

Managing Your Club's Budget

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR ALL STUDENT
ORGANIZATIONS FUNDED BY THE
GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION AT THE
UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

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How to Make Purchases

Step 1: Find out about your account

- Stop by the GSA office at 310 Student Union and ask about your account balance. Gena Zimmerman or Stephanie George, the Office Managers are available Monday through Friday from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm. You may also e-mail either one at gmz@buffalo.edu or slfrank@buffalo.edu, or call the GSA office at 645-2960.

Step 2: Fill out an Encumbrance Request Form

(see sample attached)

An encumbrance request form is used to request funds from your budget to be set aside for purchases. Encumbrance requests **MUST be made 10 days prior to the purchase**. Any encumbrance turned in after this point may not be approved!

On the form you must include:

- 1) Name of the vendor (the person or company you are paying)
- 2) Address of the vendor including city, state, and zip code. If using a campus address, please include the department. Requests without a complete vendor address may be delayed.
- 3) Whether the check is to be picked up at GSA, 310 Student Union, or if the check is to be mailed to the vendor address.
- 4) Your name (club officer) where the form states "requested by _____" and an e-mail address or phone number where you can be easily reached.
- 5) A short, but complete description of the purchase including the date and location of the event. No events may be held at a personal residence. Any costs associated with an event found to be held at a personal residence will not be reimbursed.
- 6) A reasonable estimate of the cost.

Submit the Encumbrance request form to the GSA Office at 310 Student Union.

PLEASE NOTE: If you will be holding your event on-campus, and alcohol will be served, you must apply for and be approved for an Alcohol Permit in advance by completing the required form via the link below. Please allow at least two weeks for review.

<http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/studentlife/alcohol.php>

Step 3: Wait for Encumbrance Approval

After you have submitted the encumbrance request form, the GSA Treasurer will approve it and send it to Student Life for administrative approval. Upon approval, Sub-Board I, Inc. will generate a purchase order. The purchase order (PO) will be delivered back to GSA at which time you will receive an email notifying you that the encumbrance has been approved, who it was approved for, and the amount. The PO will be held in the GSA office until all the necessary paperwork has been submitted for reimbursement.

Please note:

- 1) **You must always submit the original, itemized receipt, invoice, and/or contract.** There will be no photocopies, faxes or generic, non-vendor-specific receipts accepted. It is your responsibility to obtain an adequate receipt, invoice or contract. Receipts that are not itemized are not acceptable. For example, the credit card slip that you sign at a restaurant is not an itemized receipt. You must submit the itemized cash register receipt along with the credit card slip. If the vendor does not give you an itemized receipt, you are responsible to ask for one.
- 2) **If you purchase anything with a credit card, you will also be asked to show proof that you are the person to be reimbursed.**
You may submit a photocopy of your credit card with all except the last 4 digits blackened out so that your privacy will be maintained. If the credit receipt does not have your credit card number on it, then you must submit a credit card statement showing your name and listing the purchase.
- 3) **If you purchase with a check, you will need to submit a copy of the cancelled check.**
- 4) **You must always submit documentation from your club's event.** The office of Student Life requires that all purchase orders include proof that the purchase is being made for a club event. Therefore, meeting minutes approving the expenditure (see "Sample Minutes" attached for required format), **AND** a flyer or poster that you hang for the event, a copy of the listserv e-mail sent to club members about the event, or any other reasonable proof of announcement of the event must be included before a check can be cut. You must do this for every purchase order. It is not the Office Managers' responsibility to go back to previously paid purchase orders to find the documentation.
- 5) **You must always sign the receiving report after you have received the goods or services.**

Step 4: Is any additional paperwork necessary?

Depending on the situation, there are other forms that may be required to accompany your reimbursement paperwork. These may include a tax form, a general services contract, a co-sponsorship agreement, or a sponsorship agreement. Examples of each of these appear on the following pages.

- 1) **Tax forms** must be obtained from vendors who provide services or rentals. The IRS requires GSA to get tax identification numbers from such vendors before a check can be cut. Your club will be notified if a tax form is required. The GSA will email or fax tax forms to vendors who perform services or rentals, or one will be given to you to take to the vendor directly for completion. It is extremely important that you provide the complete, correct address for vendors. If the complete address is not provided then payment may be delayed.
- 2) **General services contracts** are required when GSA will be paying a vendor directly for a service or rental. This contract then serves as the invoice for the service to be provided. It will list what services are expected and what the price for these services will be. Examples of cases where a contract may be required include whenever an acceptable receipt or invoice can not be provided by the vendor, when paying a band for playing at a party, paying a restaurant for catering an event, etc. If you are unsure whether or not a contract will be needed, please ask ahead of time!
- 3) **Speaker contracts** are required when your club will be paying an honorarium to a speaker from outside the University at Buffalo. University policy prevents any club from paying speakers that come from within the University.
- 4) **Co-sponsorship agreements** are required when your club is giving money to clubs from another student government, a department or other organization to help pay for an event. This form commits both parties to a predetermined, specific amount and serves as a contract between the two.
- 5) **Sponsorship agreements** are required when your club is receiving money from clubs from another student government, a department, or other organization as a contribution. This form commits both parties to a predetermined, specific amount and serves as a contract between the two. Monetary donations may be made to GSA clubs. The check must be made payable to the Graduate Student Association, not to your GSA club.
Charitable contributions from GSA clubs to outside vendors cannot be made from the allotted budget given to your club annually by the GSA. Clubs must prove (via Ticket Office reports or other types of receipts) that the money they wish to donate is not from student activity fees, but was raised independently.

The GSA treasurer (NOT your club treasurer) and the payee must sign any contracts and/or agreements before a check can be cut. These must have both original signatures. Scans, faxes and/or photocopies are not acceptable.

Step 5: What to do once you are authorized

- 1) **Get a tax exemption form.** (see sample attached) Before you make a purchase that you want to be reimbursed for, please get a tax exemption form at Sub-Board I, Inc., 341 Student Union. You will need to have a requisition or PO number in order to request this document. You will not be reimbursed for NYS sales tax you pay for any purchases. You may also call Sub-Board at 645-2954 to have a tax exemption form mailed or faxed wherever you want it to go. An example of a tax exemption form is shown on the following page. Any kind of deposits are also not reimbursable. For example, bottle deposits paid for soda purchases cannot be reimbursed.

- 2) Make the purchase or proceed with the event.
 - a) Complete all paperwork and keep copies for yourself
 - (1) Get the original, itemized receipt, invoice or contract.
 - (2) Get credit card receipts and proof of payment documentation, or the cancelled check
 - (3) Attach event advertisement documentation and club minutes with receipts and return to GSA at 310 Student Union
 - (4) Sign and date the receiving report on the PO, or include a signed Receiving Report. These can be downloaded from the GSA website www.gsa.buffalo.edu.

****PLEASE ask questions before you make a purchase if you are unsure about anything!**

What to do if you are denied:

Make an appointment with the GSA Treasurer. Bring any additional information requested by the Treasurer. If your encumbrance request has been rejected, you may not use your club funds to purchase items and you will not be reimbursed for any purchases you make.

How to make a deposit:

1) Deposits from events/fundraisers/sales

- a) All money collection is handled through the **Sub-Board I, Inc. Ticket Office**. Please refer to the following pages for specific Ticket Office policies and procedures. **Any time your club collects money, you MUST use the Ticket Office.** You must contact the Ticket Office at least 10 business days before the anticipated event/fundraiser/sale is to happen. If arrangements are not made 10 days before, the Ticket Office will penalize your club. Ticket Office personnel will set up the event for you, print tickets, sell merchandise, etc. The Ticket Offices are located at 221 Student Union (645-2353) on North Campus and at 350 Harriman Hall (829-2581) on South Campus. After the money has been collected through the Ticket Office it will be deposited at Sub-Board and a budget adjustment will be done to increase your club's expense budget.