



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF STATE ETHICS

Reporting of Necessary Expenses and/or Gifts to the State Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I attended a conference in New Haven in my official capacity to learn about the latest developments in my professional field. The organizers of the conference reimbursed me for meals, travel costs and registration fees. Do I have to file a “Gifts to the State” report?

A: NO. Reporting for in-state events is required only if lodging is involved.

Q: My state agency is a dues paying member of a national organization comprised mostly of sister agencies from other states and the federal government. The organization itself is not considered a governmental entity but a nonprofit association. Two representatives from my agency are planning to travel to attend the organization’s annual conference in Chicago. Would the reporting requirement apply in this situation if the state agency is a dues paying member?

A: IT DEPENDS. If the dues paid by the state agency are sufficient and intended to cover the cost of the expenses to attend the annual conference, then no reporting is required. If, however, the cost of attending the conference by Connecticut officials is not covered by the dues (e.g., the membership dues cover only the administrative costs of operating the organization’s national office), then reporting is required.

Q: The national organization to which my agency belongs receives substantial funding from the federal and other governmental sources. The organization holds a number of seminars relevant to my state job. Do I have to file a “Gifts to the State” form for having received a payment from the organization for lodging and out-of-state travel when I attended an event in Washington, D.C.?

A: IT DEPENDS. Unless the federal government or another state government is specifically the source of payment or reimbursement of the cost of attending the seminars, reporting will be required.

Q: Is asking questions as a member of an audience considered active participation for purposes of the “necessary expenses” provision?

A: NO. Active participation requires some substantive official activity that is essential to the event (e.g., speech, participation on a panel, moderating a panel, presenting or receiving of an award, etc.).

Q: My state agency belongs to a multistate organization. Normally, attendance at events is covered by membership dues paid by all member states. One event, however, was funded by a national nonprofit foundation. With regards to this one event, do I have to report reimbursement of lodging expenses?

A: YES.

Q: If reporting is required, do I have to provide a breakdown of the costs of meals and lodging for an event I attended in my official capacity?

A: IT DEPENDS. If specific amounts are unknown because payment was made directly by the person or entity paying the expense, then no breakdown of the costs is necessary. The form has a checkbox to indicate that the amounts are unknown. At a minimum, a filer who has received payment for lodging, out-of-state travel, meals, and/or registration fees, etc., should list the receipt of such expenses without the breakdown of specific amounts. If, however, the payor of expenses disclosed to the filer the actual amounts paid, such amounts should be reported.

Q: A sponsor of an event at which I participated as a panelist paid for lodging and out-of-state travel before the event occurred. I am still awaiting reimbursement for meals and airport taxi. Should I wait until I receive all reimbursements before I file my necessary expenses report?

A: NO. If payment for lodging and out-of-state travel was made by the sponsor before the event occurred, the 30-day reporting period commences from the date of the event. You can always amend a previously filed form to add subsequent reimbursements for meals and airport taxi.

Q: I attended an event in Boston in my official capacity and the event was relevant to my state duties. I paid for my lodging and out-of-state travel. The host paid for meals and conference registration fees. Do I have to file a “Gifts to the State” form?

A: NO. Because you paid for your own lodging and/or out-of-state travel, you have no reporting obligation.