



## Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine Discretionary Spending Guidance

*For Departments & Central School*

### Policy Overview

This guidance outlines standardized discretionary spending policies for departments, institutes, and central school operating units within the School of Medicine (SOM). It promotes equitable, transparent, and mission-aligned use of discretionary funds by addressing historical inconsistencies and reinforcing fiscal responsibility. It also reflects messaging from President Daniels and Dean DeWeese, who have emphasized the importance of meeting FY26 discretionary spending goals through consistent, mission-driven financial stewardship. This policy is subject to all other applicable JHU financial and other policies.

### Support for Faculty Discretionary Spending

Discretionary expenses for faculty may be supported by departments based on budget availability and institutional priorities. Departments may choose to provide up to \$2000 annually per faculty from unrestricted funds (fund type 10 or 11 as appropriate to the type of expense). Any amount exceeding this threshold must be supported by designated (fund type 13) or restricted (fund types 20 or 30 ) funding sources. Spending should align with financial performance expectations and broader messaging from the JHU leadership and the Dean of the School of Medicine. Funds must be used within the fiscal year and cannot be banked or carried over.

Utilize existing support mechanisms from JHU when available. For example, optimize use of JHU reimbursement to Departments for registration fee to courses or conferences where faculty earn CME credits. Required Continuing Education Courses Program Details can be found online at:

<https://hr.jhu.edu/benefits-worklife/tuition-assistance/tuition-reimbursement/required-continuing-education-courses-outside-jhu/>

### Non-Sponsored Travel

1. Virtual First Policy: Encourage virtual attendance for conferences, meetings, and interviews, when appropriate for the type of business being conducted. Faculty are strongly encouraged to consider virtual attendance for meetings when available and appropriate.
2. Advance Authorization:
  - a. Require departmental or divisional pre-approval and clear justification for all non-sponsored travel, demonstrating alignment with institutional goals.
  - b. All international travel must be pre-approved by the department director.
3. Fares / Ticket Types / Class of Service should follow the guidelines in the JHU Travel Policy (PRO005).

4. Requirements:

- a. All travel must be booked through JHU Contracted Travel Management Company (TMC) (e.g., Concur), in accordance with the university's travel policy. Per the policy, if the TMC is not used, then costs must be similar to or less than costs under the TMC.
- b. Per-diem rates for meals and lodging must align with GSA guidelines. ([Per diem rates | GSA](#)). If submitting receipts for meal reimbursements, the total receipt expenses for a day cannot exceed the per diem rate for that location.
- c. For full details, refer to the official JHU Travel Policy (<https://www.jhu.edu/university-policies/>).
  - i. Find the official Johns Hopkins University travel policy and related guidelines in the university's Policy and Document Library: JHU Policy and Document Library – Travel Policies
  - ii. For specific travel and expense processing forms and procedures, including Concur guidance, visit: JHU Accounts Payable – Travel Forms and Policies

5. Travel Cards: No new individual travel cards should be issued without approval from the Vice Dean for Finance & Administration. Existing cards will be reviewed for continuation, and transactions will be audited for appropriate use.

## Meal & Food Expenses

1. Use JHU tax-free ID for meals:

- a. Present the JHU tax-exempt certificate at the time of purchase.
  - i. Reference JHU policy for use of the certificate at: <https://policies.jhu.edu/doc/fetch.cfm/djyc41xB>
  - ii. Find the certificate at: [https://facilities.jhmi.edu/FacilitiesV4/Upload/TaxExemptForms/Attachments/Johns%20Hopkins%20University%2009.30.27\\_20221027-130951.pdf](https://facilities.jhmi.edu/FacilitiesV4/Upload/TaxExemptForms/Attachments/Johns%20Hopkins%20University%2009.30.27_20221027-130951.pdf)
- b. Ensure the vendor accepts tax-exempt purchases (some restaurants may not).
- c. To get the official JHU tax-exempt certificate or guidance on how to use it for meals, contact JHU Supply Chain Shared Services.

2. Business Meals (non-travel): Travel-related meals should follow the travel policy guidelines.

- a. Max reimbursement: \$50 per person (before tax and tip).



- b. Alcohol is allowed within the per-person cap.
  - c. Must include agenda, list of attendees, and business purpose.
- 3. Non-Meal Food Spending (social/event gatherings, food at meetings, stocking snacks and beverages):
  - a. We recognize that there may be some practices to provide food for trainees during work hours. That should be managed within the department budget and should utilize designated and restricted funds only.
  - b. Alcohol is not allowed outside of meals and should follow guidelines.
- 4. Recruitment Dinners: Establishment of clear guidelines and limits on recruitment-related hospitality
  - a. Limit Attendees: Restrict recruitment dinners to essential personnel only.
  - b. Dinner: Up to \$125 per person, max 6 people → \$750 total.
  - c. Cap Overall Spending: Limit recruitment dinners to one dinner per applicant per visit.
  - d. Alcohol is allowed within the per-person cap.

### Additional Spending Restrictions

- 1. **Parking Expenses:** In cases where SOM or department funds parking for faculty or staff, continued funding can only occur where the overall budget of the relevant entity has a positive margin with no unrestricted funds deficit. Funding for parking must be reviewed and approved annually by the Central School.
- 2. **Hosted Receptions:** For FY26, suspend professional organization SOM Department-hosted receptions. No new contracts for events should be executed after July 1, 2025. This will be reviewed annually going forward.
- 3. **Cell Phones:** Eliminate individual cell phone expenses (purchasing phone or paying for service) for faculty and staff. There may be service phones that are used for clinical coverage that may stay intact.

### Allowable Use and Funding Sources

All expenses must be included in the budget and supported by an available funding source. Discretionary funds may be used for expenses such as licensure, non-sponsored travel, professional development, and national society memberships. All expenditures must serve a legitimate business or academic purpose. Annual allotment should not be expended just to ensure our dollars are used if there is no legitimate purpose or need. Fund use should align with the first dollar principle. As much as possible, unrestricted funds should be preserved for mission-critical needs.



Excess spending must be pre-approved by department or division leadership and supported by restricted or designated sources. For faculty who do not have access to such funds, the Department may opt to use departmental funds, adhering to first-dollar principle, depending upon affordability and budget availability.

### **Stakeholder Responsibilities**

Department Chairs: Ensure compliance and communicate policies.

Faculty: Use funds responsibly and within guidelines.

Finance Administrators: Monitor spending, maintain documentation, and support audits.

Central SOM: Provide oversight, training, and policy updates.