

Housestaff Rotation to Veterans Affairs Hospital – Meal Reimbursement Guidance

Olive View-UCLA Medical Center / David Geffen School of Medicine

Purpose

This guidance establishes the process for reimbursing eligible resident meal expenses while assigned to approved Veterans Affairs (VA) hospital rotations when the VA or UCLA does not provide a meal allowance, meal voucher, or catered meal. The reimbursement is intended to cover limited meals that are not otherwise provided and is not intended to supplement or duplicate meals provided by UCLA, the VA, or any other source.

Eligibility

Residents are eligible for reimbursement only when all of the following conditions are met:

- The resident is actively assigned to an approved VA hospital GMED or GERI rotation through Olive View-UCLA Medical Center.
- The meal is associated with an eligible service period, as outlined below.
- The VA is not providing a meal allowance, voucher, or other meal benefit for the applicable shift or day.
- The meal is not otherwise provided by UCLA, the VA, the resident's department, or another source.

Eligible Reimbursements

Eligible reimbursements are limited to the following:

- VA GMED rotations: Residents assigned to VA GMED-R or VA GMED-I may request reimbursement for one meal purchased during an approved long-call shift. Long-call meals may be reimbursed only for dates on which the resident is scheduled and works long call. If reimbursement is requested for a third long-call meal during the same rotation, additional documentation confirming the additional long-call shift(s) may be required.
- VA GERI rotations: Residents assigned to VA GERI may request reimbursement for one meal for each weekend day worked while on service. This is generally expected to equal one reimbursable weekend meal per week per resident.
- Weekday catered lunches provided by UCLA Monday through Friday are not eligible for additional reimbursement.
- No additional reimbursement is available for night shifts unless separately reviewed and approved in advance, as VA GMED and VA GERI rotations are not expected to include resident night shifts.

Reimbursement Limits

- Reimbursement is limited to a maximum of \$25 per eligible meal.
- The \$25 limit is inclusive of the meal, taxes, delivery fees, service fees, and tip.
- Any amount above the allowable limit is the responsibility of the resident and will not be reimbursed.
- Alcohol, gift cards, non-food items, and meals for individuals other than the eligible resident are not reimbursable.
- Reimbursement is only permitted during the dates the resident is actively assigned to the approved VA GMED or VA GERI rotation.

Reimbursement Process and Documentation

- Residents may purchase meals directly or use an app-based food delivery service.

- An itemized receipt is required for each reimbursement request. Credit card summaries or non-itemized receipts are not sufficient.
- Each request must be submitted including the resident's name, rotation, date of meal, basis for reimbursement (long call or weekend day worked), vendor, itemized receipt, and amount requested.
- Submissions must be made within 14 business days from the last day of the resident's rotation.
- All submissions must be combined in PDF format and emailed to Shiree Ballentine at SBallentine@mednet.ucla.edu.
- Requests are subject to administrative review. Incomplete, unsupported, duplicate, late, or non-allowable requests may be denied.

Changes to VA Meal Support

If the VA reinstates or otherwise provides a meal allowance, meal voucher, or equivalent meal benefit for these rotations, this reimbursement guidance will no longer apply to those meals unless reviewed and approved by the appropriate OVMC and DGSOM leadership.

Misuse of Reimbursement Policy

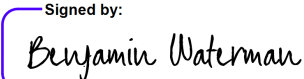
Misuse of the reimbursement process includes, but is not limited to:

- Submitting reimbursement requests while not assigned to an approved VA GMED or VA GERI rotation;
- Submitting reimbursement requests for dates when the resident did not work the applicable long-call shift or weekend service;
- Requesting reimbursement for weekday catered lunches or meals already provided by UCLA, the VA, the resident's department, or another source;
- Submitting duplicate, altered, inaccurate, incomplete, or unsupported documentation; and/or
- Exceeding the reimbursement limits outlined above.

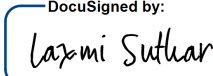
Misuse may result in the following actions:

1. First infraction: A warning may be issued, and any non-allowable amount will not be reimbursed.
2. Second infraction or major initial infraction: If a second infraction occurs, or if an initial infraction exceeds two times the allowable daily limit, the resident may be required to meet with the Program Director to review the matter and discuss accountability measures.
3. Repeated or serious misuse: Repeated or serious misuse may result in suspension of reimbursement eligibility and/or additional review under applicable program, department, or institutional policies.

Dr. Benjamin Waterman
Chief Medical Officer Olive View-UCLA Medical Center

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Dr. Laxmi Suthar
Designated Institutional Official- Olive View- UCLA Medical Center
Program Director UCLA- Olive View Internal Medicine Residency

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