

### § 301-74.3

conference costs paid by the Government, whether paid directly by agencies or reimbursed by agencies to travelers or others associated with the conference. Some examples of such costs are:

- (a) Authorized travel and per diem expenses;
- (b) Hire of rooms for official business;
- (c) Audiovisual and other equipment usage;
- (d) Computer and telephone access fees;
- (e) Light refreshments;
- (f) Printing;
- (g) Registration fees;
- (h) Ground transportation; and
- (i) Employees' time at the conference and on en route travel.

#### **§ 301-74.3 What must we do to determine which conference expenditures result in the greatest advantage to the Government?**

To determine conference expenditures, you must:

- (a) Assure there is appropriate management oversight of the conference planning process;
- (b) Always do cost comparisons of the size, scope, and location of the proposed conference;
- (c) Determine if a Government facility is available at a cheaper rate than a commercial facility;
- (d) Consider alternatives to a conference, e.g., teleconferencing; and
- (e) Maintain written documentation of the alternatives considered and the selection rationale used.

#### **§ 301-74.4 What should cost comparisons include?**

Cost comparisons should include, but not be limited to, a determination of adequacy of lodging rooms at the established per diem rates, overall convenience of the conference location, fees, availability of meeting space, equipment, and supplies, and commuting or travel distance of attendees.

[FTR Amdt. No. 89, 65 FR 1327, Jan. 10, 2000, as amended at 86 FR 54631, Oct. 4, 2021]

#### **§ 301-74.5 How should we select a location and a facility?**

Site selection is a final decision as to where to hold your conference. The term "site" refers to both the geo-

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graphical location and the specific facility(ies) selected. In determining the best site in the interest of the Government, you should exercise strict fiscal responsibility to minimize costs. The actions in § 301-74.3 must be followed. Cost comparisons must cover factors such as those listed in § 301-74.4. As part of the cost comparison, you must use the established per diem rate for the locations for which you are comparing costs.

#### **§ 301-74.6 What can we do if we cannot find an appropriate conference facility at the chosen locality per diem rate?**

While it is always desirable to obtain lodging facilities within the established lodging portion of the per diem rate for the chosen locality, it may not always be possible. In those instances when lodging is not available at the applicable per diem rate, travelers should construct a cost comparison of all associated costs, including round-trip ground transportation, between finding lodging at the applicable per diem rate away from the conference locality and using the actual expense method at the conference locality as prescribed in subpart D of part 301-11 of this chapter.

[FTR Amdt. 2013-01, 78 FR 65211, Oct. 31, 2013]

#### **§ 301-74.7 May we provide light refreshments at an official conference?**

Yes. Agencies sponsoring a conference may provide light refreshments to agency employees attending an official conference. Light refreshments for morning, afternoon or evening breaks are defined to include, but not be limited to, coffee, tea, milk, juice, soft drinks, donuts, bagels, fruit, pretzels, cookies, chips, or muffins.

[FTR Amdt. 89, 65 FR 1327, Jan. 10, 2000. Redesignated by FTR Amdt. 2013-01, 78 FR 65212, Oct. 31, 2013]

#### **§ 301-74.8 May we include conference administrative costs in an employee's per diem allowance payment for attendance at a conference?**

No. Per diem is intended only to reimburse the attendee's subsistence expenses. You must pay conference registration fees separately, either directly or by reimbursing employees