

Allowed Event Expenses

Event expenses can be covered either by an [Event Advance](#) or paid for directly by Reliant as arranged through the Events Department. Once connected with Reliant's Events Department, the event leader is a trusted source for what is a necessary expense as related to the event. Reliant has provided broad spending guidelines, allowing the event leader to decide what is appropriate and necessary, according to the event needs. The church partner leader and the event leader should be in agreement about appropriate and necessary event expenses, both prior to the event during the budgeting phase and during the event should questionable expenses arise.



The rules below DO NOT apply if you are a missionary purchasing an expense for an event using the event fund to reimburse the expense through a normal Reliant reimbursement form. If you are using that method (and not using an event advance or having Reliant purchase it for you directly then you need to follow [Events Gifts Policy](#) (which adhere to the traditional Reliant reimbursement rules instead.)

What is Allowed

Expenses for an event should be reasonable to the type of event and must fit within Reliant's [set category of expenses](#). The church leader and the event leader should be in agreement about appropriate and necessary event expenses, both prior to the event during the budgeting phase and during the event should questionable expenses arise. Expenses for individual event participants that are needed may also be covered. Reliant's Events Department is available to provide guidance as needed. Event Admins are responsible for sharing these guidelines with other event participants that may be making purchases using event advance funds.

Examples of Allowable Expenses

- If the event purpose is a work trip to build a playground, every purchase needed to build the playground would be acceptable expenses.
- A team is going overseas to help a church rehab a building for services. Allowable expenses might include new windows or flooring materials.
- If the event's purpose is to do evangelism in a city or on a campus, paying for participants and locals to do an outing for evangelism purposes would be acceptable.
- A team is going to help a church build relationships in a surrounding community through evangelism and service. Buying groceries to gift to each house in the neighborhood while doing evangelism would be an acceptable expense.
- Event participant needs during an event such as medicines that can be purchased without a prescription or laundry are acceptable expenses.

Other allowable expenses:

Medicine

If the event used participant allowance, then medicine should be bought using those funds.

However, if the event did not use participant allowance, then simple over-the-counter medicines that can be used by the entire team (such as stomach medicine or pain relievers) can technically be purchased using event funds, but are typically only purchased if they will be used by multiple team members so that it is not a personal expense.

Although medicines that need a prescription are not covered by the event fund, medicines requiring a prescription or doctor visits may possibly be covered by Reliant event's supplemental medical insurance. Please see the Reliant Events Department for guidance.

Laundry

If the event used participant allowance, then laundry should be paid for using those funds.

However, if the event did not use participant allowance, and the event is long enough to warrant washing clothes during their stay, then laundry can be paid for by the event fund if all participants are given the opportunity to wash their clothes.

Phone SIM cards

International phone SIM cards, or payment for a month of international phone service with a phone provider is approved for event leaders as this is a necessary expense for communication for event leaders for planning, finances, etc. during the event. For your receipt, for international phone service if you are paying for a month of added international plan (vs buying SIM cards) go online with your provider and take a picture of how much it costs for a month (or per day) for that plan and we will use that as the receipt. Typically a phone plan/SIM card is not necessary or needed for all the individual participants to have for the purpose of the event. Therefore, it would be considered a personal expense for the rest of the participants to also buy an international phone plan/SIM card and would not be reimbursed using event funds. (The only exception to this would be the purpose and goal of the event directly correlates to each participant needing their phone to work in that country in order to accomplish their role during the event. Before purchasing international calling ability for each participant to be reimbursed by the event fund directly, please discuss with Reliant the purpose and reasoning for that need so that we can verify that it has a purpose for the event and not just a personal reason such as wanting to socialize with family and friends, etc.) If Reliant agrees with the decision that it is needed for all participants to also purchase using event funds an international plan for a month (or a few days, etc.) or buying a SIM card, we suggest allotting a specific amount that is the same for all participants to receive from the event. Please show us how you came to that amount (example show a picture of your international calling plan amount online) and say you decided to give all or a portion of that amount of the cost to each person to pay for their phone plan for the week then have everyone sign (either via paper or by replying to an email) that they have received \$x amount on x day for that purpose.

Visas

You are also allowed to also purchase Visas for your event participants if that was a budgeted expense approved by your church. Since Visas are specific to the country you are visiting it would be an event related expense. If you are going to a more secure country we do not suggest buying Visas all together. We suggest having the individuals purchase their Visas and you can use the event advance to reimburse them for their purchase. (Passports and immunizations are not allowed to be purchased with event funds as they are considered a personal expense that can continue to be used by the participant after the event.)

Thank you gifts

Many events want to bless their host family, or interpreters, or host church leader, (for the Collegiate programs you may want to bless a few key leaders at the YMCA, etc.) You can take them out for a meal, create a gift basket or for international trips we suggest bringing a few token gifts from the U.S. (for example something from your home state) to hand out as thank you's.

Unfortunately you can not give straight cash or gift cards using event advance funds directly to an individual. See [Leftover Funds](#) for ways to give to a specific ministry.

Here are a few suggestions to help define what we think to be a reasonable amount to spend on thank you's, but again with all event purchases think about the purpose of the funds being spent, what is budgeted, etc. when deciding on appropriate amounts.

- Thank you gifts around \$25
- Thank you dinners up to \$40



Thank you gifts cannot be given to Reliant missionaries. The IRS considers the wonderful experience as the missionary's "gift". If you feel so led to give a gift to a Reliant missionary (this would include a program director that is a Reliant employee) you can do so, but it will be considered a personal out of pocket expense and can not use event advance, event funds or MTD funds to reimburse the gift.

Unexpected Larger Purchase

If a larger purchase has to unexpectedly be made with expense advance funds while overseas (for example something breaks like a camera that is needed for the purpose of the trip) then, Reliant would need to make sure that whatever is bought becomes local church property after the trip is over and not an individual property since we cannot use event funds for personal expenses. Before you were to buy for example a brand new camera overseas because a lens broke, we would want to see if you could first try to get it repaired or just purchase that part for the camera before resorting straight to buying a brand new one if possible. Please contact Reliant before purchasing something expensive with expense advance funds so that we can help you figure the best course of action. In all cases, something big like that would need to be the church property after the event is over and not personal property and an email would need to be sent to Reliant from the church leader explaining/affirming that the church will be using it or storing it there for use on the next trip.

Mileage

Mileage Reimbursements



For summer programs, the event fund is not used to reimburse travel to and from the event.

See the following for more details on why:

- [Employee Reimbursements During an Event](#)
- [Coordinating Rides for LT](#)
- [LT Subsidies](#)
- [Event Honorariums for Churches and Speakers](#)

However, there may be a few times during a summer program where you need to reimburse mileage using event funds if it was budgeted by the event.

Examples include:

- Missionary driving to the airport to pick up a main session speaker for the summer program.
- The entire summer program is driving together to go to an event or location far away, etc. (Example: Winter Park LT participants are all going to Estes Park LT to have teaching session together.)



For domestic mission trips, the event fund is typically used for reimbursing travel to and from the event since the church travels together as a team to the event. (Make sure that Reliant is aware that this is happening so that proper liability insurance has been bought for the event.)

The event will reimburse those that have driven based on the mileage reimbursement rate for the year. (2021 rate is \$0.56/mile, [Use the IRS standard business mileage rate](#)). Or, your event may also choose to budget a lower flat rate agreed-upon amount for trips rather than following the yearly mileage rate. (You may give a lower rate, but you may not give a higher rate.)

For those that are driving that own the car being driven:

For someone who is driving their own car, it is preferred that you calculate the cost using mileage rather than paying for specific gas receipts. This allows for equitable reimbursement for all drivers to account for both gas and wear and tear on the vehicle. Please ask each driver to track their odometer readings from their vehicles before and after the trip to substantiate the # of miles driven.

For documentation for your event advance receipts, you'll need a handwritten receipt from the driver saying they received X amount of dollars from the (event name) for driving their car to ____ for this purpose ____ and include their vehicle's starting and ending odometer readings. If you are giving less than the standard business mileage rate, then write the amount you used to calculate the total amount given.

Here's an example of a hand-written receipt for mileage reimbursement.... (If you are unable to get a handwritten receipt, then an email from the individual who received the funds can count as well.)

I, Gabe Smith, received \$69.55 from this event (ex. Estes Park LT) for driving my vehicle 130 miles (starting odometer 85,000/ ending odometer 85,130) to transport this week's summer program main session speaker from the airport to the summer program housing.

Signed (Gabe Smith)

Date: 6/14/2021

For those that are driving that are borrowing the car being driven:

For those that are borrowing someone else's car to drive, there is reason to give compensation to both the driver who paid for gas and the owner of the vehicle for wear and tear on the car.

In this situation, it makes sense for the event to pay for the specific gas receipt (rather than to use a mileage calculation) to reimburse the person who bought the gas. Then, it also makes sense for the event to compensate the owner of the vehicle for the use of their car towards the purpose of the event. Since you are not allowed to simply give someone cash or a gift card to say thank you for letting us borrow your car, we need to make it more official that this is a payment for the usage of a vehicle. In this situation, we would ask that you give the owner a copy of this [invoice template](#) and ask that they fill it out with a description that says why they are being paid. The amount they are paid should be agreed upon in advance (based on your budget) and all owners of the vehicles should receive the same amount across the board. This invoice will count as your receipt for your event advance.



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Fun events for participants

If you have any special outings planned for participants during the event that you'll incur fees to places such as tours/admission to national parks/ropes course, etc. (or outreach or fun events) please keep in mind the purpose of the event and the intent of the event fees or donations related to the mission of the event. We ask that you would budget this line item ahead of time and work with your church partner/network on an amount that seems reasonable and in line with the purpose of the trip. Ultimately, especially for trips with donations, we want to make sure that the participant is giving more than receiving and that the event is not perceived to be more beneficial to the participant than those that they are going to serve.

What is Not Allowed

Expenses not related to the direct purpose of the event are not allowed. This would include items meant to bless a local church in the middle of a trip just because it feels right or the church asks, but it was not part of the original objective of the event.

- Note that once all expenses related to the event have been paid for, that it may then be possible to bless the church with anything truly leftover. See [Leftover Funds](#) for more information.

Alcohol cannot be purchased using Reliant funds.

Passports and immunizations are not allowed as those are personal expenses for the individual.

No straight cash or gift cards can be given directly to a foreign individual.

Examples of What is Not Allowed

A team is going overseas specifically to do evangelism with a local church, and while there the local church asks the team for money for new windows. New windows are not tied to the original purpose of the event so the expense would not be allowed as a reported expense.

A team is going to help a church build relationships in a surrounding community through evangelism and service. The team is asked by families in the neighborhood for money to buy groceries. The team is not allowed to give cash to them out of the Event Advance.

**Collegiate Church Network**

Collegiate events are subject to additional guidelines as determined by the Collegiate Church Network. See [solomon](#) for further information.