Cost Containment Approval and Exception Request Instructions and FAQ

In response to cost containment efforts announced by UTHealth executive leadership on March 26, 2018, McGovern Medical School has implemented a Cost Containment Approval and Exception (CCAE) request form. These restrictions are in place until further notice. The CCAE form should be used to request activities for a function or travel occurring on or after April 2, 2018 from the following list:

- Travel approval for Management and General A&P, classified, and postdoctoral research fellow employees
- Off Campus Retreat exception approval
- Intra-UTHealth employee function exception approval
- Holiday Function exception approval funded by non-university funds (no exceptions will be considered for holiday functions funded by university funds)

If an approval/exception is granted, the requestor must attach the signed CCAE form to the travel, expense or official function request document and process through normal pathways. An approved CCAE form does not replace the existing approval process for these activities. Rather it authorizes the requestor to move forward in the existing approval process.

If an approval/exception is granted for travel that was approved prior to the cost containment effort announcement on 03/26/2018, the requestor must attach the signed CCAE form to the travel expense worksheet (TEW) when processing travel expenditures and reimbursements.

For CCAE processing, please submit the form and any previous approval to MSFA@uth.tmc.edu. The subject line of the email must begin with “CCAE” to ensure that requests can be efficiently sorted and tracked. Please allow a minimum of 5 business day for processing the CCAE. Please note this timeline does not include the normal time requirements for other forms (e.g., OFF, RTA, BTA).

On the following pages are FAQs to assist you in understanding the impact of these cost containment efforts on your business operations.

Original Date: March 29, 2018
Lastest Revision: March 30, 2018
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Travel Approval for Management and General A&P, Classified, and Postdoctoral Research Fellow Employees

Q1: Are there any exemptions to this travel limitation and approval process? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

YES: Per the 3/26/2018 memo from Kevin Dillon, exemptions from this travel limitation and approval process include 1) in-state travel of two days or less, 2) travel to Austin for UT System meetings, conferences, etc., and 3) travel that is ENTIRELY funded by sponsored program funds (Funds 50000-57999) and/or endowment funds (Funds 60000-69999).

Q2: If we have previously obtained approval on an RTA/BTA for a Management and General A&P, Classified, or Postdoctoral Research Fellow Employee to travel on or after 4/2/2018, must we reobtain approval? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

YES: If the travel is occurring after 4/2/2018 and the travel does not fall under one of the exemptions listed in Q1, the department must reobtain approval. Submit the CCAE and a copy of the approved RTA/BTA to MSFA@uth.tmc.edu for reconsideration.

NO: If the travel falls under one of the exemptions listed in Q1, the department does not need to reobtain approval.

Q3: If more than one funding source is being used for a Management and General A&P, Classified, or Postdoctoral Research Fellow Employee’s travel, must we obtain approval? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

YES: If the travel is not entirely funded by Sponsored program funds (Funds 50000-57999) and/or endowment funds (Funds 60000-69999), approval must be obtained. Submit the CCAE to MSFA@uth.tmc.edu for consideration.

Exception Approval for Functions

Q1: What function expenditures and reimbursements are suspended due to cost containment efforts, and are there any exemptions? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

All off campus retreat and “intra” UTHealth function expenditures and reimbursements are suspended unless they are ENTIRELY funded by sponsored program funds (Funds 50000-57999) and/or endowment funds (Funds 60000-69999). Holiday function expenditures and reimbursements are suspended regardless of University fund source.

Q2: What is considered an “intra” UTHealth event? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

An “intra” UTHealth event is defined as a function solely among or between UTHealth employees. Examples may include: In-House lunches for committees or working groups, Welcome/Farewell functions, Employee appreciation functions, On Campus Departmental Retreat food expenditures, Hosting meals while traveling on University business, Faculty meetings, Lab meetings, Journal Clubs, and Grand Rounds.
Q3: If we have previously obtained approval on an Official Function Form (OFF) for a function that is scheduled on or after 4/2/2018 and the function type is now suspended due to cost containment efforts (off campus retreat, “intra” UTHealth event), must we reobtain approval? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

YES: If the function is not entirely funded by sponsored program funds (Funds 50000-57999) and/or endowment funds (Funds 60000-69999), the department must reobtain approval. Submit the CCAE and a copy of the approved OFF to MSFA@uth.tmc.edu for reconsideration.

Q4: Are we allowed to have functions for resident/fellow graduations? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

YES: Per University clarification on 3/27/2018, these functions will be allowed through the summer of 2018. Departments must still adhere to MMS Official Function Policies and Guidelines (e.g., $50/person maximum). The most recent edition of the MMS Official Function Policies and Guidelines may be found on the Office of Administration intranet site.

Q5: Must we submit an exception request for a Retirement Reception? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

YES: Retirement receptions are considered an “intra” UTHealth function, so the department must submit a CCAE for consideration. Submit the CCAE and include a moderate budget and location proposal to MSFA@uth.tmc.edu for consideration.

Q6: Are Faculty, Resident, Fellow, and Postdoctoral Research Fellow recruitment events allowed? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

YES: Departments must still adhere to MMS Official Function Policies and Guidelines. The most recent edition of the MMS Official Function Policies and Guidelines may be found on the Office of Administration intranet site.

Q7: Are functions with Non-UTH Seminar Speakers allowed? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

YES: Departments must still adhere to MMS Official Function Policies and Guidelines. The most recent edition of the MMS Official Function Policies and Guidelines may be found on the Office of Administration intranet site.

Q8: Our department is holding a CME workshop or course where registration fees will cover meals during the event. Must we obtain exception approval for these events? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

YES: Departments must submit a CCAE. Include in the justification that registration fees will cover the cost of the function. Submit the CCAE to MSFA@uth.tmc.edu for consideration.
Cost Containment Efforts Memorandum

From: UTHealth Communications, GM
Sent: Monday, March 26, 2018 3:01 PM
To: uthsc.ap@uth.tmc.edu
Subject: Cost containment efforts
Importance: High

To: UTHealth A&P Employees

From: Kevin Dillon, M.B.A., C.P.A., Senior Executive Vice President, Chief Operating and Financial Officer, and Michael Blackburn, Ph.D., Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer

Date Sent: Monday, March 26, 2018
Subject: Cost containment efforts

In response to ongoing budget challenges, the cost containment efforts below will become effective Monday, April 2, 2018. We appreciate your ongoing efforts to responsibly steward university funds and are grateful for your fiscal management.

1) **Travel limitations for administrative staff (both A&P and classified employees)** - Attendance at conferences, seminars, meetings, etc., that require overnight stay will now require reporting line approvals (EVP, Dean/Associate Dean, VP). Medical School Service Line Administrators require approval both by their Chair and Kevin Dillon. Dr. Blackburn will approve Academic and Research Affairs requests and Kevin will approve direct and in-direct (or “dotted line”) reports. Within Administration, approval of staff overnight travel will be delegated to the respective VP. Exempt from this travel limitation and approval process are 1) in-state travel of two days or less, 2) travel to Austin for UT System meetings, conferences, etc., and 3) sponsored program-funded (Funds 50000-57999) and endowment-funded travel (Funds 60000-69999).

2) **Suspension of all off campus retreat expenditures.** Sponsored program-funded (Funds 50000-57999) and endowment-funded (Funds 60000-69999) off campus retreats are exempt.

3) **Suspension of all official function entertainment expenditures or reimbursements to employees for “intra” UTHealth events.** These are defined as functions solely among or between UTHealth employees. Sponsored program-funded (Funds 50000-57999) and endowment-funded (Funds 60000-69999) “intra” UTHealth employee official functions are exempt.

4) **Suspension of all holiday party expenditures, through the end of FY 2019, regardless of fund source.**

5) **90-day hiring delay** extended through the end of FY 2019. Current process will continue unchanged. Sponsored program-funded (Funds 50000-57999) administrative positions, faculty and public safety officer positions are exempt.

Limited waivers may be granted in exceptional circumstances. We understand that these cost containment efforts will result in additional oversight on your part and we appreciate your time and effort. If you have questions, please contact Kevin at Kevin.Dillon@uth.tmc.edu.