

Examples of inappropriate purchases of promotional items from state funds would be the purchase of t-shirts, coffee cups, sixpack coolers, lunch bags, or other items which would primarily be used for personal purposes and/or would have more than a nominal value. Articles of clothing or meal related items generally fall in this category unless they are part of a required uniform (would not then be considered a promotional item).

### **Unallowable Purchases from State Budget Codes**

There are some purchases that are not allowable from state funds. Listed below is information about unallowable purchases:

1. The purchase of alcoholic beverages and "setups" is prohibited from state funds.
2. The purchase of items for personal use is prohibited.
3. The purchase of food, coffee, tea, drinks, candy, snacks, break refreshments, etc. for consumption by employees or guests is prohibited from state operating funds under all circumstances other than those provided for under university and state travel regulations. The travel regulations provide specific guidance as to allowable reimbursable expenses for meals when in travel status. State budget regulations do provide for the purchase of refreshments for coffee breaks not to exceed \$5/person for meetings/conferences which are planned in detail in advance, with a formal agenda or curriculum, where there is a formal written invitation to participants setting forth the calendar of events and the detailed schedule of costs, and there are twenty (20) or more participants per day.  
Purchases of food, flowers, and plants are permissible when purchased for use in research, education, or for consumption by research animals rather than for decorative or personal use.
4. The purchase of medications (pain relievers, aspirin, etc.) and/or medical supplies for staff/employees other than as may be required by federal or state regulations or for emergency first aid is not allowable.
5. The purchase of microwave ovens, coffee pots, refrigerators, or related items for personal office use is not allowable. This prohibition does not extend to equipment or supplies utilized for educational or research purposes.

6. The purchase of plants or flowers (live or artificial) for decorative use in an office is prohibited except purchases by the Facilities Division as part of campus maintenance.
7. The purchase or framing of pictures, art, diplomas, etc. for use in a personal office for decorative purposes is not allowed. Exceptions include the purchase/framing of motivational or informational wall hangings, which are functional rather than decorative in nature.
8. The purchase of party items or other decorative items to decorate an office for a holiday or party or general decorative use including the purchase of balloons and other like items is not allowable.
9. The purchase of picnic tables for a department other than by the Facilities Division, as part of the campus maintenance function is not allowable.
10. The purchase of picnic items (paper plates, cups, napkins, forks, spoons, etc.) for office/employee use is not allowable.
11. The rental of portable water dispensers and the purchase of bottled water from state funds is not normally (see exceptions below) allowable and is considered a personal expense. In the event that the quality of the water in a campus building is in question, the department should call the Environmental Health and Safety Office at 515-6859 to have the water tested. The Facilities Division may be contacted to determine if additional water fountains are needed in a campus building. Outside of Wake County, the local water utility or health department should be contacted. A portable water dispenser can be rented or bottled water purchased from state appropriated or overhead funds only if there is a health/safety reason for the purchase. Examples would be if a temporary condition existed where water quality in a facility was below state standards or when university personnel (for example, Facilities' personnel or farm personnel) are working under weather or other conditions where water is not available otherwise.
12. The purchase of gifts or flowers for an employee or non-employee is considered a personal expense and is not allowable.
13. The purchase of get-well cards, sympathy cards, birthday cards, Christmas cards, or other holiday cards is considered a personal expense and is not allowable.
14. The purchase of personal clothing items or t-shirts which are not part of required uniforms, safety related, or program related (for example, use in textile research) is not allowable.