UADA Policy 402.2
Employee Apparel and Safety Gear Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define UADA's approach to providing uniforms, safety gear, and branded apparel to employees in a manner that complies with funding source limitations and IRS regulations regarding fringe benefits (see IRS Publication 5137 and IRS Publication 15-B).

Policy

A. Uniforms and Safety Gear

1. Eligibility
    a. Faculty and staff whose roles require specific attire or protective footwear for safety, identification, or regulatory compliance (e.g., OSHA standards) are eligible to receive employer-provided uniforms, boots, or other safety gear.
2. General Guidelines
    a. If a purchase of uniforms or safety gear is necessary (including initial purchase and replacement), this should be accomplished as a direct purchase by UADA, using an approved purchase method (e.g. purchase requisition, purchase card purchase) rather than direct reimbursement to an individual. Any direct reimbursement to faculty or staff for the purchase of uniforms or safety gear must be appropriately supported with substantiating receipts and approved by the applicable department head or unit leader. Direct reimbursements should be rare and infrequent.
    b. Purchase of uniforms or safety gear using allocated M&O funds is acceptable and may also be acceptable using other funding sources such as gifts, grants, indirects, RIF, or start-up. Specific questions regarding funding should be addressed to the Business Office and/or sponsored programs/grants office in advance of purchase.
    c. Cost of uniforms or safety gear must be reasonable considering the item purchased. Additional justification must be provided for the purchase of premium options or the most expensive available alternative.
    d. Uniforms are clothing specifically designed for uniform use (e.g. not common clothing that is simply branded). Safety gear includes, but is not limited to, safety goggles, face shields, lab coats, aprons, dust masks, earplugs, hairnets or caps, and specialized footwear (including boots). In all instances, these items must be required as a condition of employment and not be suitable for general or personal wear, satisfying the IRS's working condition fringe benefit exclusion under IRC §132(a)(3).
    e. Employees must not wear uniforms or safety gear outside of work-related activities.

    f. To the extent practical, safety gear should always remain in or on UADA property. Employees are expected to surrender any uniforms or safety gear upon termination.

3. Tax Treatment
    a. UADA- provided uniforms and safety gear must meet the criteria above; these items are not taxable to faculty and staff and as such will not be reported on Form W-2.

B. Occasional UADA-Branded Apparel

1. Eligibility
    a. Faculty and staff may occasionally receive UADA-branded items such as T-shirts, hats, or other apparel.
2. General Guidelines
    a. Branded apparel may be provided at the departmental or unit level, but provision of such apparel will be infrequent and at minimal value. The provision of UADA-branded apparel will be for the purpose of promoting UADA at events or for recognition of UADA programs or teams.
    b. Occasional purchase of UADA-branded apparel to be provided for faculty and staff using M&O funds is **not** acceptable. It is generally acceptable using other funding sources such as gifts, indirects, RIF, or start-up. Specific questions regarding funding should be addressed to the Business Office in advance of purchase.
    c. The value of UADA-branded apparel provided will generally not exceed $100 during a calendar year per employee, and distribution will be occasional, not routine. Provision of UADA-branded apparel does not preclude employees from purchasing apparel at their own cost and applying UADA logos to the apparel in accordance with Communications Department guidelines.
3. Tax Treatment
    a. Provision of occasional UADA-branded apparel may qualify as de minimis fringe benefits under IRC §132(a)(4), and therefore is not taxable to the employee, provided the apparel meets the criteria above.
    b. In the event the value or frequency exceeds IRS thresholds, the items may be considered taxable compensation and reported accordingly.