



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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Appendix E

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**Policy for Use of Emergency Preparedness Funds
To Attend Conferences and Trainings
Budget Period 5**

Training and continuing education are an important part of building and maintaining emergency-ready public health departments and healthcare organizations. There is increased emphasis by funders on ensuring that funds are utilized efficiently and effectively to advance regional preparedness. Training must be purposefully designed to close operational gaps and sustain jurisdictionally required preparedness competencies, and to achieve the capabilities established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR).

This policy establishes the criteria for use of Emergency Preparedness funds distributed by DPH OPEM to support participation by eligible local public health or healthcare personnel in conferences and trainings. It is the intent of this policy to provide a process that supports necessary training and education and ensures that all conference and training activities funded with emergency preparedness funds relate to identified preparedness capabilities.

In Budget Period 5 (BP5), a Public Health Coalition may use up to 10% or \$46,000 of CDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) funds, whichever is less, to support eligible expenses related to training and conference registration and travel costs over the course of the budget period.

Funding for training should be clearly identified in the budget, and documentation maintained to identify all personnel who have used emergency preparedness funding to attend a training or conference.

General Policy

Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition (HMCC) Sponsoring Organizations must submit a Training and Conference Request/Notification Form to the DPH OPEM at dphmcc@mass.gov prior to the conduct of or attendance at a training and conference that is supported by PHEP, HPP, or state funds.

Eligible Costs:

Emergency preparedness funds may be used for full conference/training registration fees if:

1. The in-state conference sponsor has sought and received prior approval from DPH OPEM documenting that the curriculum is designed to close operational gaps and sustain jurisdictionally required preparedness competencies; and
2. The attendee spends at least 50% of his or her time at the conference/training in eligible emergency preparedness session, based on the total of all training/session time; and
3. The attendee can provide a copy of his or her continuing education credit form or some other documentation of attendance to the HMCC Sponsoring Organization, if requested; and
4. There is a current written policy on file with the HMCC Sponsoring Organization that governs selection of personnel to attend approved conferences/trainings that will be supported by emergency preparedness funds.

Travel and Related Expenses:

Attendees must comply with their employer's or HMCC Sponsoring Organization existing travel policy as it pertains to expenditures for travel, overnight accommodations, meals and incidentals. It is the responsibility of the individual traveler to determine which policy is applicable. If there is not an employer or HMCC Sponsoring Organization travel policy in place, GSA rates must be used. In no case is it allowable to reimburse attendees for more than the scheduled GSA rates.

<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/110007>

Emergency preparedness funds may be used for travel expenses if the criteria below are met:

1. Travel:
 - a. Air travel must be coach or equivalent lowest cost option; and
 - b. Travel to/from the airport must be the most economical and reasonable method available. Carpooling is encouraged. Mileage is reimbursable; and
 - c. Additional reasonable costs including public transportation, shuttle, or taxi to/from the airport from home/office/hotel, airport parking, and tolls will be reimbursable with receipts. Car rentals are not reimbursable; and
 - d. Additional costs, such as seat upgrades or change fees, are not reimbursable.
2. Accommodations:
 - a. The one-way travel distance to the conference/training is 60 miles or greater from the attendee's office; and
 - b. Overnight accommodations are eligible for reimbursement the evening before a full day (at least 7 hours) of conference/training sessions which include eligible emergency preparedness sessions; and
 - c. Overnight accommodations for the evening of the final day of an out-of-state conference are eligible for reimbursement when traveling by air and if the

- conference/training ends at or after 3 p.m. on that day (conference time zone) and there is no scheduled flight available after that time that lands before 12:00 midnight; and
- d. Overnight accommodations for the evening of the final day of an in-state conference or training are not eligible for reimbursement.
3. Meals and Incidentals:
- a. Reimbursements may not exceed GSA per diem rates; and
 - b. Meal reimbursement will not be provided for meals which were provided by the conference organizer at no cost to the registrant over and above the conference/training registration fee; and
 - c. Emergency preparedness funds may not be used to purchase alcohol.