

HOWARD UNIVERSITY POLICY

Policy Number: 300-006 Business and Finance
Policy Title: PERSONAL PROPERTY LOSS REIMBURSEMENT POLICY
Responsible Officers: Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer
Assistant Vice President, Controller and Chief Accounting Officer
Responsible Office: Office of the Controller
Effective Date: February 21, 2018

I. POLICY STATEMENT

When loss or damage to personal property is incurred for which Howard University (“the University”) may be responsible as a result of certain catastrophic events, the University may authorize reimbursement for loss or damage. This Policy provides guidelines and procedures for the submission, assessment, and reimbursement of claims for such personal property loss or damage. This Policy supersedes all previous personal property loss reimbursement policies, and shall apply to all University managers, staff, faculty, and students who have experienced loss of or damage to personal property as further described herein.

II. RATIONALE

In the wake of catastrophic events, the University may employ this Policy to permit an efficient and consistent process by which loss is reported, managed and reimbursed. The University may authorize reimbursement for the loss or damage of personal property, subject to applicable insurance policy coverage determinations. All claims must meet the eligibility and filing requirements under this Policy **before** any claim is paid.

III. ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

This Policy applies to all University entities except Howard University Hospital.

IV. DEFINITIONS

As used in this Policy, the following terms mean:

- A. **Catastrophic Events** – Certain incidents defined by the University’s insurance providers, which are subject to change from time to time. Examples of certain incidents may include weather events, such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes and droughts, which result in extraordinary damage or disruption severely affecting the infrastructure, environment, and/or functions of the University.
- B. **Personal Property** – any movable, tangible item owned by the claimant. Not all personal property is eligible for reimbursement by the University. The following list of personal property **is not eligible for reimbursement:**

- Cash and gift cards;
- Property owned by the University or purchased using University funds, e.g., furnishings typically found in office spaces, including but not limited to, furniture, carpet, flooring, and fixtures. Repair or replacement of University-owned property will follow the policies of the Office of Procurement and Contracting;
- Personal property covered by the claimant’s homeowners or renters insurance policy;
- Personal property lost or damaged as a result of the claimant’s own carelessness, negligence, or recklessness;
- Personal property not owned by the claimant, e.g., property owned by friends or acquaintances who have no current employment or client relationship with the University; and
- Personal property valued at \$50 or less, as determined by the University in its sole discretion.

The foregoing list is not exhaustive; it is merely a guide for identifying personal property that is not eligible for reimbursement. The University will assess claims on an individual and case-by-case basis to determine eligibility for reimbursement. The University will reimburse lost or damaged personal property based on its fair market value, as determined in the University’s sole discretion, at the time that the University receives the claim. The University’s valuation may account for depreciation. Claimants must submit reasonable documentation reflecting the fair market value of the property lost or damaged. Reasonable documentation may include certificates of authenticity, notarized appraisals, and receipts; provided that such documentation must clearly identify the property claimed and ownership thereof.

V. PROCEDURES

- A. Claimants must file the **Howard University Personal Property Damage/Loss Claim Form** (the “Claim Form”), in accordance with the procedures set forth herein. Absent extraordinary circumstances described in subsection A(3) below, claimants shall have thirty (30) calendar days from the later to occur of the dates listed in subsections A(1) and (2), to submit a Claim Form and all supporting documentation to the appropriate University official(s) listed in subsections V(C)(2) or (3):
1. Date of the event causing the claimed loss or damage, OR
 2. Date the University notifies faculty, students, and staff of the personal loss claim submission process.
 3. In the event that the claimant has limited or no access to the damaged or lost personal property because such property has been quarantined, the claimant shall have sixty (60) calendar days from the date access is granted to the claimant to assess the condition of the claimed items, to submit a written claim for reimbursement.

Due dates will be extended to account for official University breaks and holidays. The claimant's failure to timely submit completed forms and attach all required documentation may result in reimbursement delays and/or denial.

B. Claim Submission

1. The claimant must timely file a claim within the applicable 30 or 60 day timeframe, in accordance with Article V(A) above.
2. The claim must include a completed and signed Claim Form, which shall provide the name of the claimant, the claimant's University status (e.g. student, faculty, staff, etc.) and position/title, the claimant's employee or student ID number, and the claimant's dean and supervisor (if applicable).
3. The claim must include the date of the loss, the specific location where the loss or damage occurred, a detailed description of the loss or damage and the events leading thereto, any mitigating efforts taken by the claimant to limit the loss or damage, and the value of the loss or damage.
4. Reasonable documentation describing the loss or damage including, but not limited to, photographs, e-mails, police report, insurance claims reports, etc. must be attached to the Claim Form. All such documentation must be dated, legible, and clearly identify the claimed property and ownership thereof.
5. Where applicable, reasonable documentation evidencing the claimant's filing of a claim under claimant's homeowners or renters insurance policy, and the results of such filing must be attached to the Claim Form (if applicable).
6. Reasonable documentation stating the purchase price of the claimed item including, but not limited to, invoices, receipts, e-mail confirmation, canceled checks, credit card statements, etc. must be attached to the Claim Form. All such documentation must be dated, legible, and clearly identify the claimed property and ownership thereof.
7. Reasonable documentation reflecting the cost of repairing the damage including, but not limited to, photographs, e-mails, police report, insurance claims reports, etc. must be attached to the Claim Form. All such documentation must be dated, legible, and clearly identify the claimed property and ownership thereof.

C. Claim Processing

1. Completed and timely filed Claim Forms shall be processed and reasonably reimbursed within sixty (60) to ninety (90) calendar days following the University's receipt of the completed Claim Form and supporting documentation, subject to extension caused by a pending homeowners or renters insurance determination. The claimant's failure to submit completed forms and required documentation may result in reimbursement delays and/or denial.

2. If the claim is less than \$5,000, then the claimant must obtain the approval of his/her school/college dean and department chair, on the bottom of the Claim Form. After obtaining such approval, the claimant must submit the completed Claim Form and required documentation to the Office of the Controller at controller@howard.edu for review and processing. For questions about the submission process, please contact Keonna Carter, Associate General Counsel for University Business Affairs by telephone at 202-806-2655 or email at keonna.carter@howard.edu.
3. If the claim is \$5,000 or more, then the claimant must submit the Claim Form and required documentation directly to the Office of Risk Management at risk@huhosp.org for review and approval. For questions about the submission process, please contact Keonna Carter, Associate General Counsel for University Business Affairs by telephone at 202-806-2655 or email at keonna.carter@howard.edu.

D. Record Keeping and Auditing

Each claimant shall receive written notification of the approval or denial of their claim and a brief explanation for the decision from the Office of the Controller. Where appropriate and feasible, the claimant's file should include a copy of the wire transfer confirmation or canceled check for the reimbursed funds.

VI. COMPLIANCE

The application of this Policy is subject to periodic audit at all applicable institutional levels by the Internal Auditor, in addition to the required institutional approval prior to payment of claims.

VII. SANCTIONS

In cases where this Policy has been abused, penalties may be recommended to the Responsible Office by the Office of Risk Management, in consultation with the Office of the Internal Audit.

VIII. HYPERLINKS

www.howard.edu/policy