement.

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