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The following is a quick, general guide to the section’s financial rules, reimbursement procedures, and guidelines. For the complete set of TMA-MSS Financial Policies and Reimbursement Guidelines, please refer to the TMA-MSS Operating Procedures, in **file #3**.

#### Medical Student Section Funding

Currently, the TMA Board of Trustees (BOT) provides funding to each MSS chapter in an effort to enhance chapter programming, and encourage student member participation at TMA meetings. This funding is divided into two accounts: TMA Programming and TMA Travel. Funds are to be allocated in such a manner as to optimize both section programming and medical student participation in meetings. Funds are not necessarily intended to cover all expenses related to a member's travel and lodging at TMA meetings.

Funds for the MSS are administered by the TMA Membership Sections Department, through the Section Coordinator, along with the chapter treasurer and president. As with any funds provided through the TMA budgetary process, funds can only be utilized within specific guidelines. All expenditures must be documented, and availability is on an annual basis. Consequently, TMA funds not utilized during the fiscal year (January 1 through December 15) cannot be carried over for use in the following year. In addition, the BOT requests that all budgets be handled in a responsible manner, and that money not be spent just because there may be some left at the end of the year.

# **AMA Outreach Awards**

The AMA Outreach Program is a peer-to-peer recruitment program. Each chapter earns funds for travel to AMA meetings by recruiting new AMA medical student members, typically during the first-year orientation/registration periods in August. Funds are awarded annually to the chapter (typically in January) through the TMA, and are administered by the TMA-MSS Coordinator. Because AMA Outreach funds are an award and not budget funds, unused funds in this account will carry over to the next calendar year.

#### Management of Funds

Each chapter shall have **three** accounts managed by TMA.

1. The first account will be for funds allocated for chapter programming (Chapter Programming Account).
2. The second account will be for funds designated to assist with travel to TMA meetings (TMA Travel Account).
3. The third account will be reserved for AMA Outreach funds earned by the chapter (AMA Outreach Account).

Funds must be used as designated. Chapters may have independent sources of funding that are not subject to TMA financial policies and reimbursement guidelines. Any expenditures, therefore, not considered reimbursable by TMA, may be expended out of the individual chapter’s other sources, in accordance with that chapter’s policies and guidelines. Because AMA Outreach funds (AMA Outreach) are for all chapter members, this fund is administered by TMA, and must adhere to TMA Guidelines.

It is recommended that chapter officers engage in long-range planning for travel to TMA and AMA meetings. TMA generally has two meetings annually: TexMed (April/May) and Business of Medicine/Leadership Summit (September/October). The AMA generally has two meetings annually: the annual meeting (June) and the interim meeting (November/December). Specific maximum allocations should be established and budgeted for each meeting, and should not, in total, go over the amount allocated for the year.

#### TMA Programming and TMA Travel Accounts

1. Each chapter is to be given a base amount for travel to TMA meetings and a base amount for TMA programming.

2. Any chapter with satellite campuses is to be given an additional funding for TMA travel for each additional campus.

#### General Reimbursement Guidelines

Reimbursement guidelines, established in accordance with TMA policy, will be reviewed, and if necessary, updated by the Executive Council annually. Any changes must be approved by the Director of Membership Sections and/or the Executive Vice President. **Receipts must be provided for all reimbursable expenditures. In addition, reimbursement is contingent on participation in MSS conference activities.**

**Travel:**

TMA funds are to be used for *travel* and *lodging* only. Members are encouraged to carpool to out-of-town meetings. In addition, where appropriate, members are to share hotel rooms when meeting schedules necessitate an overnight stay. Nonmembers who share travel or hotel accommodations must pay their portion of expenses out of their own pockets.

Travel via personal vehicle:

* Mileage or gas is reimbursable, but not both.
  + If requesting milage, the reimbursement will be made at the current IRS-allowed rate.
  + If requesting gas, receipts must be submitted showing dates that corresponded with conference dates.
* Commuting to local meetings is not considered a reimbursable expenditure.

Travel by air:

* Best available, super-saver (coach) air travel (with needed baggage fees) is reimbursable for a limited number of student members, and for a limited amount per meeting. However, if the cost when compared to that of travel by personal vehicle is greater, then a personal vehicle should be utilized.
* Tickets must be purchased at least three weeks in advance to ensure the lowest fare.

Lodging:

* TMA will pay for lodging only when a member has official TMA business on the day of and after the night in question. If, however, it is necessary to stay overnight after official business is completed, and reimbursement is desired, then **prior** approval must be obtained from the TMA-MSS Coordinator. Members may stay at the conference hotel, a nearby hotel, or an Airbnb in the area of the conference.

Miscellaneous travel expenditures:

* Parking garage fees, road tolls, taxi/rideshare, and bus fares are reimbursable expenses only when a receipt is presented.
* Alcohol is never considered a reimbursable expense.
* No other costs, including meals, are considered reimbursable expenses.

**Reimbursement Procedures**

In order to be reimbursed for an approved expenditure(s), the following procedures must be completed:

* All reimbursement requests must be approved by the chapter treasurer and chapter president before being submitted to the TMA-MSS Coordinator.
* A reimbursement request/expense form must be filled out and filed by the member that made the expenditure, along with all applicable receipts/documentation, to the TMA-MSS Coordinator for approval and processing. Forms may be obtained from the TMA-MSS Coordinator, and reimbursement checks will be sent directly to the member.
* **All reimbursement request/expense forms must be submitted (postmark date) to the TMA-MSS Coordinator no later than 30 days after the date of the expenditure, with the following exception: the deadline for any meeting occurring after November 10 will be December 15 of the same year.** This exception is necessary to ensure that reimbursements are made within the correct fiscal year. Any forms received after the stated deadline will not be processed or paid. **It is the member's responsibility to make sure his/her reimbursement request is received by the TMA-MSS Coordinator within the aforementioned time frame**. **Failure to do so may result in the reimbursement being denied. Members should keep copies of their forms and receipts in case they are lost in the mail.**
* In the event there is a claim/dispute between a student member and his/her chapter regarding the use, misuse, and/or abuse of chapter funds, the member will be allowed due process. *See TMA-MSS Operating Procedures for steps.*

*Please note: IRS laws, governing the operation of associations, requires that TMA release information of reimbursement payments if they total $600 or more. It is for this reason that the traveler, or the person who expensed the item, file the request and provide the Association with his/her social security number.*

#### Other Funding Sources

While the Texas Medical Association Board of Trustees generously provides funding annually for Medical Student Section members to travel to TMA and AMA meetings and produce social programs, for the many important social programs and services that students organize through the TMA, chapters may raise additional funds for travel and programs. Raising money to supplement TMA budget funds allocated to each chapter is important to the success of your chapter development and programs. Not only can additional funds enable your chapter to host prominent speakers or meals at your meetings, these supplemental funds also allow your chapter greater representation at TMA and AMA meetings because you have more money to reimburse members for their travel expenses.

Before your chapter launches a major fundraising campaign, the event coordinators, along with governing board members, should look at what is available to your chapter, and determine the amount of money it will take to fund the program. Check with the TMA Section Coordinator to determine balances in the accounts available to you through TMA (TMA Programming, TMA Travel, or AMA Outreach), and then check on the local level through the chapter treasurer.

After your chapter has created a budget, begin researching the resources available, and determine which resource(s) would be the most feasible for your chapter to undertake, but that would raise enough funds to produce the program. Also, begin thinking about what items could be donated to the project.

**Possible Funding Resources**

* Chapter Funds (local & state)
* Medical School Administration & Alumni
* County Medical Society (sponsorship or grant)
* State Medical Association (sponsorship or grant)
* American Medical Association (sponsorship or grant)
* Medical Supplies Companies
* Local Physicians or Hospital Systems
* Local Celebrities, including prominent Alumni
* Sales of Promotional Items (Patagonia jackets, t-shirts, caps, glassware, etc.)
* Raffles/Silent Auctions
* Exam Survival Baskets (sell to parents/spouses/significant others before block or USMLE exams)