



## Chapter 7- Commuter Crew: Expenses, Payroll and Policies

### **BUDGET ADMINISTRATION**

#### **Program Budgets**

A unique aspect of working as a Crew Leader for the SCA is your level of financial responsibility. You will manage and have direct responsibility for your program's budget. Do not take this responsibility lightly. A properly managed budget is crucial to having a successful program. As a Crew Leader, you will receive a budget to buy all the food, supplies, and to make travel arrangements as necessary for your program. Examine your program's budget closely and you will see that it details the amounts in each individual expenditure category. This budget will serve as your spending guideline.

#### **Budget Cards**

Along with your budget book you will receive a budget card for the total amount budgeted for your program. This card operates as a credit card. Because it does not have a person's name on the front and may be used without a PIN to make purchases, this card is like cash – always keep track of your card!

#### **Non-options for Managing Budget Money**

- Do not deposit any SCA budget money into your own personal checking or savings account. Mixing personal money with business advances will confound SCA's accounting procedures and very likely make tracking any financial questions difficult.
- Do not put your entire budget check into cash. If you should lose the money it would be your responsibility and liability. Most people cannot afford a \$2,000 hit on their personal finances.

#### **Tracking your Budget**

Along with your budget card you will receive a form about how to record all of your transactions and expenditures for your program. In preparation for submitting the final budget accounting, you must keep your SCA budget up to date. The procedure for tracking purchases is as follows:

Keep track of each purchase and each receipt as you go along – waiting until the end of the program will not keep you apprised of how much money you have to spend, not will it be an easy process to remember and compile.

Crew Leaders must exercise extraordinary care and self-discipline to get receipts for everything they buy. At the end of the program, the amount of your receipts should total the expenses written in each budget category.

We have determined your budgeted expenditure amounts based on our past experience and these amounts should be more than adequate to run your program. You should be able to stay within your budget, but if you foresee additional expenses that will run over-budget, you must discuss a revised budget with your Regional Coordinator before you go actually commit the money. SCA and the Commuter Crew Program have very tight budgets and we do not have any "extra" money hidden somewhere for overruns.

### **Sample Expenditure Breakdown for Commuter Crew**

Most of your budget will go to gas and food and activities for the camping/recreation trip (if applicable) at the end of the program. Please do not go over budget! You will not be reimbursed.

Your program budget should be delegated to the following expenditures:

Supplemental Lunch Food The Crew Members are required to bring their own lunch and water bottle; if they do not have a water bottle we can provide you one for them from the office cache. We have promised to provide them with water and you will have them fill up the water cooler with ice and water each day as you arrive to the Park's maintenance yard. You will also want to bring a drink mix like Gatorade for them to encourage Crew Members to drink plenty of fluids throughout the day. You can also provide them with a little snack like granola bars, fruit or GORP during a break in the day. **You have a small amount of money budgeted for these types of expenses so use it wisely and effectively.** Please try and make most of your food purchases at wholesale or supermarket stores. It will be a lot cheaper than a 7-Eleven type convenience store. On an environmental education day, plan on filling the water cooler at your place and purchasing a bag of ice for the cooler before you meet your crew because you will mostly likely not be going to the Park that day.

It is almost a given that some crew members will not show up with a lunch on any given day. You should plan on having backup sandwich supplies readily available in the form of peanut butter, jelly and bread. Keep it real simple and plain or else they will all start forgetting their lunch every day. **Also, it is not acceptable to take Crew Members to fast food restaurants for lunch daily.**

You can treat your crew to an occasional ice cream or slurpie after work on a Friday. Reward them for their efforts, but don't use it to win them over.

Gas for Vans Filling up the van will use a large portion of your budget.

Miscellaneous You will need to purchase some small miscellaneous items such as ice, parking meters & garages, bug repellent and maps. Please use good judgment and don't go overboard with your expenditures as we've tried to provide you with a lot of supplies already.

SCA will only reimburse you for authorized expenses. The only exception to pre-authorized overruns is in the case of expenses to ensure the health and well being of your crew and yourself. If you have a surplus, we are delighted! Alas, you must refund it to SCA.

### **Keeping Tack of Submitting and Receipts every 2 weeks**

The Commuter Crew Program requires that you submit frequent budget reports and receipts to your SCA Coordinator which account for all your expenses. **YOU MUST KEEP RECEIPTS FOR EVERY PURCHASE YOU MAKE!** Your final compensation may be delayed or partially withheld if there is a significant discrepancy between your total receipts (plus any excess funds returned) and the budget advanced you.

As a business (albeit a non-profit organization), SCA is audited each year and must provide backup receipts for all our expenses. Your program budget may be but a small part of the total SCA financial picture, but crucial to getting us through an audit smoothly.

## Travel Arrangements

As an SCA Crew Leader, you may travel quite a bit before the season is over. SCA pays for all of your travel expenses incurred while on program-related business, but uses two budget mechanisms to do so. Most of your travel will be arranged for and paid by the SCA office directly and in some other instances you will need to pay for travel out of your program budget.

- Arranged and paid for by SCA office directly:
  - Crew Leader orientation meeting
  - Work Skills training
  - Travel to and from your field program
- Paid for out of your program budget:
  - Daily travel to-and-from the work site
  - Recreational trip expenses
  - Food budget for recreational trip and education days
  - Miscellaneous – incidentals for crew like personal items

## Travel Expenses for Crew Leader Training

If you incur expenses doing non-field program business for SCA, such as attending Crew Leader training sessions, you will be reimbursed by a different method than described above. In addition to paying you for mileage (using the SCA rate) you will be paid for your actual food, road tolls, and other miscellaneous expenses.

Again it is essential that you keep detailed records of all of your expenses including all of your receipts. No receipt = No reimbursement. To receive reimbursement you should place all of your receipts, a detailed list of items purchased, and your total mileage into an envelope and submit it to the Regional Program Coordinator for review and processing. (Make a copy for yourself first in case your letter gets lost.)

## Travel Expenses for Field Program

All arrangements for air, bus, or train travel for training and field programs should be done through SCA's travel agent. The contact information for our current travel agent can be found in your training invitation letter.

## CREW MEMBER STIPENDS AND PAY SCHEDULE

SCA commuting Crew Leaders will be using a program management software to track Crew activities this summer. The software ETO® (*Efforts to Outcomes*) is a web-based project management program that will allow SCA to more easily and accurately track and compile information such as Member attendance, Crew demographics, Member evaluations, project accomplishments and reports. With this tool, SCA will be able to efficiently compile information program-wide to support program evaluation as well as develop reports to share with our agencies and funders. In short, we'll be able to better track and tell the story of an SCA Crew. ETO will be further explained in Chapter 10: Post Program and Evaluation as well as Crew Leader Training.

Crew Leaders will **input weekly reports** using the web-based ETO in order to keep accurate record of Crew Member activities. Crew Member attendance (and therefore payroll) will be tracked using ETO software therefore it is essential that Crew Leaders are up to date with the input of their Crew Members activities.

## Pay Dates – Crew Members

Crew Members receive a flat rate stipend for their participation. You will hand out paychecks at the end of day on Fridays (bimonthly) aside from the last pay date which will be mailed to participants who do not come by the office to pick-up their final check. In most cases SCA staff will get you Crew Member paychecks sometime by the Friday pay date. However some crews may have to swing by the office on Friday afternoon to pick-up paychecks if an SCA staff cannot deliver you the paychecks.

Specific details about the stipend amount and pay schedule will be provided to you by the regional coordinator for your program during Crew Leader Training.

## TARDINESS AND ABSENTEESIM

### Crew Member Absenteeism

*Crew Members will be informed of the following protocols in advance and in writing.* Our goal is to have every Crew Member present every day, but we know that this does not always happen. If a crew member is going to be absent from work, we want to teach them fundamental job-related life skills that relate to personal accountability. You remind your Crew Members to please inform you in advance whenever possible if they know they will be absent on a certain day/s.

Personal accountability and communication are both valuable life and job skills that SCA is attempting to instill in the crew members. In order for the procedures and expectations to be effective, you must uphold them. Remember, young people need structure. You will create this structure when you communicate with the crew members the procedure YOU want them to follow when they know they are going to be absent.

Crew Members (and parents) need be reminded about their commitment to the program for the entire 6 weeks (or specific duration of the program) with limited absences. Each Regional Commuter Crew may have slightly different policies however it is generally accepted that **Crew Members can miss up to three days** for whatever reason. If a Crew Member is absent a fourth day, he or she will be automatically dismissed from the program. While this may seem strict, frequent and/or unexplained absences have a tremendous effect on crew dynamics and the crew member experience. Crew Members have been strongly encouraged to minimize planned absences to allow for illnesses and emergencies that may arise!

We do not have the time or capacity to run a shuttle service to/from the work site to public transportation, other than for the morning pick-up and afternoon drop-off. Unfortunately, we cannot make special concessions. The Park expects us to be on time each morning and in the Park working on our projects for the duration of the day.

Therefore, it is very important that Crew Leaders report **all** absences on the morning of the absence. **When you are ready to leave your pick up site and are missing a Crew Member/s, please call your Regional SCA Coordinator and leave a message on their voice mail of which member(s) is absent.** That evening please give the absent Crew Member/s a call and talk with them about their absences and remind them of the attendance policy and how many days they have missed already. In addition, this Member's profile will reflect the missed day(s) when the Crew Leader inputs a comprehensive report at the end of each week in ETO.

The below summarizes and example of the absenteeism policy and the stipend penalties from one Region. This is an example only. Each Region may have slightly different way to

manage this process. Please work with your Regional Coordinator and Regional Addendum to the Commuter Crew Handbook to better understand how to manage this for your Crew.

**Example:**

**Crew Member's miss:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> day, no stipend penalty
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> day, stipend is docked \$60 for each day
- 4<sup>th</sup> day, dismissal from program (Crew Member does not receive remainder of stipend)

Crew Members that drop out or are dismissed will lose all or segments of their stipend. For example, if a Crew Member quits or is dismissed during the 5<sup>th</sup> week of the program, s/he will lose the last half of the stipend (weeks 5,6; \$470). It will not be pro-rated on weeks or days worked.

*\*\*Crew Members participating in college orientation during the program will be given special consideration regarding the absenteeism policy.*

**Crew Leader Tardiness**

Being on time is a must for all Crew Leaders this summer. If however, due to some unforeseen and unavoidable circumstance in the morning, you are going to be late, immediately call your Regional SCA Coordinator. If you are unable to speak with someone and have to leave a message – Please keep trying. The key point here is you need to make contact with SCA staff so a contingency plan can be implemented. Most likely, this will involve a sub-Crew Leader or staff picking up your Crew, driving them to the work site and working with them until you arrive.

**Crew Leader Absences**

Due the relatively short length of the program, we cannot grant days off to Crew Leaders during the summer program. If there is an emergency, however, we do have a contingency plan in place. It is challenging to implement and execute, but it will work effectively if needed. The proper procedure in the event of an emergency absence is to get in touch with your Regional Coordinator. Please remember that Crew Leader absences, whether planned or unplanned, put a tremendous strain on our staffing structure. Please be safe and careful and plan on working every day throughout the program.