

Technical Assistance on Field Trips

This technical assistance paper is designed to assist 21st CCLC subrecipients in the state of Florida to implement federal and state requirements regarding field trips. Below is a series of frequently asked questions to help support the allowability of field trips.

Under what conditions must my agency follow the rules and guidelines for 21st CCLC field trips?

Subrecipients must ensure compliance with state and federal laws, policies, and regulations when an agency is using 21st CCLC funds and/or when the field trip occurs during 21st CCLC operational hours and involves 21st CCLC student participants.

Under what conditions would a field trip be considered allowable?

Field trips are allowable when directly related to the identified educational needs of participating students and meet the goals and objectives of the program as identified in the approved program application. Field trips for entertainment or recreational purposes are not allowable. Subrecipients are required to have a policy for allowability of costs, and like any other 21st CCLC expenditures, the costs of the field trip must be allowable. Costs of a field trip may include the admission fees for both students and adults, transportation, and staff salaries and fringe benefits that occur during the time of the field trip. While there may be other criteria, all costs must be reasonable, necessary, allocable and well-documented.

- **Reasonable:** Defined as what a prudent person would do, and generally interpreted as getting the most benefit for the least cost.
- **Necessary:** Defined as what is needed to achieve the program goals and objectives, and generally interpreted as the objectives would not be achieved in its absence.
- **Allocable:** Defined as costs which directly benefit the program incurring the expense, and generally interpreted as getting the most benefit to the students and the program for a fair cost. A cost is allocable to a program in the proportion it benefits the program, similar to weighing the costs against the benefits.

All admission tickets must be purchased from the education office or department of the destination. If the destination does not have such an office, the agency should thoroughly consider whether this is an allowable field trip destination.

Agencies may consider the field trip by asking these questions:

- Is this trip necessary?
- Can we achieve the objectives without the trip?
- Is there a less costly alternative?

In addition to Federal requirements, subrecipients must comply with state policies, applicable statutes and the approved grant application. Funds must be used in accordance with those statutes, policy, and the application.

When can a field trip take place?

All 21st CCLC activities must occur during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (i.e., before school, after school, evenings, holidays, school spring breaks, summer). Overnight field trips are not allowable. Field trips should occur during the approved operating times of the 21st CCLC program. If the 21st CCLC operation time needs to be adjusted to accommodate the field trip, programs should contact their assigned 21st CCLC Program Development Specialist.

Can programs travel out-of-state?

Programs are not allowed to travel out-of-state without written pre-approval from the FDOE 21st CCLC State Director.

What field trips are not allowable?

Activities that are considered to be for entertainment purposes are prohibited, e.g, bowling, skating, or movie attendance, regardless if a lesson plan is provided. Overnight field trips including retreats and lock-ins are not allowable. Field trips during the regular school day are also prohibited as they are not allocable to the program time. Field trips that do not related to the goals and objectives of the program are also considered entertainment, and thus, not allowable.

When a fieldtrip is not allowable, then none of the costs associated with the trip are allowable. This includes the admission fees for both students and adults, transportation, and staff salaries and fringe benefits that occur during the time of the field trip. For example, if an organization donates admission tickets to a bowling alley, then 21st CCLC funds cannot be used to pay for the staff time and the transportation costs of this field trip because it is an unallowable destination.

What type of documentation should be maintained?

The Florida Department of Education requires subrecipients to maintain financial, programmatic records, supporting documentation for five (5) years after a final disbursement report is submitted, though the retention period may be longer if there is an on-going audit, investigation or monitoring. Documentation should include the following, at minimum:

- Project name and number
- Trip information (destination, grade level(s) of students attending, date of trip, departure time, and return time)
- A list of all students, staff, and chaperones, including their title (i.e., teacher, parent, volunteer, paraprofessional)
- Description of the field trip (goal, objective, evidence of educational value, lesson plan(s), pre-activities, activities during the field trip and post-activities)
- Detailed itinerary of the field trip
- Itemized costs for the field trip (admission fees, transportation costs, staffing costs)
- Invoices for all expenditures
- Sign-in/out attendance sheets for the day of program attendance

What makes a field trip educational?

Educational field trips are allowable when directly related to a lesson, as part of academic instruction, and necessary to meet program objectives. Field trips without clearly demonstrated educational value are not allowable for 21st CCLC programs. Rather than creating lesson plans to fit a desired field trip, programs should create lessons that meet their student needs and are used to support the lesson activities. Field trips must be

designed to include pre-, during-, and post-educational activities. The field trip must have the likelihood to positively and measurably impact the program goals and objectives and ultimately increase student growth and achievement.

Should certified teachers attend field trips?

Field trips are required to be educational in nature and tied to academic enrichment; therefore, field trips should be facilitated by a certified teacher in order to make connections with the pre, during, and post educational activities that must be conducted around the trip.

Can my agency purchase more tickets than the number of 21st CCLC students attending the field trip?

Subrecipients must be able to get a refund on unused admissions. Any non-refundable unused admissions are considered unallowable costs. When purchasing admission tickets in advance, subrecipients should inform the vendor that the admission tickets are being purchased with grant funds and that unused tickets must be refunded. If the vendor does not allow for refunds on unused admission tickets, then the subrecipient should consider a different field trip activity or location. Keep in mind that admission tickets must be purchased from the education office or department of the destination.

Can we purchase food or meals for the field trip?

Food may not be purchased with 21st CCLC funds. This includes any meals or meal packages that may be offered at the field trip destination or included in the admission ticket price. If the vendor does not allow admission tickets to be purchased without including a price for food, then the subrecipient should consider a different field trip activity or location.

Can we purchase T-shirts or clothing items for the field trip?

If shirts are listed in the program’s approved budget, subrecipients can purchase T-shirts for safety purposes; however, these T-shirts must stay in the custody of the program. At the end of the field trip, programs are not allowed to give the T-shirts away to the students. Clothing may not be purchased with 21st CCLC funds as part of a package for a field trip, i.e. the T-shirt is included in the admission of the field ticket price. If the vendor does not allow admission tickets to be purchased without including a T-shirt or any clothing item, then the subrecipient should consider a different field trip activity or location.

Are there additional rules for purchasing T-shirts for field trips?

If 21st CCLC funds are used to purchase T-shirts for safety purposes, the name and or logo of the 21st CCLC program must be visible on the T-shirt, and the name of the subrecipient is not allowed to overshadow the 21st CCLC logo or name on the T-shirt as that may be considered advertising. Programs are permitted to have the words “afterschool program” written on the piece of clothing.

Our field trip(s) are listed in our approved application and budget. Does that mean it’s allowable?

Listing a field trip on the approved application or budget does not render the field trip allowable. As stated above, many factors determine allowability.

Are field trips to theme parks or amusement parks allowable?

While there are no explicit regulations against taking a field trip to an amusement park, there are significant concerns regarding the associated costs being reasonable, necessary and allocable. Typically, field trips to these destinations are considered entertainment, and there is a considerable burden of proof to document that these trips are primarily for educational purposes. Typically, in practice, these trips involve an academic or enrichment component that lasts a small amount of time, and the majority of the time is spent partaking in

the attractions available at the park. As a result, this would make the trip entertainment, and therefore, not allowable.

Are field trips for college tours allowable?

College tours may be allowable for programs if they align with approved programs objectives in the area of college readiness. College tours may not include attendance to sporting events as these are considered entertainment.

Can we charge a fee for field trips?

The funding purpose of the 21st CCLC program is to establish programs that offer academic and personal enrichment to students in need and their families. Although not contrary to federal law, the FDOE strongly discourages charging fees. Unless a subrecipient completes all the steps described in their original Request for Proposal (RFP) and receives written approval from the FDOE Bureau Chief of Contracts, Grants and Procurement to charge fees as listed in the RFP/A, subrecipients are **not** allowed to charge or request fees from students and their families to pay for any costs associated with the field trip for students participating in the 21st CCLC program.

Can 21st CCLC subrecipients request prior approval for 21st CCLC field trips?

To help ensure compliance with state and federal laws, policies, and regulations, the 21st CCLC Administrative Team has developed a template for subrecipients to request prior approval for field trips that are supported by 21st CCLC funds, occur during 21st CCLC operational hours, and/or involve 21st CCLC student participants. If your agency is interested in seeking prior approval, please complete the “Field Trip Request Form.” and submit the form and the necessary supporting documentation to the 21st CCLC Administrative Team at least 30 calendar days before the proposed field trip.

Are there any additional requirements?

In addition to the requirements already addressed, please remember that subrecipients are obligated to comply with the requirements made in their original awarded application.

Please note that this document is to assist subrecipients in becoming/remaining compliant with the 21st CCLC requirements. This document is an aid and is in no way meant to lessen the requirements imposed by applicable federal and state laws and regulations or the specific requirements in your original awarded application or applicable RFA/RFP. If you have any questions, please contact your assigned 21st CCLC Program Development Specialist.