

FAQ's for Reimbursements:

Reimbursement Request Forms

- 1. Why doesn't the year to date field auto-populate after I enter the current period amount on the request form?**

Occasionally reductions in reimbursements occur and therefore the reimbursement form must be updated to reflect the denial. The year-to-date field is intended to be inclusive of any amount that may have been denied in previous reimbursement requests. Stakeholders will be notified via e-mail of any reductions in reimbursement requests and should make corrections to their current period and or year-to0date amounts.

- 2. I have not had any expenditure for the month. Do I still need to submit a reimbursement request form for the month?**

No. Stakeholders are only required to submit reimbursements when they have incurred expenses. These reimbursements should be sent either monthly or at least quarterly if expenses have been incurred.

- 3. The authorized signer is out of the office today and I want to get this request submitted. Can I sign as the preparer and the authorized signer?**

No. The reimbursement form must be signed by the preparer and another authorized signer. Accordingly, the State of Arizona Accounting Manual (SAAM) states the following:

Topic 05 Internal Controls; Section 05 General Internal Controls:

2. All transactions—payroll, disbursements, purchases; personnel actions, etc.—should be approved by a designated person. Any person designated an approval authority over any transaction should:

2.1. Be at the level of management appropriate for such authority.

2.2. Have the requisite operational, procedural and financial expertise to determine the appropriateness of the transactions over which he has approval authority.

- 4. How can I get more information about how to put together my packet for submission?**

Reimbursement instructions and the reimbursement form are always sent via e-mail to the financial point of contact as indicated in your application. Additionally, stakeholders can find the reimbursement instructions on our website at www.azdohs.gov, under General Information, Reimbursement Instructions for Homeland Security Grant Program.

- 5. I am requesting cell phone charges in my reimbursement packet. I'm not sure if they are invoiced in advance, or for the previous month. I want to know how I can make sure I am submitting for the correct reporting period.**

As an example, specifically, with Verizon bills, the dates shown on the "Quick Bill Summary" page are for the previous month and Verizon always bills a month in advance. The current amount due for the upcoming month can be found just above the Total Amount Due on the Quick Bill Summary just to the right of "Total Current Charges Due by (Date)." These dates can be found on the individual "Summary" pages.

It is important to note that stakeholders, whom have been awarded grants that include cell phones, mobile wireless devices, etc., should contact their provider and understand how these expenses are billed.

- 6. What dates do I put in the reporting period field of my reimbursement request form?**

These dates are at the stakeholders' discretion. As a suggestion, the "from" date could be the date when the first expense was encumbered and the "to" date could be when the final payment was made. If stakeholders are only submitting one reimbursement for the entire period of performance, then these dates could also be that entire period. Note: Both dates must be within the period of performance (POP) of the grant. As a reminder, per the Subrecipient agreement, you are required to submit reimbursements at least quarterly when expenses have been incurred.

- 7. We have a new finance/programmatic contact who will be taking over grant duties. What are our next steps and how can we ensure that they know how to put together the reimbursement request form?**

Our main priority at the AZDOHS is to make sure that our stakeholders are well informed of our processes and procedures and to reimburse them in the most expeditious manner possible. We recommend contacting the AZDOHS to inform us of these changes. We will require contact information such as name, position, e-mail address and phone number. Secondly, the AZDOHS has developed new Subrecipient training. We will contact the new employee and conduct a one-on-one programmatic and/or fiscal training which will provide them with the tools necessary to guarantee success. The new contact can refer to the AZDOHS website at www.azdohs.gov, under the General Information, Reimbursement Instructions for Homeland Security Grant Program.

- 8. Why don't you accept electronic submission of reimbursements?**

The AZDOHS and the State are looking into web-based systems for grants management. This solution; however, will take some time to procure and implement, in the meantime, stakeholders must submit reimbursements in hard copy. Submitting reimbursements via e-mail, which is the only platform that is currently available, is not an option due to the possibility of the e-mail getting lost in transition.

9. **I am on a strict diet and the food at the training/conference did not fit my dietary needs. Can I be reimbursed for my meal since I bought it somewhere else, even though a meal was included in the conference/training registration?**

Under Topic 50 – Travel of the State Accounting Manual, Section 25 Meals and incidentals parts 18 – 18.3 states that meals satisfying special dietary needs will generally be provided by airlines, conferences, etc., if requested. It is the traveler’s responsibility to make, on a timely basis, the necessary arrangements for such special needs. If the traveler’s request for a meal satisfying a special dietary need is denied (typically by the conference people), in order to claim a reimbursement for an expenditure related to a meal that otherwise would have been provided without cost to the traveler, the traveler must provide a statement that details and certifies, to whom the request was made, by whom the request was denied and the reason given for the denial.

10. **When should I submit for reimbursement?**

A reimbursement packet should be submitted no more than monthly and no less than quarterly for expenses that have been incurred. If no expenses have been incurred, then no reimbursement request is required (see question 2).

11. **My agency was awarded training and equipment expenses, but the equipment was more expensive than the quote. Is it okay if I expend more in my equipment line items and forgo some of the training that we were awarded?**

Project modifications that conform to the following conditions do not require AZDOHS, RAC, UASI or OPSGWG review and action.

- a. Does not exceed 10% (in aggregate) of the total award amount.
- b. Is less than \$25,000.00
- c. Is within approved budget categories.

Do not amend the budget in the reimbursement request form. The subrecipient may expend funds up to 10% or \$25,000, whichever is less, in excess of the budgeted amount for approved budget categories without a modification request as long as the agency under expends by a corresponding and equal amount from the remaining approved budget categories.

Reimbursement Supporting Documentation

1. **What documents other than the invoice are required when I am requesting payment for a credit or purchasing card purchase?**

Stakeholders will need to submit a copy of the credit card statement which shows the charges as well as proof of payment that the credit card statement was actually paid in full. This ensures that the AZDOHS is reimbursing actual cash outlays and not obligations to pay.

2. How do I need to arrange the items that are included in my request?

When submitting reimbursements, please place the supporting documentation (invoices, proof of payment, etc.) in the order in which they appear on the reimbursement request form. We encourage stakeholders to separate the supporting documentation with a paperclip, different color paper, or some other means for each category (POETE) on the reimbursement form.

3. I have travel-related expenses and the subgrantee agreement states that I will only be reimbursed per the State of Arizona Accounting Manual. Where can I find information regarding allowable travel rates?

Stakeholders can find all travel related information at the General Accounting Office website at: <https://gao.az.gov/publications/saam>. *Topic 50 contains information on Travel. If you have questions regarding Meals and Incidental expenses (commonly referred to as per diem) refer to section 25. Questions regarding allowable Hotel and Lodging expenses can be found in section 30. Expenses regarding Conferences, Conventions & Meetings can be found in section 40. All of the reimbursement rates can be found in section 95.* Stakeholders are encouraged to contact the AZDOHS with questions prior to expenditure of funds especially when dealing with travel.

4. Why do reimbursement rates for travel, meals and incidentals keep changing?

The State of Arizona's General Accounting Office (AZGOA) is in the process of updated rates more in-line with the federal reimbursement rates. You are encouraged to check the AZGOA website for updates, as rates may change.

5. Can I include tips to the house cleaning staff or tips on cab/Uber/Lift rides on my travel reimbursement request?

Incidentals include such things as baggage handling tips, house cleaning staff tips, cab fare tips, etc.,. The incidentals are a part of the total Meals and Incidentals rate for the day and that rate cannot be exceeded.

6. Can I rent a car if I am going out of town for a training/conference?

SAAM Topic 50, Section 15: Travel by Individually Operated Motor Vehicle policy 4.1 states that "a traveler may use a rented motor vehicle for official State business if it is the most cost effective, economical or only available means of travel." Furthermore, 2 CFR 200 § 200.403 states that a cost must (a) Be necessary and reasonable for the performance of the Federal award and be allocable thereto under these principles and (c) Be consistent with policies and procedures that apply uniformly to both federally-financed and other activities of the non-Federal entity."

Stakeholders should take these policies into consideration when determining whether it is necessary and reasonable to rent a vehicle for out of town travel. We strongly suggest that stakeholders conduct a cost-benefit analysis and provide that to the AZDOHS for pre-approval. Even if stakeholder management may determine that the cost is justified, the AZDOHS will conduct a review and may deny these charges during the reimbursement process (unless otherwise pre-approved).

7. The hotel I stayed at did not offer free Wi-Fi and I had to pay for it. Can I still be reimbursed for the expense?

Subject to the provisions and limitations outlined, the following may sometimes be reimbursed; Hotel Internet, Wi-Fi or hot spot connections if it can be demonstrated and documented that the Internet needed to be used for the purposes of the performance of the grant and was, indeed, used for State business. *See travel policy (topic 50) section 30 – Hotels, Motels and Lodging part 9.2.*

8. Do I submit for the actual gas used or for mileage?

Stakeholders will be reimbursed for mileage if a personally owned, department or fleet vehicle for a day or long-term trips was used. Stakeholders will be reimbursed for fuel only on a daily or weekly rental such as renting from a private company like AVIS, National etc., or if the vehicle is a fleet vehicle that is rented for the day or longer and a charge for that particular vehicle was invoiced.

9. I ordered equipment towards the end of the performance period of my grant but received it after the period of performance ended, can I still be reimbursed?

No. The equipment must be ordered and received (or installed) by the end of the period of performance (POP) in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

10. Do I need to send a copy of my purchase order?

As standard practice, the AZDOHS does not require purchase orders in reimbursement packets; however, the AZDOHS reserves the right to obtain all documentation regarding reimbursable expenses. Therefore, stakeholders should retain all supporting documentation in regards to expenses.

11. Do I need to send a copy of the packing slip?

Typically, AZDOHS does not require a packing slip or proof of receipt in the reimbursement packet, but may require it if the packet is submitted at the end of the POP or within the 45 day window after the POP ended. This is to make sure that the product was received before the POP ended.

Training/Exercise/Travel Supporting Documentation

1. What type of documentation is required for reimbursement?

Planning & Organization

If stakeholders are charging personnel (other than overtime and backfill), Time and Effort (T&E) reports will be required. A T&E report indicates the actual time that an employee devoted to Homeland Security Grants; and, therefore the amount of his/her salary that can be allocated to such grants. Stakeholders must use the AZDOHS T&E form which can be found at <http://www.azdohs.gov/grants> under "Stakeholder Forms." This form must account for 100% of the employee's time and must be signed by the employee and a supervisor.

In addition to T&E reports, any personnel charges must also include payroll records for personnel expenditures (including backfill, overtime and employee related expenses (ERE)).

Equipment

Invoices and proof of payment are required. Quotes cannot be submitted in lieu of invoices. In some cases stakeholders may be required to submit packing slips or receiving documents as proof of receipt as well as Purchase Orders. Stakeholders are prohibited from obligating funds before the period of performance begins or after it ends. All equipment must be received and invoiced by the last day of the period of performance. We may require copies of purchase orders or packing slips in situations where there may be ambiguity on whether the obligation was made outside of the period of performance or the equipment was not received and invoiced.

Training

If the training was sponsored the following is required: Agenda, duration, location, number of participants, sign-in roster, AZDOHS/DEMA Reimbursement Pre-Approval form (if training is scheduled/coordinated through DEMA).

If the training/conference includes travel the following is required: Agenda, registration receipt, hotel receipt showing a \$0 balance, documentation showing the hotel was conference/backup conference hotel, per diem request broken down by meal in compliance with the Arizona General Accounting Office travel policy rates, transportation receipts (i.e. airfare, shuttle/cab fare, etc.), and payroll records (if backfill/overtime expenditures are requested).

Exercise

Exercise expenditures require the following: Agenda, sign-in-roster, AZDOHS/DEMA Reimbursement Pre-Approval Request form and an Exercise After-Action Report (AAR)/Implementation Plan (IP). As a reminder, exercises must be conducted in compliance with HSEEP guidance.

Payments

1. Where do I send my request?

Requests should be mailed to:

Arizona Department of Homeland Security
1700 W. Washington Street, Suite 210
Phoenix, AZ 85007

The AZDOHS does not accept electronic submissions of reimbursement requests.

2. How long will it take to get reimbursed?

The average processing time for a reimbursement request is 30 – 45 days from the receipt of a complete reimbursement request packet.

3. Will I receive a check or electronic funds transfer (EFT) (Otherwise known as Automated Clearing House (ACH) deposits)?

Stakeholders who are not setup to receive ACH deposits will receive payment by check. Stakeholders wishing to receive payment by ACH must complete an ACH Vendor Authorization form (GAO-618 ACH Vendor Authorization) which can be located at <https://gao.az.gov/publications/forms> under “ACH and Vendor Forms.”

4. How do I identify this payment in my EFT?

Normally, in the body of the EFT payment, you should be able to see your Subrecipient agreement number and amount that was paid by the EFT. NOTE: if you have multiple awards for multiple years, (not only from AZDOHS, but other State agencies) you might see several payments combined into one EFT.

5. Why can't I get reimbursed based on federal rates?

Yes, these are federal grants, however; the SAAM requires that even when the travel is related to a federal grant, state rates are still used:

SAAM Topic 50; Section 05, Policy 12.1: “Even when the travel is financed using monies that were provided by the Federal Government or some other organization, individual, program, or funding source; employee reimbursements for meals and lodging are limited to State rates.”

Even though these are Federal grants, the AZDOHS is the State Administrative Agency (SAA). We are charged with the responsibility of administering funds, and pursuant to section XXIII (Governing Law and Contract Interpretation part a) of the Subrecipient Agreement, This Agreement shall be governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Arizona. Therefore, subrecipients will need to follow the reimbursement guidelines established by the General Accounting Office.

Other

1. Who do I contact when I have questions?

For programmatic question, please contact your designated Regional Strategic Planner. For financial question, please contact your designated Finance Project Specialist. Contact information can be located at <http://www.azdohs.gov/Contact.asp> .

2. Does my organization need to pay for expenses first?

Yes. Stakeholders are required to pay for their expenses out of other non-federal funds and then submit for reimbursement to AZDOHS. Per the Subrecipient Agreement section IV. b) “this grant is on a reimbursement basis only and is conditioned upon receipt of proof of payment and applicable, accurate and complete reimbursement documents, as deemed necessary by the AZDOHS, to be submitted by the Subrecipient.”