

# Guidelines for DFA Events, Recognitions, and Awards

## I. Summary

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There are occasions when university funding may be utilized for entertainment events and recognition awards, so long as a clear business purpose exists. Events and recognitions must be modest in scope and nature, align with appropriate stewardship of public funds, and demonstrate consideration for budgetary impacts. These guidelines are intended to:

- Inform budgetary planning.
- Create equity across DFA.
- Provide education on UC and UCI's policies.
- Develop a consistent framework that outlines which events are hosted by campus, by DFA centrally, or by individual DFA departments.

## II. Resources

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- [UC Policy BUS-79: Expenditures for Business Meetings, Entertainment and Other Occasions](#)
- [UCI Policies and Procedures: Sec, 701-20: Business Meetings and Entertainment Guidelines](#)
- [Accounting and Fiscal Services – Entertainment and Meetings](#)
- [UC Policy G41: Employee Non-Cash Awards and Other Gifts](#)
- [Training and Development: Recognition Overview](#)
- [IDA 632 Approvals of Exceptions/Additional to Travel and Entertainment](#)

## III. Key Policy Highlights

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### *Maximum Allowable Per Person Meal Limits*

Per UC policy, the allowable maximum rates for meals appear in [UC BUS-79](#) with more clarification on [UCI's travel website](#). Further details can be found in the [Entertainment and Meetings](#) section of the Accounting and Fiscal Services' website.

### *Priority for UCI Catering*

Due to UC's agreements to limit contracting out for services, catering for events must be carefully planned. If your unit is hosting an event that requires on-site catering (set-up and/or service), review [Regents Policy 5402](#), and [Article 5](#) of the AFSCME SX and EX collective bargaining agreements. Both require that the university utilizes in-house employees ([UCI Catering](#)) before resorting to private contractors (off campus caterers).

## IV. Common Event Types

### Employee Morale Building Events

<i>Examples</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Hosted by Campus</i>	<i>Hosted by DFA</i>	<i>Hosted by Department</i>
Service Awards	annual	1		
Year End Celebration	annual			1
Summer Picnic/Social	annual	1	1	
Retirements	as they occur			# will vary
Employee Recognition (e.g., awards)	as they occur			# will vary

Recognizing employees is a critical component of staff engagement which encourages high levels of performance. Employee morale building activities should be strategically planned and participation from all levels encouraged. Note that employee morale building events require an additional level of approval per authorities in [IDA 632](#).

- DFA employees should be invited to at least one department-sponsored morale building event each year.
- Examples of appropriate employee morale building events include recognition receptions, annual faculty/staff picnics, new employee welcome events, year-end/holiday gatherings, recognition events for retiring/separating employee after *at least* 5 years of service.
- Events should be modest. Meals/refreshments must adhere to [UC policy limits](#).
- Under no circumstances may university funds be used for occasions such as employee birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, or other occasions of a personal nature.
- Certain roles, especially in larger departments, may warrant inclusion in more than one event celebrating the same occasion (e.g., year-end celebrations, service awards, etc.). Discretion should be used when deciding how many events to attend.
- While retirements occur throughout the year, most employees elect to retire in late June. When possible, DFA departments should hold one recognition event for staff who are retiring at the same time. If appropriate, some DFA units could hold their events together.

### Business Meetings

<i>Examples</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Hosted by Campus</i>	<i>Hosted by DFA</i>	<i>Hosted by Department</i>
DFA wide event (e.g., DFA Town Hall)	biannual		2	
Events/trainings for campus customers	as they occur			# will vary
Hosted events for non-DFA guests	as they occur			# will vary

- Many DFA departments operate in remote/hybrid environments, and the need to provide meals at group meetings has reduced or even been eliminated.
- Departments that work primarily on-site may provide meals during a business meeting but only if the team must conduct their meeting during a meal period.
- Meal expenses at business meetings must be infrequent, meaning no meals are allowable at standing meetings.

## V. Ideas for Low/No Cost Employee Morale and Engagement Events

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- Human Resources sponsors [Staff Appreciation Week](#) which offers several free and easy activities. Departments of all sizes can easily engage in these programs.
- Opportunities for [low cost / no cost employee recognition](#) are available on the Human Resources Training & Development site.
- Several DFA employees volunteer with UCI’s “[Engagement Ambassador](#)” program. These employees champion UCI’s efforts to foster an environment of engagement.
- UCI offers many free offerings and activities that make great employee engagement activities. Review the [UCI Today](#) page for continual updates.
- UCI’s [Jack and Shanaz Langson Institute and Museum of California Art](#) is free!
- UCI’s [Athletics Department](#) often offers free tickets to sporting events.
- Take a tour of our own DFA units, such as the UCIPD station, Peter’s Exchange, the scanning facility, and many others.

## VI. Awards and Recognitions

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Tangible property (including gift cards) can be awarded to an employee in recognition of noteworthy work-related accomplishments. Recognition awards are meant to be occasional and therefore must only be presented on an infrequent basis.

- Retirees will be acknowledged with a recognition gift. While UC policy allows for gifts valued at \$400, DFA will abide by these guidelines:

\$200 gift	5 to 9 years
\$300 gift	10 to 19 years
\$400 gift	20+ years

- DFA will not provide length of service gifts. Central campus HR provides service recognition gifts at the annual service award ceremony.
- Other [non-cash awards and gift certificates](#) are also allowable with a \$75 limit. Additionally, raffle prizes and participation incentives are allowable.

UCI’s [Staff Achievement and Recognition \(STAR\)](#) program enables managers to recognize employees with a cash award for exceptional performance, creativity, organizational abilities, work success, teamwork, and/or significant contributions related to and supportive of individual, departmental, divisional, and/or organizational goals and objectives. Specific DFA instructions on eligibility and how to process a STAR award are located [here](#). **All awards must be approved by the CFO and Vice Chancellor and must be funded with departmental resources.**

DFA’s [Employee Recognition Program](#) is currently under review. A revised program is in development.

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