

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION
119th CONGRESS
COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 119-15

Resolution to Amend the *Committees' Congressional Handbook*

Be it resolved, pursuant to clauses 1(k)(1), (6), and (9) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives that the Committee on House Administration adopt the following regulations amending and superseding the relevant portions of the prior regulations known collectively as the *Committees' Congressional Handbook*.

SECTION I. GREEN AND GOLD CONGRESSIONAL AIDE PROGRAM

Under section titled “Committee Staff,” insert after subsection titled “Fellows,” the following new subsection:

“Green and Gold Congressional Aide Program

“The Green and Gold Congressional Aide Program provides an opportunity for disabled veterans and members of Gold Star Families to work in a Committee office for two years in a paid position. Green & Gold Congressional Aides are placed in Committee offices but do not count against a Committee’s staff ceiling as they are employed by the CAO which covers the aide’s compensation and reimbursement for most expenses. Positions in the two programs are divided evenly between the majority and minority.

“Green and Gold Congressional Aides may accrue leave. Offices must approve the dates of leave, but all approved leave must be reported to the CAO for tracking purposes as the CAO will pay out any unused accrued annual leave upon the aide’s termination. Aides are eligible to receive transit benefits through the CAO. Committees may assign and provide parking from their rosters.

“Committee funds may be used to reimburse Green and Gold Congressional Aides for expenses incurred for official business, including travel expenses, during their employment that is not otherwise covered by the CAO. Committee Funds may be used for bonuses in addition to the compensation that aides receive from the CAO.

“Additional information about the respective programs, including application information, eligibility, and other details, is available from the CAO.”

SECTION II. ATTENDANCE AT EVENTS

Under section titled “General Office Expenses,” insert following subsection titled “Appliances,” after the paragraph ending with “AOC (e.g., mini-fridges, full-size refrigerators).” the following new subsection:

“Attendance and Events

“Ordinary and necessary expenses incurred to attend an event in support of official committee

business are reimbursable, including but not limited to informational programs such as conferences, seminars, forums and symposiums.

“Members and staff are often invited to attend events because of their official position, but that does not necessarily mean that the event itself is official in nature. For committee funds to be used the event must be primarily official in nature and the primary benefit of the Member’s or staff’s attendance must be to the committee and not the organization putting on the event.

“Committee funds cannot be used for any expenses related to:

1. an event that is primary social in nature (such as award ceremonies, galas, banquets, receptions, graduations, etc.);
2. an event that is campaign or political in nature;
3. a sporting or entertainment event;
4. a fundraiser or charity that solicits or collects donations of goods, services or funds; or
5. a visit to a monument or museum.”

SECTION III. CONTRACTORS

Under section titled “General Office Expenses,” strike and replace subsection titled “Contractors” with the following:

“Vendors

“Committees may contract with firms or individuals for general, non-legislative and non-financial office services (e.g., equipment maintenance, systems integration, web services, data entry, staff training).

“Vendors may not perform regular core functions of employees or provide consulting services (including, but not limited to: legal fees, speech writers, personal financial advisors, communications advisors, political party or campaign advisors).

“Vendor contracts must be for a specified time period not to exceed a Congress.

“Vendors are not employees of the House and do not count against a committee’s staff ceiling and are ineligible for benefits.

“Committees are advised to consult CHA before entering into such contracts.”

SECTION IV. EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES

Under section titled “General Office Expenses,” strike and replace subsection titled “Educational Expenses” with the following:

“Educational Expenses

“Ordinary and necessary expenses for Members or employees of the Committee to take professional training and development courses related to official Committee business are reimbursable.

“Committee Funds may be used for Members and staff to take training or development courses that depart knowledge, tools and skills to improve their ability to conduct Committee business.

“Expenses to obtain a primary, secondary, graduate, postgraduate, professional degree or acquiring or maintaining a professional certification or license are not reimbursable with the exception for basic first-aid, CPR or notary certifications. Expenses related to professional training or development that relate to a Member’s or employee’s committee business duties are reimbursable even if such a program provides a certification upon completion. Expenses related to professional training or development that relate to a Committee Member or employee’s official duties are reimbursable, even if such a program provides a certification upon completion.

“The Retention through Educational Advancement Program (REAP), which replaced the Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP), allows a Member and an eligible employee to enter into a written service agreement under which payments are made by the House to repay a student loan repayment, educational assistance, and professional development program. Additional information on REAP can be located [here](#) on [Housenet](#).

“The CAO offers a wide range of training courses and professional development programs through the CAO Coaches Program and Staff Academy at no cost to offices. More information about the training opportunities available through the Congressional Staff Academy is available on HouseNet. The Congressional Research Service has issued multiple reports on House Rules, procedure, major policy issues, and can provide tailored confidential memoranda, briefings, and consultations upon request in addition to seminars and workshops.”

SECTION V. PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

Under section titled “General Office Expenses” after subsection titled “Photography Expenses” insert a new “Professional Liability Insurance” subsection:

“Professional Liability Insurance

“Committee funds may be used to reimburse up to one-half of the premium of annual professional liability insurance for certain qualified employees pursuant to 5 U.S.C § 5941, which defines “qualified employees” as a supervisor who has been delegated the authority to make employment decision and/or a manager who is authorized to formulate or influence policy.

“To obtain reimbursement, a receipt or invoice of the premium along with a copy of the insurance policy must be submitted to the Office of Financial Counseling. Financial Counseling will send the policy to the Office of Administrative Counsel for review prior to processing for reimbursement.”

SECTION VI. AUDIO AND VIDEO EXPENSES

Under section titled “Hearings and Meetings,” in subsection titled “Audio and Video Expenses,” strike “to the district” in the fourth paragraph.

SECTION VII: WITNESSES

Under section titled “Hearings and Meetings,” strike the first two paragraphs and replace with the following:

“The reimbursement of travel expenses incurred by a witness is an extraordinary measure and is authorized at the discretion of the Committee Chair.”

In the last paragraph, strike “transportation” and replace with “travel.”

SECTION VIII: TRAVEL

Under section titled “Travel,” in subsection titled “General,” after the fifth item, insert the following:

“6. Expenses incurred during travel or while outside of the United States, its territories and possessions are not reimbursable.”

Subsequently, renumber the following items currently marked 6-11 to 7-12.

SECTION IX: COMBINED TRAVEL

Under section titled “Travel,” strike the “Combined Travel” subsection and replace with the following:

“Combined Travel

“Combined travel is travel when a Member or employee of the Committee, for official reasons, either travels to an intervening destination or spends additional time at the location of official business. The primary purpose of the travel must be official, and any expenses incurred (e.g., lodging, meals, rental car, etc.) on the days of personal travel must be paid for with personal funds.

“If traveling to an intervening destination either to or from a location of official business for personal reasons, the traveler must purchase the “personal” segment (official to personal) with personal funds at the commercial rate. The “official” segment (personal to official) must be purchased with personal funds at either the commercial or government rate and the official travel card may not be used. The traveler may then seek reimbursement for the government rate of the direct route (official to official) or the actual traveled fare (official to personal to official), whichever is less.

“A Combined Travel Form must be included when submitting for combined travel reimbursement, stating that the official travel and personal travel was combined for personal convenience.”

SECTION X: INTENT TO OBLIGATE FUNDS

” Under section titled “Disbursements,” in subsection titled “Intent to Obligate Funds,” strike “and software” in the second sentence of the first paragraph. Insert after the first paragraph the following:

“Office supplies, printing, and software and decorations cannot be included on a letter of intent.”