

# Have work-from-home expense policies been on your mind?

Roughly 6 months into the global pandemic caused by COVID-19, we continue to see public and private events being postponed, canceled, or moved online. Companies around the world have been encouraging or requiring employees to work from home until the end of 2020 or mid 2021.

We've been talking to our peers and customers to gather best practices on work-from-home expense policies. Below are some things to consider as you craft the policy that works for your company.

## Travel

- Know where your employees are, and be mindful of advisories from local authorities in those locations. T&E data can give you real-time insight, where other data may be limited.
- Accommodate employees who are uncomfortable or unable to travel to the office or for business by allowing them to work remotely.
- Discuss with your travel providers how to reclaim lost funds, and have a plan to track the increase in cancellations, no-show fees, or travel credits that are likely on your employees' loyalty accounts.

## People

- Re-evaluate hourly workers' compensation for those out sick. Bear in mind expediting expense reimbursement can alleviate any possible financial burden.
- Allow flexible work hours to help with social distancing for employees who can't work from home. Consider allowing employees to expense protective gear.
- Communicate clear policies for employees who are sick or traveling from highly infected areas. Consider making exceptions about what employees are allowed to expense if they are unable to depart, or reside in highly affected areas.
- Postpone hiring non-critical roles and try to conduct interviews virtually instead of in-person.

## Offices/Spaces/Events

- Inquire about event refunds, and refund policies for events pending cancellation. Instead of canceling your events, consider postponing them.
- Increase the cleaning regimen if there will be employees working at the office and communicate the changes to help ease anxiety.
- Adjust or cancel office supply orders, including catered meals, groceries, or basic supplies.
- Allow some purchases through the T&E process instead of the AP process as an emergency response.

## Working from home

- Allow reimbursement for internet access, monitors, or keyboards – not all employees have the optimal equipment to work from home. Alternatively, a one-time stipend can be simpler to implement.
- Encourage an environment and culture where working from home is accepted. Invest in technology such as video conferencing software to make the transition smoother.
- Boost employee morale by allowing them to expense hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, or cleaning supplies.

## Remember

Clear and regular communication from leaders can ease confusion and fear in turbulent times