

Recommendation on Per Diem Meal rates from Staff Council

Staff Council is incredibly grateful for the University allowing employees to travel for professional development opportunities, professional presentations, and to attend continuing education opportunities related to an employees' job. There are concerns with the current per diem reimbursement rates as they have not been adjusted in several years. Taking into consideration the current cost of inflation, Staff Council would like to propose adjustments to the meal reimbursement rates. We are willing and open to having further discussion surrounding per diem reimbursement rates and the information presented in this recommendation.

Based on the following information presented, Staff Council would like to make a formal recommendation that the ECU administration consider the two proposed adjustments to the per diem reimbursement rates for meals when traveling.

Data Review:

Data was collected from other state colleges and universities in Kentucky to determine what their per diem reimbursement rates were. We recognize this might not be a full comprehensive list of all higher education institutions in Kentucky as some did not respond to the request for data, however, it gives us enough data to make an informed recommendation.

Per Diem low-rate area:

Institution	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
EKU	7	8	15
UofL	9	14	23
NKU	8	10	18
KCTCS *in state overnight travel	11	14	24
Morehead	Did not hear back about request for data		
UK (Based on Louisville) *75% on first and last day traveled*	14	16	29
WKU	13	17	29

Per Diem high-rate area:

Institution	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
EKU	8	9	19
UofL	10	15	26
NKU	10	11	23
KCTCS *out of state overnight travel	12	15	29
Morehead	Did not hear back about request for data		
UK (Based on NYC) *75% on first and last day traveled*	18	20	36
WKU	14	18	32

We also collected the Kentucky State Government reimbursement rates.

State Govt. Kentucky:

Meal reimbursement rates for non-high rate areas shall be as follows:

- a. Breakfast: eight (8) dollars
- b. Lunch: ten (10) dollars
- c. Dinner: eighteen (18) dollars

Meal reimbursement rates for high rate areas shall be as follows:

- a. Breakfast: ten (10) dollars
- b. Lunch: eleven (11) dollars
- c. Dinner: twenty-three (23) dollars

https://finance.ky.gov/office-of-the-controller/office-of-statewide-accounting-services/Documents/Secretarys%20Order%2021_103.pdf

Proposed changes to ECU rates:

Based on the data collected, Staff Council would like to propose the following options for consideration on ECU's per diem reimbursement rates.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
EKU Current- Low	7	8	15
EKU Current- High	8	9	19
Proposed Option One			
State & NKU - Low	8	10	18
State & NKU - High	10	11	23
Proposed Option Two			
Avg. all KY data - Low	11	15	25
Avg. all KY data - High	13	16	30

Differences: Proposed Option 1– \$1, \$2 breakfast, \$2, \$2 lunch, \$3, \$4 dinner, more than current per diem.

Differences: Proposed Option 2– \$4, \$5 breakfast, \$7, \$7 lunch, \$10, \$10 dinner, more than current per diem.

Summary:

EKU has an outstanding workforce. Our employees can continue to grow professionally, bring back relevant content and ideas, as well as promote ECU across the nation by attending professional development opportunities. Providing reimbursement rates that are in line with inflation and the cost of meals today is a wonderful way of acknowledging employees for their work at these conferences and professional opportunities.

Staff Council would like to say that we are very appreciative of any increase to per diem rates, regardless of if it is option one, option two, or another agreed upon option. We understand the time and dedication it takes to review these data, and hope ECU will strongly consider an adjustment.