



Chapter 6- Managing Crew Expenses

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 and is a part of your end-of-season evaluation. 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 Chase card for the total amount budgeted for your program. This card operates both as an ATM card and 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! You will receive information on how to activate your Chase card when you are given your budget packets at training.

Budget Card Tips and Hints

- Always activate your Chase card and set up the PIN number before you head into the field- contact Debi x120 or Patty x114 immediately if you have issues. Keep in mind that they are only available on weekdays between 8 and 4 EST.
- Make sure that the vendor accepts MasterCard before shopping. The bulk food stores sometimes will not accept the card.
- Try to withdraw \$20 before you head into the field to make sure your card is working properly.

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. 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 Cohort Manager before you actually commit the money. SCA and the Conservation Crew Program have very tight budgets and we do not have any "extra" money hidden somewhere for overruns.

SCA will only reimburse you for authorized additional 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.

At the end of the program you must submit a budget report in which you account for all your expenses. **YOU MUST KEEP RECEIPTS FOR EVERY PURCHASE YOU MAKE!** Your rehire status may be compromised if there is a significant discrepancy between your total receipts, any excess funds, and the budget.

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.

Budget Tips and Hints

- 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, nor will it be an easy process to remember and compile.
- 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.
- While SCA encourages you to treat yourself to a celebratory meal at the completion of your crew, alcohol purchases using the SCA budget are not permitted.
- If you lose a receipt or a receipt isn't available, hand write your own version so you can keep track of your expenses. Include the hand-written version with your budget when you turn it in at the end of the crew. While it's not always possible, we encourage all purchases to be made using the Chase card because any lost receipts can be tracked using the Chase card website.

Travel Expenses

SCA will cover or reimburse up to **\$500** towards the cost of travel and travel related expenses for each of these trips (training and each program site). A complete list of allowable expenses follows. Additional related expenses may be submitted and reimbursed with Program Staff approval.

- Air / Bus /Train ticket fare
- Mileage (if you drive your own vehicle) at .40/mile
- Travel related lodging (ie. early flight requires overnight stay nearby the airport)
- Travel related meals (meal expenses incurred on the day of travel to/from)
- Parking
- Tolls
- Airline baggage charges
- Terrapass.com - offset your carbon footprint for travel

There are two methods for you to arrange travel for SCA:

- Use SCA's partner travel agent- Egencia (a subsidiary of Expedia). Go to the Crew Leader website for directions on creating a user account with Egencia. Afterwards, you can begin to book your travel to/from Training and your Program Site. When you have completed your travel plans, you can submit the itinerary, which will be reviewed and approved by SCA before being ticketed. For fares less than \$500, SCA will provide payment directly.
- For fares above \$500, SCA will work with you to find a lower priced ticket. In the event that we cannot, you may research travel arrangements on your own, purchase a ticket, and submit for reimbursement up to \$500 from SCA. To receive reimbursement, you must book travel then send itinerary and fare information no less than 2 weeks prior to day of travel. For more information, contact Debi Monroe, dmonroe@thesca.org

At the end of your crew(s), you may submit additional travel expenses for reimbursement. Again, the limit for all travel and travel-related expenses is \$500 total per crew. Please submit a Travel Expense Reimbursement Form (found on the CL website) detailing all relevant expenses as listed above. These expenses must be itemized (ie. airport meal during travel to training, baggage charge to Grand Teton crew, etc.) with corresponding receipts. **NO RECEIPT = NO REIMBURSEMENT**. Also, you must submit final expenses no later than 15 days after your final program has ended. Submit all reimbursements to Debi Monroe (dmonroe@thesca.org).

Travel Outside Continental US

If you are traveling between the continental U.S. and Alaska, Hawaii, Virgin Islands, or other site, the reimbursement limit is \$750.

Small Airport Provision

If you are experiencing difficulty booking a flight for less than \$500 because your Crew site is a minor U.S. airport and your scheduled parameters are reasonable (i.e. you're not swinging through Zion NP on your way to Denali from your home in Vermont) – please contact Debi Monroe, dmonroe@thesca.org.

Carpooling

If you are the owner of the vehicle, check out the list above and fill out the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form. If you are a carpooling passenger, please contact Debi Monroe, dmonroe@thesca.org for reimbursement details.