

Office of the District of Columbia Auditor

Suggest Guidelines for the Provision of Nominal Refreshments

Nominal refreshments by law are an allowed expense for an ANC's monthly public meetings. The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) has provided advice regarding what is considered nominal refreshments. In a March 11, 1992 advice letter, the OAG indicated:

"I conclude that the Council intended the phrase "nominal refreshments" to mean light food and drink that is inexpensive - something short of a "meal." Therefore, as you have suggested, the kind of drink that would be appropriate is coffee, tea, juice, or soft drinks, and the kind of food that would be appropriate is snack food such as doughnuts, cookies, pretzels, potato chips, or something comparable. Pizza and deli cold cuts would not fit within the category of light food that is inexpensive, and something short of a meal."

Therefore, based on the definition OAG provided, below you will find a list ANCs should use to determine the types of refreshments that are allowable at public meetings that can be paid for with ANC funds.

- Cookies
- Cake
- Doughnuts
- Pretzels
- Chips
- Crackers
- Small fruit tray (inexpensive)
- Small cheese tray (inexpensive)
- Soda
- Coffee
- Tea
- Juice

Your ANC should consider that the following foods would not be considered light food and would not fit within the category of food that is inexpensive. The below foods would be considered a disallowable expense during our review process.

- Chicken
- Lunchmeat
- Deli Trays
- Kabobs
- Empanadas
- Quesadillas
- Pizza
- Restaurant Food
- Imported cheese
- Shrimp Salad
- Chicken Salad