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 and residents/students (for CME travels, please see Travel FAQ 3 on Page 2)
- 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)

The CCAE form should be submitted for approval as soon as the department is notified of travel or a function that is restricted by the cost containment efforts. The CCAE form should be approved before the requestor begins processing travel and/or official function arrangements.

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.

For CCAE processing, please submit the form to OAFA@uth.tmc.edu. The subject line of the email must begin with “CCAE” followed by an identifying element. For example: “CCAE – Travel John Doe to Washington”. This is to ensure that requests can be efficiently sorted and tracked. CCAE forms will be sent back for revision if all applicable fields on the form are not completed, previous approved documentation is not attached, or if the form is not approved and signed at the departmental level.

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 12, 2019
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: For staff physicians, residents, advanced care providers (classified employees) and any others who travel using their CME allocations of funding, must the department complete a CCAE form for each individual? (Last revised: July 26, 2018)

Effective for FY19 Departments must submit for approval a blanket exception memo for these travels in lieu of individual CCAEs. Once the memo has been approved, the department must attach a copy of the signed memo (in lieu of a CCAE) to all BTAs/RTAs/TEs for CME travels upon submission to the MS Travel Team. Submit the memo to OAFA@uth.tmc.edu and include the following:

- List of Employees who will travel for CME (last name, first name)
- Position title of each person
- Maximum amount of CME allotted funds approved by the department
- Brief justification of purpose of the trip (e.g., CME trip to maintain licensure)
- CFS including the title of the Source of Funds that will be used
- Period of time to be covered by the blanket exception memo (cannot exceed the end of the current FY)

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 OAFA@uth.tmc.edu for consideration.

Q4: Is the CCAE form required for mileage reimbursements from accounts that fall outside of Funds 50000-57999 and Funds 60000 – 69999? (Last revised: April 3, 2018)

NO: Blanket mileage reimbursements do not require a CCAE form. Blanket requests must be resubmitted for approvals each fiscal year, using the standard approval process.

Q5: Do these travel restrictions apply to staff physicians and advanced practice providers? (Last revised: July 26, 2018)

These restrictions are applied according to the job family for each job title. Staff physicians are under the general A&P family and are subject to these restrictions. Advanced practice providers who hold classified titles are covered by these restrictions; those who hold faculty titles are not covered. Departments should submit CCAE requests for travel for any of these covered individuals. If the travel is necessary for licensure continuation (e.g., CME requirements) and the department has allotted CME funding to the individual in question, please see Q2 above.
Q6: Are local conference registration fees restricted under these cost containment efforts? (Last revised: April 3, 2018)

NO: Registration fees for local conferences are not restricted and do not require submission of a CCAE form.

Q7: Must CCAE forms be submitted for residents’ travel? (Last revised: April 3, 2018)

YES: The University will require an approved CCAE form to process the resident’s reimbursement. See Q2 above for blanket approval. Submit the CCAE/blanket memo to OAFA@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: 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.

Q4: 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 OAFA@uth.tmc.edu for consideration.

Q5: Are Faculty, Resident, Fellow, and Postdoctoral Research Fellow recruitment events allowed? (Last revised: March 29, 2018)

YES: A CCAE is not required for these events, but 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.
Q6: 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.

Q7: 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 OAFA@uth.tmc.edu for consideration.

Q8: May we have social events for new residents/fellows? *(Last revised: April 3, 2018)*

CCAE exception requests should be submitted for consideration of each event. Submit the CCAE to OAFA@uth.tmc.edu.

Q9: May University funding be used for lunches to be served at scheduled meetings of groups such as residency coordinators, clerkship directors or DMO’s? *(Last revised: April 3, 2018)*

**NO:** No university funds may be expended for this type of event. See Question 2 above. Individuals attending such events may, if desired, personally pay for food served at the event.

Q10: Do the cost containment restrictions apply to Agency Fund sources? *(Last revised: April 3, 2018)*

**NO:** Agency funds are held by the university on behalf of other organizations and are not subject to these restrictions.

Q11: Are events scheduled with employees at LBJ subject to these restrictions? *(Last revised: April 3, 2018)*

**YES:** These events are considered “Intra UTHealth” if the participants are UTHealth employees, regardless of the event location.

Q12: Are events with students considered “intra” UTHealth? *(Last revised: April 3, 2018)*

**YES:** Student events are covered by these cost containment restrictions. CCAE forms should be submitted to OAFA@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.

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.