

ARIZONA STATE MEAL AND TRAVEL RATES, IN PLAIN ENGLISH

Source: State of Arizona Accounting Manual, Topic 50 Travel, Section 95, issued January 27, 2025

Pulled from the state's own PDF on September 15, 2026. This is the version in force today.

1. The whole system in four sentences

The state does not publish one meal limit. It publishes a **full day limit** for each location, and then splits that day into a breakfast, lunch and dinner amount. There are only **five tiers** in the entire country, from \$58 to \$82 a day, and every city in America falls into one of them. The tier for a location is set by the state's own table, which is the federal rate for that city minus ten dollars. These are **limits on what the state will reimburse for money actually spent**, not an allowance somebody gets to pocket.

2. The five tiers, with the meal breakdown

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
Full day	\$58	\$64	\$70	\$76	\$82
Breakfast	\$12	\$13	\$14	\$15	\$16
Lunch	\$14	\$16	\$18	\$19	\$21
Dinner	\$32	\$35	\$38	\$42	\$45
Travel day (75%)	\$43.50	\$48.00	\$52.50	\$57.00	\$61.50

The three meals add exactly to the full day figure. On a full day of travel the traveler may use the whole amount without splitting it by meal. When a meal is provided free, that meal's amount comes off the day.

3. Which tier applies where in Arizona

Where	County	Full day	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Kayenta, county listed as Navajo	Navajo	\$64	\$13	\$16	\$35
Grand Canyon and Flagstaff	Cocoonino and Yavapai, except Sedona	\$70	\$14	\$18	\$38
Tucson	Pima	\$70	\$14	\$18	\$38

Phoenix and Scottsdale	Mari copa	\$76	\$15	\$19	\$42
Sedona	Sedo na city limits	\$82	\$16	\$21	\$45
Everywhere else in the country		\$58	\$12	\$14	\$32

4. The Joseph City question, and it matters

The state's rule, printed at the top of every page of the location table, reads: *"If a city is listed, then the city's rate applies. If a city not listed is located in a county whose rate is listed, then the county's rate applies. Otherwise... the rates to the immediate right apply,"* meaning the \$58 standard.

Joseph City is not listed. But Joseph City is in **Navajo County**, and Navajo County is listed, in the Kayenta row. Read literally, that puts Joseph City, Holbrook, Winslow and Show Low at the **\$64 tier**, not the \$58 standard.

The other reading is that the Kayenta row covers only Kayenta. The difference is small, three dollars on dinner, but pick one on purpose and write it down rather than leave it to whoever fills out the form. **Recommendation: use \$64 and the Navajo County row, because that is what the rule literally says and it is the reading an auditor cannot argue with.** Have Selena confirm, and note it in the regulation.

5. What this means for the food and beverage regulation, DJ-R

If the Board takes **Option 1**, the SAAM limits, then a district event in Joseph City is capped at roughly:

- **Breakfast \$13 a person**
- **Lunch \$16 a person**
- **Dinner \$35 a person**

and Phoenix events at \$15, \$19 and \$42. A board workshop lunch for seven people is capped at about \$112. Those are the numbers a member will react to, so have them ready.

Two honest caveats. SAAM is written for an **employee in travel status**, not for catering a meeting at the district office, so Option 1 borrows a travel rule for a different purpose. And the SAAM table is **not refreshed automatically** when the federal rates change every October; the current version has been in force since January 27, 2025. That is an argument in Option 1's favor if you want stability, and against it if you want the numbers to track the market.

Option 2 is the Board writing its own breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack dollar amounts. Simpler to explain at a district event, but it requires the Board to revisit the numbers whenever prices move.

6. Other numbers from the same section you will use

- **Mileage, personal vehicle: 67 cents a mile.** This is the number for travel claims.
- Privately owned aircraft: 99.5 cents a mile.
- **Day trip with no overnight stay, over 6 hours and under 12: \$17 total for the day.**
- **Day trip with no overnight stay, 12 hours or more: \$32 total for the day.** Both are taxable to the traveler.
- Departure and return days on an overnight trip: 75 percent of the full day rate for the place you slept.
- Lodging is a separate limit by location and season. Phoenix runs \$113 in the summer to \$229 in February and March. Flagstaff is \$110 to \$144. Kayenta is \$145 year round. The standard everywhere else is \$110. Taxes are reimbursed on top.
- Long assignments: after the first seven days in one place, meals drop to 50 percent of the full day rate.

7. Where this came from

The PDF is saved beside this file as

`SAAM\_5095\_Reimbursement\_Rates\_250127.pdf`, 29 pages. The state posts it at gao.az.gov under the State of Arizona Accounting Manual, Topic 50, Section 95. The version-specific link will change when the state reissues it; the stable page is <https://gao.az.gov/state-arizona-accounting-manual-saam>. Questions go to gaotravel@azdoa.gov.